

True Will Vs. Conscious Will: An Exploration Of Aleister Crowley's Concepts Of True Will And Conscious Will And Its Possible Applications To A Midsummer Nights Dream, Marison, And Wicked

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TRUE WILL VS. CONSCIOUS WILL: AN EXPLORATION OF ALEISTER CROWLEY'S
CONCEPTS OF TRUE WILL AND CONSCIOUS WILL AND ITS POSSIBLE
APPLICATIONS TO A *MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM*, *MARISOL*, AND *WICKED*

by

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BS LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, 2002

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

In our lives we will have to make hundreds upon thousands of choices. The effects of these choices will follow us with varying intervals; some effects may be brief while others may literally last a lifetime. In these moments that we are forced to choose, it ultimately comes down to two options, what we should do, and what we want to do. Essentially, it is a choice between the head and the heart. Playwrights depend on these moments of choice, for it is the basis of almost all plays. At some point, the protagonist must make a choice, even if the choice is not to choose. In the early part of the 20th Century, a religious philosopher by the name of Aleister Crowley helped to define these choices, or as he referred to them, Wills. In essence, he stated that everyone has a True Will and a conscious will, and the path that you will ultimately follow is contingent on the choices you make in your life. Following your True Will, the path of ‘the heart’ will lead you to a sense of Nirvana, while following your conscious will, the path of ‘the head’ leads to a life unfulfilled.

While some called him demonic (he occasionally referred to himself as ‘The Beast With Two Backs’¹) others saw him as a sage – someone to esoterically explain the chaotic and industrial world of the early 1900’s. Aleister Crowley seemed to be one of those few men that you either loved, or hated, or hated to love. At the dawn of the 20th Century, he was an English philosopher and religious guru that made a call to arms to the general populous to start living a better life. His theories will be explained fully in Chapter One, but ultimately he wanted everyone to achieve their True Will and leave their conscious wills by the wayside. He felt that this process could be achieved through what he referred to as his ‘theorems’ on magick. It is

¹ Crowley, Aleister. "Introduction." Introduction. Magick: In Theory and Practice. Secacus, NJ: Castle Books, 1991. xi.

unknown exactly how the idea came to him to add the 'k' to the original magic; however speculation reveals he might have taken from the original Greek word *magikE*. Contrary to the modern definition of magic (the art of producing illusions by sleight of hand²), Crowley felt that his magick was significantly more complex³. Pulling on philosophies from the Egyptians and the Celts along with basic Buddhist principles, he defined his magick within his twenty-eight 'theorems'. Ultimately, he philosophized that magick was a way to enlighten a person, or, for the purposes of this thesis a character's True Will⁴ and to avoid following their conscious will. In layman's terms, Crowley saw it as an argument between the head (conscious will) and the heart (True Will). While the main focus of this thesis is on the tension and outcome of the decision of a character to follow their True Will or their conscious will, it is impossible to talk about these two concepts without discussing, at least in part, magick. Crowley saw magick as the practice and process to achieve True Will.

This study, therefore, involves both homonyms, magic and magick. By applying this process as defined by Crowley in his self-named theorems to plays and musicals that have been defined as strictly 'magic,' I am looking for not only the exact moment in which the main protagonists in each play define and execute their decision to follow their True or conscious Wills, but also to critically examine their journey to that fatal decision. I describe it as such because I feel that a characters fate may truly depend on the choice that they make. These philosophies are not new to the philosophical world. Other theorists such as Schopenhauer and

² "Magic." Def. 3. Merriam Webster. 11th ed. Merriam-Webster, 2003.

³ His exact definition of magick as stated on page xii of Magick: In Theory and Practice is as follows: 'Magick is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.' The theorems he supposes delves deeper into the philosophical ramifications of what 'magick' is.

⁴ Crowley references two types of 'wills' in his writings. He felt that 'conscious will' should not be capitalized, while 'True Will' should. His justification was that your True Will was vitally more important than your conscious will. Crowley, Aleister. Magick: In Theory and Practice. Secacus, NJ: Castle Books, 1991.

Nietzsche and their relation to Crowley's theories will be discussed later; however I felt that because Crowley is the one who is responsible for rejuvenating the word 'magick' from the Greeks in the 20th Century, I should be able to use his theories as a modern lens to examine *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, *Marisol*, and *Wicked*. I plan to take plays that cross both genre and era and consider not only (1) what can be illuminated using this 'Crowlean lens', but I also to highlight (2) any universal truths, by which I mean any ideological or philosophical ideas that appear in all three plays, that can be found in works as diverse as the ones that I have chosen. While their connection to True Will may be tangential in nature, if there are things in common in these plays that are brought to light using Crowley's lens, then I feel it is worth noting. By examining these two factors I will be able to see if critics have accurately defined these plays. My goal is to add the 'Crowlean lens' to the already existing approaches to critically examining a theatrical piece. This lens, as defined before, is simply taking Crowley's concepts of True Will and conscious will and their link to the progression of magick within a character to illuminate the characters choices leading up to their breaking point in which they must ask themselves "Do I chose what I should do, or what I want to do?"

The three plays I chose were done for specific reasons. The basic criterion was to choose on a basis of (1) chronology, (2) genre, (3) and magical reference⁵. I took three plays that entertained the religious, philosophical, and fantastical nature of what I felt best applied to Crowley's theories. Keeping in mind that Crowley interpreted his magick as a philosophy, a religion, and a way of life to ultimately achieving True Will, I felt it pertinent to explore these aspects of each play as well.

⁵ At the time of this thesis' publication, I have found no evidence of a play being called 'magickal'. The only exception being when Crowley referred to his own plays, which is not the focus of this thesis.

In the musical *Wicked*, the philosophical nature of the piece asks the question ‘Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?’ This question can be answered through a variety of subjects. By exploring these issues within the context of its main character, Elphaba, (pronounced EL-fa-ba), and a variety of themes throughout this musical (including behavior, appearance, deception, honesty, courage and labeling) we find that True Will and conscious will in the land of Oz are flowering. Defining our True Will, according to Crowley, takes constant affirmations and diligent calculations of our feelings and utilizing those to aid in making the right choice for that specific moment⁶. In this fashion, *Marisol* marries the idea of what the author calls ‘magical realism’ in a post-apocalyptic New York City with a fervent religiosity all while underscoring the political nature of the 1980s indigent cleanup initiated by then mayor Ed Koch. Through the character of Marisol Perez, we find that not only is the choice between True Will and conscious confusing, but it can be potentially lethal. Within the structure of this play is also where Crowley’s spiritual views on True Will and conscious will become highlighted. The Lovers (Helena, Demetrius, Hermia, and Lysander) in Shakespeare’s fantastical *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is the perfect backdrop to explore Crowley’s more eccentric philosophies on magick and how these philosophies relate to True and conscious will. In essence, I plan to not only explore the choices that these four individuals make due to acts of both types of magic(k), but their ultimate consequences as well. It also must be noted that during the process of this thesis, the one overarching theme throughout all three plays dealt with Crowley’s theory of self-preservation. I feel that this is innately tied into the idea of True Will. By achieving True Will, we are inherently attempting to make the best choices for ourselves. This

⁶ This idea is taken from the Buddhist philosophy of the Middle Path. Regardless of past or future, striving to do what is exactly perfect in a given situation (making the choice that is best for you) will lead toward Enlightenment.

inherently keeps alive the innate human instinct of survival. At the end of this thesis, I hope to defend that Crowley's concepts of True Will and conscious will, when applied in tandem with Crowley's concepts of magick, can be a valid lens to examine theatrical works, old and new alike.

For Slugger

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I would like to thank first and foremost the support that my family has given me. There has been many a sacrifice made to make this thesis a possibility; do not think your loyalty and devotion has gone unnoticed. I Love You. Thanks to my mother and father. I know that they have had to go through the same process and their sage wisdom was always welcome in times of crisis.

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INTRODUCTION

Often times, as with most journeys in life, the road that you intended to take leads you to an entirely different quest than the one you set out on. Rarely is this bad, and in the case of the following thesis, it turned out to be quite exciting. The idea for this thesis came to me in my theory class, where a discussion of the Greek origins of theatre led my mind to wander. Originally, I wanted to look at the Christian reformation and its condemnation of Greek theatre and juxtapose that with the philosophies behind pageant wagons. The more that I researched early Bacchaian tradition, dances, and religious ceremonies the more I started to become fascinated with pagan traditions as a whole. Slowly, the Christian reformation went by the wayside and I started asking the question ‘Are there any paganistic rituals alive today in theatre?’ Before I go any further, let me define what ‘pagan’ means. Random House dictionary defines pagan as “a person who is not a Christian, Jew, or Muslim”. Another definition given by Random House defines pagan as “One of a people or community observing a polytheistic religion, as the ancient Romans and Greeks.” In my research of Greek mythology and paganism, I repeatedly came across the term ‘magick’ (spelled with a ‘k’). My interest in this term led me to the man that I would come to base my thesis, around – Aleister Crowley.

Crowley is mainly known for his work as an occultist⁷ philosopher and pagan guru. His life and further explanations on his theories will be discussed in depth in Chapter One. A lot of the pagan traditions of the 20th and 21st century can be linked back to his teachings. In the late 19th and early 20th century he was able to study a number of religions and their practices. He then

⁷ While several definitions of ‘occult’ and ‘occultist’ exist; I feel that Crowley’s philosophies fall in line with the following: (1) beyond the range of ordinary knowledge or understanding; mysterious, (2) secret; disclosed or communicated only to the initiated. "occult." *Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1)*. Random House, Inc. 08 Sep. 2008. <Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/occult>>.

was able to shape his own philosophies and ideas on how he saw the world. He founded his religion, Thelema, on the culmination of the individual philosophical and ritualistic practices learned from his years of soul-searching. The main dogma of this newfound religion being ‘Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law’. This simple message became a creed for everyone seeking an alternative lifestyle, a need to question the status quo, and a hedonistic way of life. As discussed earlier, he re-invented the word ‘magick’ by adding the ‘k’, homonized it with ‘magic’, and used the latter only when speaking about trickery, illusions, or stage ‘magic’. Crowley’s re-invented vernacular is a concept that I became entranced by. Tracy Tupman, in her thesis on Crowley concurs; “Magic[k], specifically Thelemic Magic[k], is to be the daily practice of those who aspire to self-actualization. It is...“The method of Science, the Aim of Religion” (Tupman, 165). What defines magick? What constitutes this ethereal notion? After researching and reading several books written by Crowley, I came across Magick: In Theory and Practice. Contained within this book are twenty-eight qualifiers defining exactly what ‘magick’ is. Even though I felt as if I had hit the Rosetta Stone of Crowley’s philosophies, the ordeal became to relate these theories back to theatre.

My challenge then became to pick plays that had been deemed ‘magical’ but still had the liberty available so that I could apply Crowley’s theories to the analysis of them. I knew that magic had been in the vernacular of critics for quite some time. By choosing plays that had been deemed as such, I wanted to see how accurate previous critics were in their assessment of these plays. Furthermore, by layering Crowley’s concepts of magick (hence superimposing) on top of the themes already present in these plays, I hoped that interesting subjects might arise. I did not want to pick plays that significantly lent themselves towards or away from magick, but moreso to pick plays that had within them elements of magic(k)al ambiguity that I could clarify. The

answer came when I was driving in my car, listening to the soundtrack to *Wicked*. The question at the beginning posed by Glinda is (as stated earlier) “Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?” This philosophical ambiguity was exactly what I was searching for. It lends itself to the heart of Crowley’s battle between True Will and conscious will. If someone is born wicked, do they have the free will to choose their own path? Are our lives predetermined? According to Crowley, they are not. By giving us the power to make our own decisions, in choosing our True or conscious Will, we are inherently free of the burden of predetermination. If there is ‘wickedness thrust upon us’, then we must surely be able to accept or reject that moniker. It fostered all of the elements of what I had learned of Crowley’s theories up until this point. I was ecstatic to find such a modern theatrical piece to utilize in my thesis. I knew, however, that writing on one show would not be enough.

I soon realized that if I was going to search for any universality within Crowley’s theories I needed something on the opposing end of the spectrum. As *Wicked* was a newer play that I knew relatively little about, I felt that I needed a play in which I was comfortable working within. Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* fit the bill perfectly. It was a canonized work, universally regarded as one of Shakespeare’s most ‘magical’ plays, and it would be a nice bookend to oppose the modern *Wicked*. Moreover, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* offered me the opportunity to delve into a fantastical world of faeries and mythical creatures, and I was curious as to how those played out in accordance with Crowley’s teachings.

After establishing a musical and a canonized work I knew that I wanted a relatively modern drama to round out this study. Moreover, the one thing that was missing from my thesis was the one thing that was so important and vital to Crowley’s work. This being that ‘magick’ is

not only something that occurs, but it is a philosophical way of life, a religion, Thelema⁸. The last play that I chose was *Marisol* by Jose Rivera. I first saw a scene from this play in 2003 and I was fascinated by not only the Christian imagery, but the post-apocalyptic nature of the script in general. Rivera refers to his writings as ‘magical realism’ which also piqued my interests. With a host of religious imagery within *Marisol* I thought that this counterbalance would be a nice addition to my thesis. Now that I had all three plays and a basis of comparison, the question(s) then became, “Now what?”

Figuring out how Crowley’s theories would relate best to these plays was no easy task. I started off attempting to ask the question, ‘Of the three plays, which one is the most magickal, according to Crowley’s twenty-eight prescriptions?’ While fascinating, this question started to feel like one giant compare-and-contrast paper and I was not happy with the direction it was going. Instead, I started to focus on using Crowley as a lens instead of a guide to look at all three of these plays. The difference being between the two is that by stepping back and using his concepts as a lens, I felt I was taking a more objective approach to this exploration. I hoped that there would be theories that would align themselves and those that would not. By relating the objectivity of this study, I hope to prove that this lens is not skewed by the author, but merely to see where on the spectrum of theorems (if at all) does the nature of these plays exist. As is the nature of any lens, it may obscure some facts (in fact in all three plays it does) and it may highlight others. Within each play (chapter), I focus on using this ‘Crowlean lens’ to ask questions about the nature of the characters, their relation to each other, nature, and the Universe. This lens is a character driven perspective seeking to find what, if any, of the concepts of magick

⁸ Thelema was the name of the organized religion established by Crowley centering around the beliefs outlined in [Magick: In Theory and Practice](#).

that Crowley speaks on are present in the decisions that the protagonist, or any other character for that matter, makes and if this leads them ultimately follow their True or conscious Will.

In the first chapter, I speak on Crowley's validity as a theorist, his credibility in theatre, his twenty-eight theorems, and how they can be broken down into seven main categories⁹. Each one of these categories is instrumental in highlighting areas of each script to dissect. The purpose of this taxonomy is for colleagues and future researchers to use this 'Crowlean lens' with ease and proper understanding. I have also included an appendix which you can refer to at any time which includes Crowley's theories, his explanations on his own theories, and my thoughts on each one of his theories.

When working on *Midsummer*, Shakespeare's rich dialogue and historical ambiguity led me to utilize more theories when looking at this classic work through Crowley's lens described above. Because of the multiple storylines and complexity of relationships I was able to cover no less than fourteen different theorems and how they align (or misalign) within the context of the play. What I have found is that out of all of Crowley's concepts of magick, I was able to apply certain ones with more ease than others. This does not mean that the concepts are in agreement with the choices that the characters make; in fact, some of the theories oppose these decisions. It is important to note that one of the beauties in having a multitude of concepts at your disposal is that you are not limited to one definition or concept. Ultimately, for the purposes of Chapter Two, I am still aiming to show The Lovers decisions to follow their True Will or their conscious will and the process of magick used in their journey.

Within *Marisol*, a different approach seemed proper. Examining Marisol's journey of True and conscious wills and the magick used to make that decision was still paramount in

⁹ I designed the categories to make it easier to speak on Crowley's theories as a whole.

keeping true to the essence of this thesis. However, instead of focusing on several different theorems prescribed by Crowley as in Chapter Two, the religious nature of the script itself and how it relates to Crowley's ideas on magick, religion, and Thelema became highlighted. Thelema comes from the Greek word for 'will' and includes the teachings of paganism, Buddhism, and the Qabalah. Its legacy lives on in the Wiccan rede 'An it harm none, do what ye will'. *Marisol* also relies heavily on Crowley's concept of True Will (your correct path in life) and what are the consequences (if any) of going with or against this path.

Although I consider *Wicked* the inspiration for this thesis, it quickly became the hardest play to write on. It took me just over a month to settle on how to structure the final chapter. I finally came across two quotes that aided me in my effort. "Are people born Wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?" This first quote I found in *Wicked's* companion book, The Grimmerie, and is spoken by Glinda, the Good Witch of the North. She opens the show with these simple questions which highlight a central theme, labels. Interesting questions soon arose. How do we react to being labeled? Do we have a choice in these labels? What happens when we embrace and not reject our labels? Not long after that I found a quote by Gregory Maguire (the author of the book *Wicked* is based on) outlining what he feels are the "fundamental questions" within the book that he did not want to get lost when it went to the stage. "...as long as the fundamental questions about behavior, appearance, deception, honesty, and courage were represented, then I was happy" (qtd. In Cote 22). I was then able to tie in these "fundamental questions" posed by Maguire, marry them with the idea of labels, and then look at how they are manifested in the text through Crowley's lens. The central theme in *Wicked* of labels and being labeled aligns with Crowley's theorems on 'wills'. As explained earlier, existing within each person is a 'True' and a 'conscious' Will, according to Crowley. By redefining your "will" you

are redefining your voluntary or involuntary label. By which I mean, according to Crowley, you can change how someone sees or defines (labels) you simply by changing your outlook on life. In essence, if you were to wake up every morning upset and angry, that is the perception you will then give off – labeling you a curmudgeon. However, if you were to change your ‘will’ to harvest a positive outlook, the world’s perception of you will change accordingly. The concept of changing your ‘will’ along with the fundamental questions that Maguire wanted to translate from the book to the stage (that of behavior, appearance, deception, honesty, and courage) became intersections in which I could use Crowley’s theories and apply them to the script as a whole.

This thesis is primarily based on four texts. The three plays of which have already been discussed and Magick: In Theory and Practice by Crowley himself. This book is over 400 pages of theological theory, practice, methodology, and ritual. This primary source not only outlines exactly what Crowley’s concepts of magick are, but as author, Crowley also gives explanations for each theorem, as he refers to them, and how they can relate to the (then) modern world. He was the editor of his own periodical, published several books, manifestos, and papers in his lifetime. I felt it necessary, however, to stay focused on these theorems contained within this book. By doing this, I was able to limit the amount of external influence from his other works and be as objective as possible when using this lens to examine theatrical works. It also discusses in detail his views on theatre. In his book, he focuses mainly on the ritualistic practices of theatre and its practical applications¹⁰. The unique opportunity arose to utilize Crowley’s philosophical ideas as well as to look at each text from his distinctive theatrical perspective. While this is secondary to the main focus of my thesis, I feel that it cannot be ignored.

¹⁰ Crowley’s theatrical visions will be discussed further in Chapter One.

I own both *Marisol* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in my personal library and obviously they both were influential in accessing needed information. *Wicked* however, presented a unique challenge in that there is no official script published. The closest thing to a script is The Grimmerie, a companion book to the musical. It has a partial script along with interviews from the cast, director, producer, etc. The main source of the scripted dialogue from *Wicked* came from a downloaded copy of the original Broadway cast that I found on the internet. I spent quite some time watching and transcribing the video for exact quotes, scene changes, and ultimately answers to the questions that I posed in my chapter. During the course of writing this thesis, I had the opportunity to watch the Chicago cast perform at the Oriental Theatre. The information garnered in the chapter on *Wicked* is a culmination of these various sources. In addition to these four main texts, I had at my disposal several articles, interviews, and reviews for all three plays that were an invaluable resource. Tracy Tupman's dissertation on Aleister Crowley also provided important and relevant information on Crowley himself and his relationship to theatre.

This thesis is meant to reflect a study that I initiated in which I primarily use Aleister Crowley's concepts of True Will and conscious will along with his concepts of magick to examine the protagonists journey in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, Jose Rivera's *Marisol*, and Steven Schwartz's *Wicked*. My hope at the end is that theatre critics will be able to take this new way of looking not only at these three plays, but be able to use the 'Crowlean lens' as a tool to look at other plays as well.

CHAPTER ONE: ALEISTER CROWLEY

...Magic is an art...which few understand, and many reprehend:...As dogs bark at those they know not; so they condemn and hate the things they understand not...
- Sir Walter Raleigh¹¹

When Aleister Crowley wrote The Book of The Law in 1904 it set into motion the beginnings of a religious society known as Thelema (taken from the Greek, literally means “will”). All of Crowley’s magickal teachings were part and parcel of this religion. The main philosophical idea behind this religion Crowley took from Francois Rabelais in the 16th century in which he wrote about a fictional abbey (Thélème) with the words “Fais ce que tu veux” inscribed on the doorway¹². This translates to “Do what thou wilt,” which Crowley modified and took as his battle cry for his religion and way of life. His modification was a simple attribute, “shall be the whole of the law,” and unfortunately was misunderstood by critics and public alike in later years. Be it by religious prejudice or time and distance, this mantra developed a more negative interpretation. “Do whatever you want without consequence” was ultimately the inference prescribed. Tracy Tupman, who centered her dissertation on Aleister Crowley and his work *The Rites of Eleusis* agrees: “His credo “Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be the Whole of the Law” was interpreted incorrectly as synonymous with the “Do Your Own Thing” mantra of the 1960s.”¹³ In reality, what he was trying to preach was a much more self-centered way of looking at one’s life. She continues:

¹¹ Mebane, John S. Renaissance Magic and the Return of the Golden Age : The Occult Tradition and Marlowe, Jonson, and Shakespeare. New York: University of Nebraska P, 1989. 81.

¹² Pocetto, Alexander. "Rabelais, Francis de Sales and the Abbaye de Thélème." Feb. 1998. Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales. 19 Sept. 2008 <<http://www4.desales.edu/~salesian/resources/articles/english/rabelais.html>>.

¹³ Tupman, Tracy W. "Theatre Magick: Aleister Crowley and the Rites of Eleusis." Dissertation. 7.

The central doctrine of *The Book of the Law*, and the phrase that became synonymous with Crowley, occurs in verse 40: “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.” This is not, as is often believed, a license to do whatever one feels like doing. Rather it is an instruction to each individual to discover their purpose in life and then to follow it... This does not give one license to do whatever one wants to do irregardless of temporal or moral law. It means that within each individual is a True Will, an ability or reason for which they are here on this plane of existence, something which they can do better than anything else. But half the road to success is discovering that “something.” (ibid, 154, 164)

What he meant by this mantra was, in essence, ‘do what your True Will tells you’. The Wiccan rede (the central doctrine of the modern neo-pagan religion) may be a more accurate statement of Crowley’s somewhat vague mantra. It reads “An it harm none, do what ye will”¹⁴. The relationship between the Wiccan religion and Aleister Crowley was discussed in detail by Tupman. I feel that understanding how his philosophies have influenced modern day religions is key when using Crowley’s philosophies.

Crowley’s stature as one of the seminal figures of neo-paganism is challenged by those who reject a misogynist and drug addict as a primary influence... He is condemned as well by a number of contemporary ceremonial magicians, who reject the results of his experiments in astral travel because he incorporated pharmaceuticals into many of his ceremonies and was, in their estimation, “hopped to the gills” while performing them.

These positions denigrating Crowley the man should not, however, dim the

¹⁴ Holland, Eileen. The Wicca Handbook. Boston: Red Wheel/Weiser, 2000. 8.

importance of the contributions he made to neo-pagan thought and practice. While many wiccans may deride Crowley and wish to have nothing to do with him, they still proclaim the Wiccan Rede (written by Gerald Gardner) “An Ye Harm None, Do What Thou Wilt,” not thinking of Crowley’s inevitable opening address on every piece of correspondence or conversation, a phrase from *The Book of the Law*, “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law” (1:40) which predates the Gardner version by fifty years. Crowley’s scholarly works *777*, *The Book of Thoth* and *Magick in Theory and Practice* are widely regarded (even by those who look askance at the author) as essential to any complete neo-pagan library. (ibid 200-201)

Simply, this restates what Crowley wanted those who chose to follow his religion to believe. Crowley and his ‘parishioners’ wanted nothing more than to pursue their True Will without harm to anyone to achieve personal greatness. This concept of harming none will become essential in later chapters.

True Will, Crowley believed, was one’s ‘calling’ in life. It was so important to his philosophy and religion, that when written, ‘True Will,’ is capitalized. Similarly, Christians capitalize Heaven or Buddhists capitalize Nirvana. True Will is in a constant struggle against conscious will (never capitalized). In essence, your life should be about finding the path of one’s True Will and not letting one’s conscious will dictate life. In layman’s terms, it is a battle of the head and the heart. The head (conscious will) is the voice inside you forcing notions of what you ‘think you should do’ into your daily life. Those things that society dictates are right and reasonable. The heart (True Will) is the opposing voice, keeping alive the spirit of what you ‘feel you should do’.

Magick, Crowley felt, was the way to achieve True Will. However, there is no one definition of magick. What Crowley did was to single out a specific definition and then qualify it with a postulate and several concepts following it. For this, he was seen as a spiritual guru and a mad eccentric. He, like so many others, found something that awakened his spirituality. He felt the need to write it down and ritualize his beliefs into a religious practice. In the same fashion, Joseph Smith, was called a heretic after starting his religion, Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Crowley saw something within magick that he was able to connect to, that drove his Wills and aided him to live a better life. One might say that Crowley's True Will was to become a spiritual guide and to teach the world about magick, just as Buddha found the road to enlightenment and wanted to teach his followers the same path. My job is not to criticize the man or his beliefs. I consider myself an archeologist of sorts. I am attempting to find the tools that Crowley used to live his (spiritual) life, analyze them, record them for others, and apply them to current ideas to see how valid his tools are today.

Crowley defines 'magick' by writing: '...it is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will'. However, his illustration of this is somewhat general:

It is my Will to inform the World of certain facts within my knowledge. I therefore take "magical weapons", pen, in, and paper; I write "incantations" – these sentences – in the "magical language" i.e. that which is understood by the people I wish to instruct; I call forth "spirits", such as printers, publishers, booksellers, and so forth, and constrain them to convey my message to those people. The composition and distribution of this book is thus an act of

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by which I cause Changes to take place in conformity with my Will¹⁵ (Crowley xii-xii)

From this, it seems that most things can then be classified as ‘magickal’. However, he continues with the following postulate and illustration:

Postulate: Any required Change may be effected by the application of the proper kind and degree of Force in the proper manner through the proper medium to the proper object.

(Illustration: I wish to prepare an ounce of Chloride of Gold. I must take the right kind of acid, nitro-hydrochloric and no other, in sufficient quantity and of adequate strength, and place it, in a vessel which will not break, leak, or corrode, in a such a manner as will not produce undesirable results, with the necessary quantity of Gold: and so forth. Every Change has its own conditions. In the present state of our knowledge and power some changes are not possible in practice; we cannot cause eclipses, for instance, or transform lead into tin, or create men from mushrooms. But it is theoretically possible to cause in any object any change of which that object is capable by nature; and the conditions are covered by the above postulate.) (Crowley, xiii)

Not only does this alchemical example show the eccentricities of Crowley, but it also shows that nothing is as simple as it seems in his definitions. Therefore, defining ‘magick’ by Crowley’s standards not only must take into account his definitions and his postulates, but it also

¹⁵ He footnotes this by saying: ‘By ‘intentional’ I mean ‘willed’. But even unintentional act so-seeming are not truly so. Thus, breathing is an act of the Will-to-Live.’ Crowley, Aleister. Magick: In Theory and Practice. Secacus, NJ: Castle Books, 1991.

necessitates that we look at his theorems on magick. By looking at a sample without analyzing the whole risks confounding or losing valuable data. Therefore, Crowley's definitions, postulates, and theorems also follow this rule. We must examine the entirety of Crowley's belief system and understand it to fully define magick.

The idea and concepts of magic(k) have been around for thousands of years. If magic is indeed nothing but trickery and illusion, would not the Serpent be a magician to Eve? Then again, would God then not be a magician as well? As the Serpent used trickery to lure Eve into biting of the Forbidden Fruit, then did not God create an illusion in the Garden of Eden, protecting both Adam and Eve from the real world? John Mebane relates Sir Walter Raleigh's views on magic:

Although the name "magic" has sometimes been applied to the practices of witchcraft, the true magician is a servant of God. Magic 'containeth the whole philosophy of nature...that which bringeth to light the inmost virtues, and draweth them out of nature's hidden bosom to human use' (Mebane 81)

Obviously, Raleigh's definition falls more in line with Crowley's definition than the conventional designation of what magic is.

Before I can begin any reasonable discourse on magick in the theatre, I must first establish a framework with which to categorize, contextualize, and understand this magick. First and foremost it is important to understand the difference between magic and magick. These two homonyms are indeed vastly different, but they are not mutually exclusive. As previously stated, if magic is the art of illusion and magick is (according to Crowley) 'the Art and Science of causing change in conformity with will,' there is indeed a slight overlap. David Copperfield has made the Statue of Liberty disappear and reappear; however, the famed statue was never actually

not there, it was an illusion, magic. He did cause change in conformity (the general populous' thought) with his will, but only via illusion. The *reality* of the situation was never fully realized. The magick was a byproduct of magic. By which I mean the Statue of Liberty was never changed, nor did it ever leave Liberty Island. It was magic, illusion. The audience members thought that magick had occurred, that change in conformity had been realized. Unfortunately, it had not. Had it really been changed or the reality of the situation actually been altered, Copperfield might have been in serious legal trouble. He is a magician, not a magikan. What follows then are my findings on Aleister Crowley's concepts of magick. As I explored these theories, I found them to fall naturally into seven categories: (1) The Laws, (2) Man's Course, (3) Man and Nature, (4) Man's Control, (5) The Forces at Work, (6) Placement, and (7) Rights.

For the purposes of this chapter, I will only touch on Crowley's theories with summations. While this cursory look will serve to keep my lens focused intently on the theatre, the appendix of this document lists all of the theories in detail along with my interpretations and commentary. Throughout this thesis these theories will be referred to continuously hence in this Chapter I plan to not only reconcile how Crowley's twenty-eight self-proclaimed theorems on magick apply to his definition as a whole, but also to briefly analyze his theory on theatre, his production values, and how they relate to magick. For convenience, the theories have been footnoted accordingly.

Theorems One – Five: The Laws¹⁶

¹⁶ **1. Every Intentional Act is a Magical Act.**

- By "intentional" I mean "willed". But even unintentional act so-seeming are not truly so. Thus, breathing is an act of the Will-to-Live.

2. Every successful act has conformed to the postulate.

3. Every failure proves that one or more requirements of the postulate have not been fulfilled.

- There may be failure to understand the case; as when a doctor makes a wrong diagnosis, and his treatment injures his patient. There may be failure to apply the right kind of force, as when a rustic tries to blow out an electric light. There may be failure to apply the right degree of force, as when a wrestler has his hold broken. There may be failure to apply the force in the right manner, as when one presents a cheque [sic] at the wrong window of the Bank. There may be failure to employ the correct medium, as when Leonardo da Vinci found his masterpiece fade away. The force may be applied to an unsuitable object, as when one tries to crack a stone, thinking it is a nut.

The first five theorems I feel are to be considered by Crowley as ‘laws’ of a magickal act. I devised this section because Crowley pens in a very specific way. The way in which we look at the law is in black and white terms, in absolutes. In all five theorems Crowley also speaks in absolutes, something I garner is uncommon in his writings. The first three theorems begin with the absolute “every”. This logically negates anything that contradicts these first three theorems. Consider these first three laws as buffers; if the criteria of an act does not meet the first three laws, then the ‘magickalness’ has been deemed null and void. The fourth and fifth theorems are considered requisites for performing a magickal act. Therefore, he is saying that not only does each magickal act have to conform to the first three theorems, but qualifies these three theorems by further requiring the act to prescribe to the requisites in theorems four and five. This has the consequence of significantly narrowing the sample of acts that may be considered ‘magickal’. Consider these first five theorems as locked doors. If a certain state of affairs or ‘magick’ can get past these first five locked doors or concepts, then it is considered ‘magick’. Never does he place blame on a certain physical being or situation for the ‘failure’ of a magickal act, but he leads us to believe that if magick is not performed then it is a combination of several factors, some of which we are powerless to control. In the very basest of forms, what Crowley is saying in each theorem is as follows: A magickal act must be (1) intentional, (2) conform to the postulate [see page 4], (3) failure is due to the requirements of the postulate not being fulfilled, (4)

4. The first requisite for causing any change is thorough qualitative and quantitative understanding of the conditions.

- The most common cause of failure in life is ignorance of one’s on True Will, or of the means by which to fulfill that Will. A man may fancy himself a painter, and waste his life trying to become one; or he may be really a painter, and yet fail to understand and to measure the difficulties peculiar to that career.

5. The second requisite of causing any change is the practical ability to set in right motion the necessary forces.

- A banker may have a perfect grasp of a given situation, yet lack the quality of decision, or the assets, necessary to take advantage of it. (ibid.)

understanding qualitatively and quantitatively the conditions, and (5) the ability to set in motion necessary forces to cause a magickal act.

Theorems Six – Nine: Man’s Course¹⁷

The following four theorems give details on man’s course in life. By defining what magick is to the individual, it helps in understanding how it can be applied to daily life. Most major religions give guidance on how to live each day within the structure of that particular faith. In that same vein, these four theorems dictate daily life and a visualization of the future in Crowley’s faith. Individually these concepts reflect that Man is (6) destined to be his/her own unique person, (7) purposely or not, find their path to enlightenment, (8) mentally differentiate between the heart and the heads desire for greatness, and finally, (9) entertain the notion that the world will support us in some way-shape-form once the true path to enlightenment is found. He calls this a struggle between one’s conscious will (un-capitalized) and one’s True Will (capitalized). The teachings of Thelema, (Crowley’s religion), all motivate a person to let go of their conscious will and find

¹⁷ **6. Every man and every woman is a star.**

- That is to say, every human being is intrinsically an independent individual with his own proper character and proper motion.

7. Every man and every woman has a course, depending partly on the self, and partly on the environment which is natural and necessary for each. Anyone who is forced from his own course, either through not understanding himself, or through external opposition, comes into conflict with the order of the Universe, and suffers accordingly.

- A man may think it his duty to act in a certain way through having made a fancy picture of himself, instead of investigating his actual nature. For example, a woman may make herself miserable of life by thinking that she prefers to love social consideration, or vice versa. One woman may stay with an unsympathetic husband when she would really be happy in an attic with a lover, while another may fool herself into a romantic elopement when her only true pleasure are those of presiding at fashionable functions. Again, a boy’s instinct may tell him to go to sea, while his parents insist on his becoming a doctor. In such a case, he will be both unsuccessful and unhappy in medicine.

8. A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength. He cannot hope to influence his environment efficiently.

- When Civil War rages in a nation, it is in no condition to undertake the invasion of other countries. A man with cancer employs his nourishment alike to his own use and to that of the enemy which is part of himself. He soon fails to resist the pressure of his environment. In practical life, a man who is doing what his conscience tells him to be wrong will do it very clumsily. At first!

9. A man who is doing his True Will has the inertia of the Universe to assist him.

- The first principle of success in evolution is that the individual should be true to his own nature, and at the same time adapt himself to his environment. (ibid.)

True Will. As Buddhists have varying paths to find Nirvana, magick is used to aid in the journey to find True Will. In a sense, Crowley is simply stating what so many have said before him, ‘The road to Enlightenment/Nirvana/Heaven/True Will is not an easy path and the journey should not be taken for granted.’

Theorems Ten – Eleven: Man and Nature¹⁸

One of the first things that students are taught in high-school literature is that there are three basic types of conflict. These are (1) Man v. Society; (2) Man v. Himself; and (3) Man v. Nature. Crowley discusses this final source of conflict (or in his case, the relationship) in theorems ten and eleven. Recounting Raleigh’s quote from page five, “magic ‘containeth the whole philosophy of nature...that which bringeth to light the inmost virtues, and draweth them out of nature’s hidden bosom to human use” (Mebane 81). In essence, Raleigh is saying the closer the relationship between man and nature the stronger grasp man has on magick. Crowley explains to us that Nature is something beyond our comprehension, and although we may think we know how things work within this bizarre matrix, we really have no clue how things relate. Could it be possible that we were not meant to know all the complexities of Nature? We can easily see how Crowley pulled from ancient Buddhist, Hindu, Celtic, and even Native American traditions. A common belief to all of these religions (including Thelema) is that there are

¹⁸ **10. Nature is a continuous phenomenon, through we do not know in all cases how things are connected.**
- Human consciousness depends on the properties of protoplasm, the existence of which depends on innumerable physical conditions peculiar to this planet; and this planet is determined by the mechanical balance of the whole universe of matter. We may then say that our consciousness is causally connected with the remotest galaxies; yet we do not know even how it arises from – or with – the molecular changes in the brain.

11. Science enables us to take advantage of the continuity of Nature by the empirical application of certain principles whose interplay involves different orders of ideas connected with each other in a way behind our present comprehension.
- We are able to light cities by rule-of-thumb methods. We do not know what consciousness is, or how it is connected with muscular action; what electricity is or how it is connected with the machines that generate it; and our methods depend on calculations involving mathematical ideas which have no correspondence in the Universe as we know it. (Footnoted: For instance, “irrational”, “unreal”, and “infinite” expressions.) (ibid.)

mysteries of the Earth of which we do not know. By getting as close to Nature as possible, we will be able to explore its deeper mysteries and find a sense of peace within our proverbial ‘Mother Earth’. He then explores the idea that we may possibly take advantage of Nature without fully understanding its full potential (his example being electricity) and serves as a warning to not take advantage of such power but to respect it and not take for granted its power. Now this example may seem somewhat outdated, but consider the general time frame. Ambrose Bierce wrote in The Devil’s Dictionary in 1911 that electricity was “The power that causes all natural phenomena not known to be caused by something else.” While this publication was meant to be somewhat satirical in nature, I feel it definitely carries some merit. Consider that Crowley published his book with these theorems in it only 18 years later and we get a better understanding of why Crowley chose this example.

Theorems Twelve – Fourteen: Man’s Control¹⁹

¹⁹ **12. Man is ignorant of the nature of his own being and powers. Even his idea of his limitations is based on experience of the past, and every step in his progress extends his empire. There is therefore no reason to assign theoretical limits to what he may be, or to what he may do.**

- A generation ago it was supposed theoretically impossible that man should ever know the chemical composition of the fixed stars. It is known that our senses are adapted to receive only an infinitesimal fraction of the possible rates of vibration. Modern instruments have enabled us to detect some of these suprasensables by indirect methods, and even to use their peculiar qualities in the service of man, as in the case of the rays of Hertz and Rontgen. As Tyndall said, man might at any moment learn to perceive and utilize vibrations of all conceivable and inconceivable kinds. The question of Magick is a question of discovering and employing hitherto unknown forces in nature. We know that they exist, and we cannot doubt the possibility of mental or physical instruments capable of bringing us into relation with them.

13. Every man is more or less aware that his individuality comprises several orders of existence, even when he maintains that his subtler principles are merely symptomatic of the changes in his gross vehicle. A similar order may be assumed to extend throughout nature.

- One does not confuse the pain of a toothache with the decay which causes it. Inanimate objects are sensitive to certain physical forces, such as electrical and thermal conductivity; but neither in us nor in them – so far as we know – is there any direct conscious perception of these forces. Imperceptible influences are therefore associated with all material phenomena; and there is no reason why we should not work upon matter through those subtle energies as we do through their material bases. In fact, we use magnetic force to move iron, and solar radiation to reproduce images.

14. Man is capable of being, and using, anything which he perceives, for everything that he perceives is in a certain sense a part of his being. He may thus subjugate the whole Universe of which he is conscious to his individual Will.

The concept that Man cannot conceive of his own greatness is treacherous ground. If the argument is for the affirmative, we are considered heretics, however if the negative side is argued, we label ourselves ignorant. Crowley simply takes the less damning of these two routes and acknowledges our human fault that we may not be able to conceive of our own greatness and therefore we should strive to then reach beyond our current knowledge. He states that one day there will be instruments to 'bring us into relation' with these unseen forces of Nature. This is the basis of his twelfth theory. Is it not true that we have already achieved some of these goals in the seventy years since his books publication? Scientifically, we can now predict earthquakes, hurricanes, and even tornados with some degree of accuracy. While Crowley may have meant that his relationship goes beyond the scientific and more towards the esoteric, I think that we are still closer to nature. By looking at the Chernobyl tragedy we are able to see that even after a terrible nuclear meltdown, nature still thrives. Overgrown trees, moss, grass, and even animal life are now abundant in the area. Nature's resilience and driving force to grow and sustain life is something that we may have never recognized without such a tragic event. Crowley then goes on to state in the explanation of his twelfth theorem that "...the question of Magick is a question of discovering and employing hitherto unknown forces in nature." If we can examine nature and, for example, employ in ourselves the resilience that nature has in the events of terrible tragedies like Chernobyl, then we are making ourselves stronger both physically and mentally. In so doing, it is his hope that we will become more aware of what our True Will is and hopefully adhere to that individual purpose.

- Man has used the idea of God to dictate his personal conduct, to obtain power over his fellows, to excuse his crimes, and for innumerable other purposes, including that of realizing himself as God. He has used the irrational and unreal conceptions of mathematics to help him in the construction of mechanical devices. He has used his moral force to influence the actions even of wild animals. He has employed poetic genius for political purposes. (ibid.)

As a whole, these theories all group themselves into relating Man to his control over his own life and his control over the Universe. Crowley feels that Man and Nature can relate under the guise of what he refers to 'orders of existence' in theorem thirteen. By relating these principles to Nature, he unifies us with a universal force, demystifying ourselves and the Universe in the process. This is not a new concept, English scholar and mathematician John Dee in the mid 1500's "...believed it was his sacred duty to harness the occult forces of the universe...in order to ameliorate our earthly condition" (Mebane 85). In his fourteenth theorem, he then goes on to say that "Man is capable of being, and using, anything which he perceives, for everything that he perceives...", this argument seems self-centered and egotistical. Objectivity then becomes difficult when a disagreement is so fundamental. I find it difficult to rationalize how we are supposed to connect with Nature on one hand, and attempt to control it on the other. Yes, we do have the power to utilize certain forces of which we may not fully comprehend. But do we dare? Many a scientist has utilized a vaccination with little knowledge of its long-term affects, only to find that they have ultimately caused more damage than originally intended. By attempting to control the intrinsic properties within Nature and the Universe, we are inherently making ourselves greater than what we are attempting to control. This is why I say this theory is egotistical and self-centered. He then goes on to deem mathematics 'irrational and unreal' which goes against my fundamental beliefs. Taken for its face value, I feel that Man can have control over his own life and it is even possible to attain small glimpses of a greater knowledge provided by Nature or the Universe; but to argue that Man can also subjugate the Universe to his own will seems unfathomable and quite frankly, irresponsible. In other words, it is possible to choose to follow True or conscious will, and by utilizing the forces in Nature may provide a helpful indication of what True Will is. To argue, however, that we may have control over Nature,

meaning having control over something that we can only catch glimpses of in passing, is quite unreasonable. If magick is indeed changing conformity with will, I hope that the Universe contains more magick causing us change than the amount of magick on Earth attempting to change the Universe. If the reverse were true, then would it not allude to humans general True Will is to harness and control the Universe? If that is what this is pointing to, it seems that common sense would dictate that this is innately problematic.

Theorems Fifteen – Twenty-One: Forces at Work²⁰

²⁰ **15. Every force in the Universe is capable of being transformed into any other kind of force by using suitable means. There is thus an inexhaustible supply of any particular kind of force that we may need.**

- Heat may be transformed into light and power by using it to drive dynamos. The vibrations of the air may be used to kill men by so ordering them in speech so as to inflame war-like passions. The hallucinations connected with the mysterious energies of sex result in the perpetuation of the species.

16. The application of any given force affects all the orders of being which exist in the object to which it is applied, whichever of those orders is directly affected.

- If I strike a man with a dagger, his consciousness, not his body only, is affected by my act; although the dagger, as such, has no direct relation therewith. Similarly, the power of my thought may so work on the mind of another person as to produce far-reaching physical changes in him, or in others through him.

17. A man may learn to use any force so as to serve any purpose, by taking advantage of the above theorems.

- A man may use a razor to make himself vigilant over his speech, by using it to cut himself whenever he unguardedly utters a chosen word. He may serve the same purpose by resolving that every incident of his life shall remind him of a particular thing, making every impression the starting point of a connected series of thoughts ending in that thing. He might also devote his whole energies to some one particular object, by resolving to do nothing at variance therewith, and to make every act turn to the advantage of that object.

18. He may attract to himself any force of the Universe by making himself a fit receptacle for it, establishing a connection with it, and arranging conditions so that its nature compels it to flow toward him.

- If I want pure water to drink, I dig a well in a place where there is underground water; I prevent it from leaking away; and I arrange to take advantage of water's accordance with the laws of Hydrostatics to fill it.

19. Man's sense of himself as separate from, and opposed to, the Universe is a bar to his conducting its currents. It insulates him.

- A popular leader is most successful when he forgets himself and remembers only "The Cause". Self-seeking engenders jealousies and schisms. When the organs of the body assert their presence other by silent satisfaction, it is a sign they are diseased. The single exception is the organ of reproduction. Yet even in this case its self-assertion bears witness to its dissatisfaction with itself, since it cannot fulfill its function until completed by its counterpart in another organism.

20. Man can only attract and employ the forces for which he is really fitted.

- You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. A true man of science learns from every phenomenon. But Nature is dumb to the hypocrite; for in her there is nothing false.) (Footnote: It is no objection that the hypocrite is himself part of Nature. He is an "endothermic" product, divided against himself, with a tendency to break up. He will see his own qualities everywhere, and thus obtain a radical misconception of phenomena. Most religions of the past have failed by expecting nature to conform with their ideals of proper conduct.)

21. There is no limit to the extent of the relations of any man with the Universe in essence; for as soon as man makes himself one with any idea the means of measurement cease to exist. But his power to utilize that force is limited by his mental power and capacity, and by the circumstances of his human environment.

-When a man falls in love, the whole world becomes, to him, nothing but love boundless and immanent; but his mystical state is not contagious; his fellow-men are either amused or annoyed. He can only extend to others the effect which his love has had upon himself by means of his mental and physical qualities. Thus Catullus, Dante and Swinburne made their

Even though the arguability of Man's control over the Universe may be debated, what cannot be debated is that there are indeed forces at play between Man and the Universe. Though this next group of theories is the largest containing seven concepts on magick, the crux of the set centers on only three. The first of these central theories (sixteen) informs us that all orders of being will be effected even if only one of these orders of being is engaged. In a simplified version, if the Universe is affecting us in a certain way, we need to not only be aware of the direct fashion in which we are being affected, but the indirect as well. In other words, we must learn to identify any magick that is put upon us and how it affects us as a whole. If a toe gets broken, not only will the physical body be affected by this change, but the mental stasis will be affected as well. The act of breaking a toe is independent of the pain that is caused by it, but they are both related. If we are in tune with both what is directly affecting us, but also what is indirectly affecting us, we can become more aware of how these affects will effect our decision to follow our True or conscious Wills.

If Man is not aware of these magickal changes, his orders of being, or the power of the Universe around him, it is a strong possibility that his own lack-of-awareness insulates him from these experiences. This is the premise of Crowley's nineteenth theorem on living magickally. How are we supposed to fully realize the true potential within us or with what surrounds us if we ignore all of the signs pointing to the greatness within ourselves or within our surroundings. We

love a mighty mover of mankind by virtue of their power to put their thoughts on the subject in musical and eloquent language. Again, Cleopatra and other people in authority moulded the fortunes of many other people by allowing love to influence their political actions. The Magician, however well he succeed in making contact with the secret sources of energy in nature, can only use them to the extent permitted by his intellectual and moral qualities. Mohammed's intercourse with Gabriel was only effective because of his statesmanship, soldiership, and the sublimity of his command of Arabic. Hertz's discovery of the rays which we now use for wireless telegraphy was sterile until it reflected through the minds and wills of the people who could take his truth and transmit it to the world of action by means of mechanical and economic instruments. (ibid.)

must have constant vigilance in our search for True Will, then and only then can we fully appreciate it.

The best example of the last central theorem in this group (twenty-one) is embodied by Luke Skywalker from *Star Wars: Episode IV*. As Luke learns to harness The Force he is able to ‘let go’ of the mental obstacles that are blocking him from getting in touch with the nature of the Universe (The Force) through disciplined training. Crowley is simply stating that vis a vis magick, we can unlock potential within ourselves that we had never dreamed prior.

Theorems Twenty-Two – Twenty-Three: Placement²¹

At the Temple of Apollo at Delphi were inscribed the words “Know Thyself”. This somewhat pithy philosophy has been the source of study for millennia. In essence, this is what Crowley is helping to define with this next group of theorems (twenty-two and twenty-three). They both deal with understanding oneself and one’s proper relation within the Universe. Crowley expounds on this ancient philosophy stating that ‘Every individual is essentially sufficient to himself. But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe. This right relation to the Universe can be interpreted as finding one’s True Will. Crowley notes in theorem twenty-three that ‘Magick is the Science of understanding oneself in one’s conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action’. Once one is able to fully understand oneself in one’s surroundings and all of the forces that one is dependant on and the forces that are dependant on oneself then the ability to act in the proper

²¹ **22. Every individual is essentially sufficient to himself. But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe.**

- *A microscope, however perfect, is useless in the hands of savages. A poet, however sublime, must impose himself upon his generation if he is to enjoy (and even to understand) himself, as theoretically should be the case.*

23. Magick is the Science of understanding oneself in one’s conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action.

- *A golf club is intended to move a special ball in a special way in special circumstances. A Niblick should rarely be used on the tee or a brassie under the bank of a bunker. But also, the use of any club demands skill and experience. (ibid.)*

manner to further oneself in one's journey towards one's True Will becomes easier. For example, if an elementary teacher understands her responsibility to keep students safe at all costs is fully understood, then there is no question when the time comes to protect the children from an enraged gunman. True Will (i.e., protection of the students) becomes easier to understand when the application of this True Will is tested.

Theorems Twenty-Four – Twenty-Eight: Rights²²

²² **24. Every man has an indefeasible right to be what he is.**

- *To insist that any one else should comply with one's own standards is to outrage, not only him, but oneself, since both parties are equally born of necessity.*

25. Every man must do Magick each time that he acts or even thinks, since a thought is an internal act whose influence ultimately affects action, though it may not do so at the time.

- *The least gesture causes a change in a man's own body and in the air around him; it disturbs the balance of the entire Universe, and its effects continue eternally throughout all space. Every thought, however swiftly suppressed, has its effect on the mind. It stands as one of the causes of every subsequent thought, and tends to influence every subsequent action.*
(cont'd on next page)

(cont'd from previous page) *A golfer may lose a few yards on his drive, a few more with his second and third, he may lie on the green six bare inches too far from the hole, but the net result of these trifling mishaps is the difference between halving and losing the hole.*

26. Every man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.

- *(Footnote: Men of "criminal nature" are simply at issue with their true Wills. The murderer has the Will to Live; and his will to murder is a false will at variance with his true Will, since he risks death at the hands of Society by obeying his criminal impulse.) A function imperfectly performed injures, not only itself, but everything associated with it. If the heart is afraid to beat for fear of disturbing the liver, the liver is starved for blood and avenges itself on the heart by upsetting digestion, which disorders respiration, on which cardiac welfare depends.*

27. Every man should make Magick the keynote of his life. He should learn its laws and live by them.

- *The Banker should discover the real meaning of his existence, the real motive which led him to choose that profession. He should understand banking as a necessary factor in the economic existence of mankind instead of merely a business whose objects are independent of the general welfare. He should learn to distinguish false values from real, and to act not on accidental fluctuations but on considerations of essential importance. Such a banker will prove himself superior to others; because he will not be an individual limited by transitory things, but a force of Nature, as impersonal, impartial and eternal as gravitation, as patient and irresistible as the tides. His system will not be subject to panic, any more than the law of Inverse Squares is disturbed by elections. He will not be anxious about his affairs because they will not be his; and for that reason he will be able to direct them with the calm, clear-headed confidence of an onlooker, with intelligence unclouded by self-interest, and power unimpaired by passion.*

28. Every man has a right to fulfill his own will without being afraid that it may interfere with that of others; for if he is in his proper place, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him.

- *If a man like Napoleon were actually appointed by destiny to control Europe, he should not be blamed for exercising his rights. To oppose him would be an error. Any one so doing would have made a mistake as to his own destiny, except insofar as it might be necessary for him to learn the lessons of defeat. The sun moves in space without interference. The order of nature provides an orbit for each star. A clash proves that one or the other has strayed from its course. But as to each man that keeps his true course, the more firmly he acts, the less likely others are to get in his way. His example will help them to find their own paths and pursue them. Every man that becomes a Magician helps others to do likewise. The more firmly and surely men move, and the more such action is accepted as the standard of morality, the less will conflict and confusion hamper humanity. (ibid.)*

As in the beginning, the last set of Crowley's theorems speak in absolutes. Like the first three, each one begins with the word 'every'. I consider these to be instructions to us from Crowley on Man's right and necessity to use magick daily. In doing this, it is his goal to instruct us on how to achieve our True Will. Theorem twenty-four states "Every man has an indefeasible right to be what he is". This affirmation is a basic principle that we attempt to instill in our kids today. Who has not heard the phrase "You can be anything you want to when you grow up?" Essentially, that is all Crowley is saying. This ties in quite nicely to the right to self-preservation which is Crowley's theorem twenty-six. If we all have the right to "be who we are" then are we then not allowing ourselves to practice how we feel we will best survive in today's society? This reasoning of self-preservation is addressed in all three plays. This theory is unique in that way. Out of all of Crowley's twenty-eight theorems, it is the only one that I found had true universality. Ultimately, Crowley saw magick within the greater context of his religion, Thelema. The goal of Thelema being, of course, to achieve True Will. However, he did not stop there. Much like the Buddhists and Christians see their religion as a true way of life, this is how Crowley looked on magickal practices. Daily practicing of magick, Crowley theorized, would lead a person to achieve True Will. This of course ties in with the oldest of human instincts, survival. If only the strong do survive, finding ways of self-preservation is key.

The final theory, however, lends itself to a bit of debate. "...For if he is in his proper place, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him." While I do not feel that Crowley meant for this theorem to carry such pomposity, it cannot be ignored. By following this final theorem to the letter, it seems it would lead to a life of greed, self-righteousness, and entitlement.

Conversely, I do understand the concept that if one is in one's 'proper place' and a force (human

or otherwise) blocks one's path there should be an innate need to figure out why it is there and to either confront or move around the proposed obstacle.

Crowley's Contemporaries

It is not hard to see that Crowley was influenced by several philosophers of his day. He takes elements of Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, as well as Buddhist thought and attempts to marry them into a web of concepts he calls his own. Crowley wrote of his own teachings:

I admit that my visions can never mean to other men as much as they do to me. I do not regret this. All I ask is that my results should convince seekers after truth that there is beyond doubt something worth while seeking, attainable by methods more or less like mine. I do not want to father a flock, to be the fetish of fools and fanatics, or the founder of a faith whose followers are content to echo my opinions. I want each man to cut his own way through the jungle.²³

In essence, he is letting us know that the philosophies that he is preaching are simply his own musings. It is up to the individual person's choice to follow him or not. As he so eloquently puts it, "I want each man to cut his own way through the jungle." What Crowley garnered from Kant was the *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge pools. *A priori* being a Transcendental truth, something that one just 'knows' versus *A posteriori*, something more Empirical that must be tested. I feel that Crowley's views on True Will are, as Kant would say, *a priori*. It is something we just know, without question. This is not to say that questioning may not occur when examining our True Will; but it is indeed something that we, even at a subconscious level, know. Schopenhauer speaks of 'wills' very freely. He says that in nature will is manifested in survival

²³ Crowley, Aleister. *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, ch. 66

instincts; something that Crowley also agrees with but instead calls it “self preservation”.

Schopenhauer, like Crowley, feels that reality is full of misery. However what Crowley expresses is more of a Buddhist centered version of reality; that of personal suffering. This is different because the suffering can be ceased by attaining Enlightenment, or as Crowley calls it True Will. From what I garner of Schopenhauer, the misery is eternal. Nietzsche’s idea of the Superman, a person whom achieves the greatest in human potential, is very much in line with Crowley’s True Will centered philosophies.²⁴

Crowley’s Theatrics

While the emphasis up until this point has been Crowley’s views on True Will, conscious will, and magick, I felt it detrimental if I did not at least address his notions of theatre. Again, while this is not the main focus of my thesis, I feel that this section will give a better understanding of how Crowley viewed the theatrical world, and in turn, give a better idea of his philosophical ideologies. In his book, Magick: In Theory and Practice Crowley devotes an entire (albeit small) chapter to what he refers to as ‘Dramatic Rituals’. It must be noted that he speaks only briefly on theatrical theory and concerns himself more with theatrical production values. While this thesis is not production specific, I felt it relevant to note Crowley’s contributions to the field as a whole. In so doing, I hope to enlighten and hopefully clarify the relationship he had between magick and theatre.

The object of [theatre] is almost invariable the invocation of a God, that God conceived in a more or less material and personal fashion. These rituals are

²⁴ This is an extremely cursory view of these theorists and their philosophies. Mannion, James. Essentials of Philosophy: The Basic Concepts of the Worlds Greatest Thinkers. Barnes and Noble: New York, 1996. p. 97-105.

therefore well suited for such persons as are capable of understanding the spirit of
Magick as opposed to the letter. (Crowley 177)

In reading this we must be conscious that these rituals that he speaks on are invariable ceremonial practices, much like the Greeks invoked gods to aid them in their spiritual life. What I find interesting is that he makes no claims that everyone will understand his brand of ritualistic theatre. It is true that the reading of each theorem may entertain the ego. However, Crowley's brand of theatrics may be a hindrance to the audience until the visceral content and spirituality provided not only by the ritual itself but also in the previously listed theorems are felt rather than comprehended. This somewhat elitist view is no more out-of-the-box than a Roman Catholic priest telling an Episcopalian that since he does not truly believe that the bread and the wine have been transubstantiated into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, he cannot fully experience mass to its fullest capacity.

Like in mass, there is a structure to the ritual. Every movement means something specifically and there is a justification behind every action. In the same vein, Crowley describes in detail how 'dramatic rituals' should look and how the rehearsal process should function.

Lengthy speeches and invocations should be avoided, but action should be very full. Such ceremonies should be carefully rehearsed; but in rehearsals care should be taken to omit the climax, which should be studied by the principal character in private. The play should be so arranged that his climax depends on him alone. By this means one prevents the ceremony from becoming mechanical or hackneyed, and the element of surprise assists the lesser characters to get out of themselves at the supreme moment. Following the climax there should always be an

unrehearsed ceremony, an impromptu. The most satisfactory form of this is the dance. In such ceremonies appropriate libations may be freely used. (Crowley 177-8)

It seems that in this process Crowley focuses on the importance of spontaneity. He relishes in the concept that the climax should be seen by no one but the actor (or actors) that are involved in the process and them alone. I feel that this would inhibit some actors but give birth to great moments to others. By having none of the actors see the moment of climax they are experiencing the same reactions that the audience feels and can truly have a natural and unbiased reaction to what action is taking place before them. However, in practical terms I find great fault in this process as well. In today's theatre, it is impossible to have that natural reaction when a show has any more than a single performance. The actors will then know what is coming and will not have the desired reaction that Crowley describes. The audience may hear word-of-mouth what the climax entails through a theatrical review or colleagues and not have the same visceral connection that seems native to Crowley's theatre.

How does this relate to magick, True, and conscious wills? The connection lies in the visceral nature of his productions. Inherent in Epic Theatre and Theatre for Social Change is the base definition of magick, causing change to conformity with Will. If Crowley would have lived even fifty years later, it would not surprise me to see him along side Julian Beck and Judith Malina in *The Brig*, *Frankenstein*, or even a modern day Living Theatre production such as *Not in My Name*. The Living Theatre, as a collective, has made its mission to do Theatre for Social Change. They feel that by producing new works, getting their message heard, and by staying topical to today's social issues, they might incite change in conformity with will, magick.

Through the use of their magickal productions, they see theatre as their True Will. Unfortunately, given Crowley's background in philosophy, various religious studies, and ritualistic practices I feel that his theatre may be out of place in today's standards. As we become a more industrialized society, we inherently lose touch with Nature. Crowley's magick was an attempt to gain that knowledge and that feeling of comfort back, and his brand of theatre did so. I do feel that this thesis may be well timed. There is a burgeoning "New Age" philosophy, and hopefully by researching Aleister Crowley and how his work is relevant today within the theatre, there will be more chances to look to other New Age philosophers and practitioners and try and develop a discourse on their views on theatre as well.

Directive

As I look at *Midsummer*, *Marisol*, and *Wicked* in the following chapters it is important to remember that I am using Crowley's theories as a lens to highlight and possibly contrast characters, plots, and relationships within each play. This lens is simply a way of examining each protagonist and their respective journeys as their stories unfold. Each protagonist, The Lovers in *Midsummer*, Marisol in *Marisol*, and Elphaba in *Wicked* all have a unique story to tell. By examining their actions against Crowley's qualifications of magick, their True and conscious Wills should arise. Each character also has a defining moment in which they either accept their True Will or their conscious will and follow that specific path. Crowley's lens should highlight these actions. *Each* one of these plays will be looked at on an individual basis, and in the conclusion will be a summary of what I have found in each of the following chapters and answering the questions (1) what can be illuminated using this 'Crowlean lens', but also to highlight (2) any universal truths, by which I mean any ideological or philosophical ideas that appear in all three plays, that can be found in works as diverse as the ones that I have chosen. By

examining these two factors I will be able to see if critics have accurately defined these plays.

My goal is to add the 'Crowlean lens' to the already existing approaches to critically examining a theatrical piece.

CHAPTER TWO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has long been a favored work from schoolchildren to critics alike. In this work, Shakespeare melds the worlds of fantasy and reality effortlessly. The word fantasy means "Imagery that is more or less coherent, as in dreams and daydreams, yet unrestricted by reality."²⁵ Crowley feels that if we separate ourselves from the Universe we are then causing harm to ourselves by not getting in touch with all of the possibilities of the world, essentially insulating ourselves from Nature and the Universe. In essence he is stating that by relinquishing our opposition to the Universe theoretically the insulation that keeps reality and fantasy separate may be compromised. If we become 'unrestricted by reality' it is akin to believing that anything is possible. In so doing, we allow ourselves to open up and create a world in which we do not deny our dreams and we strive to achieve them.

In Jonathan Bates' prologue to *Midsummer* he writes the following: "Wood, night, imagination, dream. These are the coordinates of the second form of sight, which is best described as magical thinking" (Bate 365). I feel that Bates has fallen victim to the magic(k) homonym. Remember that magic is centered around illusion, while magick is centered around causing change to occur in stasis. What Bates is more describing here is magickal thinking. Being in touch with nature and exploring and employing the imagination speaks more towards the sentiments of Crowley than of traditional stage magic. Bates refers to the 'second form of sight'; also referred to as 'looking with your third eye'. This tertiary eye is centered just above

²⁵ "fantasy." *The American Heritage® Stedman's Medical Dictionary*. Houghton Mifflin Company. 15 Sep. 2008.

the bridge of the nose, slightly centered, resting on the eyebrow. By using this ‘third eye’ we are able to look beyond the normal and the given circumstances and see a world that rests just beyond our comprehension. Crowley would say that this is the realm of magick. It is not to say that magic does not live there as well. After all, illusion and trickery are in integral part of this story.

Bates continues to describe the world of magick in this story. However, I feel he still persists in the misspelling of magick.

Magical thinking answers a deep human need. It is a way of making sense of things that would otherwise seem painfully arbitrary – things like love and beauty... The very fact of long hours of light itself conferred a kind of magic upon midsummer night. This is the night of the year when magical thinking is given full rein. (Bate 365)

Midsummer Day is considered to be a newer holiday by some who practice a modern form of witchcraft, Wicca.²⁶ Jay L. Halio refers to midsummer as “Traditionally a time of magic, when through dreams and divinations maids might discover the identities of their true loves, it was also associated with festivals and even with madness. Shakespeare underscores the festive aspect of the season by twice associating it with May Day” (qtd. in Berst 23). Like Bates, I feel that Halio might make the most of the clarifications between magic and magick that I have stated previously. As previously stated, magic and magick are not mutually exclusive (see page 5) but are very different. It seems that magick would reveal ‘through dreams and divinations’ rather than magic. Part of understanding magick is getting in touch with one’s subconscious wants and

²⁶ A new holiday adapted by neo-pagans to celebrate the middle of summer. The origins of the holiday originated in Wales where the celebration of midsummer was practiced and is called Gwyl Canol Haf.
<http://www.geocities.com/lavenderwater37/holidays/midsummer.htm>

desires. By understanding these we are able to further understand our True Will. Magic, on the other hand, is simply illusionary. While illusion does play a part in *Midsummer*, it is not the focus of the drama. While May Day is considered to be a different holiday than Midsummer by some Wiccans, it is still considered a holiday. Silver Wolf, in an article on the eight Pagan Sabbats²⁷, or holidays, writes poetically that Beltaine (May Day, traditionally May 1st):

...marks the return of vitality, of passions and hopes consummated. This is the last Spring Fertility Festival. It is time to dance around the Maypole, a symbol of Fertility. It is one of the two most important Sabbats [holidays] of the year. Beltaine is the compliment of Samhain [Halloween]. The Barriers between our world and the next are again blurred. At Samhain the Otherworld visits us, at Beltaine we can visit the Otherworld.

Compared to Litha (Midsummer's Day, Summer Solstice,²⁸ and typically celebrated around the middle of June):

Litha is the Summer Solstice. It marks the longest day of the year. Litha is the classic time for Magick of all kinds... This is a time to celebrate passion and success... The powers of nature are at their highest point. ...Litha Eve is also special for adherents of the Faerie Faith.

Regardless of the exact date in which this play was supposed to take place, as evidenced by both Bate and Wolf both days have significant magickal contexts. What strikes me most about Wolf's description of Beltaine is that she sets it opposite to Halloween (Samhain). When she describes Beltaine as a time in which "we can visit the Otherworld" this speaks directly to *Midsummer*.

²⁷ Available online at http://www.witchvox.com/va/dt_va.html?a=usor&c=holidays&id=11776

²⁸ Summer Solstice changes every year. In the year 2008 the solstice will take place on June, 20th, 2008 and on June 21st in 2009. Almanac, Old Farmer's. The Old Farmer's Almanac 2009. Grand Rapids: Yankee, Incorporated, 2008.

The Lovers venture on a journey that takes them to a different world. It is indeed a time in which, at least in the Pagan tradition, that change can occur in conformity. Litha, as described by Wolf, is a time in which "...the powers of nature are at their highest point..." Crowley is entranced by the coming together of Nature and humanity. In this marriage Nature should awaken base desires and driving forces within us, leading to the further understanding of our True Wills.

I knew that I wanted a classical work that dealt with magic. The reasoning behind this was to find a text that predated Crowley, to see if any of Crowley's theories were able to apply to a show that predates even his own theories. If so, then it could lead to further research by other practitioners to study True Will and conscious will in ancient texts. I will say there was some question in my mind to look at *The Tempest*, after all "No other two plays of Shakespeare's deal so extensively with magic" (Introduction Moorin). These questions were soon assuaged in the sheer familiarity of *Midsummer* as compared to *Tempest*. I had always been attracted to the faeries, the Athenian setting, and the intriguing characters. There were also several questions that I had about the script that I hoped would be answered by using Crowley's lens. For the purposes of this thesis, the lens that I will refer to is taking the journey of the protagonists, in the case of *Midsummer*, *The Lovers*, and seeing if their journey and the decisions they took were magical as defined by Crowley's concepts of magick. This should lead to identifying the characters' moments of defining their True Will and their conscious will and highlighting the choice that each protagonist makes. One of the main questions that I had was 'Why is Demetrius the only one still under a spell?' While Crowley's lens answers this question it also answers other questions when looking at other characters. It is impossible to focus directly on *The Lovers* without at least making a cursory look at Oberon, Theseus, Puck, Titania, and Bottom as well. While they will not be the main focus of this chapter, it is still important to note how these

characters affected *The Lovers* as a whole. For example, using Crowley's lens aided in drawing new parallels between Theseus and Oberon which will be discussed later.

Within the woods of *Midsummer* lies an interesting world of both magic and magick. Magic, as defined before, is nothing more than illusion or trickery. In his thesis on the Dramatic Effectiveness of Magic in *Midsummer* Albert Moorin writes:

Right away we recognize that the boundaries between the natural and the supernatural (or magical) crumble since the nature of the genre automatically causes us to suspend disbelief. In this sense, we accept the fairies, the origin of magic, as fictional personages of the drama just as we accept Bottom or Theseus. Consequently, ordinary events coalesce into an illusionary dream world and extraordinary events become part of everyday experience. (Moorin 2)

It is interesting then that Moorin refers to 'magic' as being supernatural. By definition supernatural means "of or relating to an order of existence beyond the visible observable universe."²⁹ Is this not what Crowley seems to be speaking of when he attempts to ascertain the mysteries of the Universe? Could Moorin be falling victim to the dreaded magic/magick homonym? Possibly, however I would like to take Moorin's argument further by saying that the forest does indeed hold both 'magic' and 'magick' within it. Harkening back to the earlier example on page 5, let us not forget that it is not true that magic and magick cannot coexist. Furthermore, we as observers and audience members are actually able to witness both magic and magick because of the natural objective nature of theatre. For example, though he is not the focus of this chapter turning Bottom into a donkey would most certainly qualify as illusion. However,

²⁹ "Supernatural." Def. 1. [Merriam Webster](#). 11th ed. Merriam-Webster, 2003.

as audience members we are also witness to the magick done by Oberon which will be discussed later. Moorin goes on to write “But even their most supernatural act, the application of juice from the “love-in-idleness” flower, a charm as inexplicable and mysterious as the “instant love” is produces, comes from nature, as all their creations do” (Moorin 3). While illusions and trickery may be abundant, the verity of Nature (The Universe) birthing this place and the creatures within it inherently makes it a vessel that Crowley wishes to tap. If magick is, as Crowley says, a philosophy and guide in which to reach True Will, it is only with the proper understanding of what magick is that the blindfold is lifted off of our face and we can see where the magick in *Midsummer* lies. Magick is nothing more than knowing how and when to apply change in conformity. What is also important is to refer back to the Wiccan rede. As I stated earlier, this would become crucial in understanding Crowley’s True Will and concepts on magick. The key in the Wiccan rede is the preface “An it harm none...” Either intentionally or unintentionally, if applying change causes harm, magick will still have been achieved but at an irresponsible cost. It is akin to driving a car under the influence. One has the power to choose to not create magick under these conditions, but if one does, then one must suffer the consequences.

I have broken down Crowley’s theories, as mentioned in the previous chapter, into seven parings. In this chapter I will attempt to align some of Crowley’s theories within my designated parings to events and relationships within *Midsummer*. The focus of the chapter will center on The Lovers and their story. Of course, In turn, this bears in mind that such characters as Oberon, Puck, Titania, Bottom, Theseus, and Egeus may be given a cursory analysis as well. One of my goals at the end of this chapter will be to utilize the much anticipated ‘Crowlean lens’. What I mean by this is by applying some of Crowley’s theories on magick, I should hope to find various intersections between magick, True and conscious will, and The Lovers and their relative

associates. Also by using Crowley's concepts of magick to highlight True and conscious Wills within *Midsummer*, a new vantage point to examine this masterful work will be created. There are several instances that have been brought to my attention using this technique. Most of Crowley's theorems show significant relevance towards the presentation of magick within this play; there are some of Crowley's concepts, however, that suggest otherwise. My goal is not to persuade, moreso to demonstrate how to use this 'Crowlean lens' to pick out instances of magick that exemplify the tension between True and conscious Will for within this canonical text. In so doing, I have been able to highlight a more intricate web of choices and actions that the characters divulge as the play unfolds. Hopefully this leads both directors and actors to look at these characters in new and exciting ways when next performing this show. Hopefully then, the purpose of this chapter will not only be intellectual, but practical as well.

The Lovers Tale

While the story of *Midsummer* consists of several plot points and overlap between them, for the purposes of this thesis I will be focusing solely on the story of The Lovers. Their story unfolds as Theseus, Ruler of Athens, his wife Hyppolyta, listen to their friend Egeus beg that his daughter Hermia be married to Demetrius. Hermia does have other thoughts in mind and plans to marry Lysander, against her father's wishes. Demetrius, who has prior to the shows opening had relations with Helena, aligns with Egeus and wishes to be married to Hermia. After given the ultimatum of marriage to Demetrius or death, Hermia seeks to run away to the woods that evening with Lysander. Helena, hearing of this plot, tells Demetrius in hopes that this will gain her favors with him. Sadly, it does not. Demetrius pursues Hermia and Lysander to the woods where strange things are afoot. Oberon, King of the Faeries and his wife Titania have been fighting over the rearing of a child. After they argue, Oberon witnesses Demetrius and Helena

arguing. He calls for Puck, his faerie servant to anoint Demetrius' eyes with a flower called 'love-in-idleness'. This flower has the power to make the recipient of its juices fall in love with the first thing it spies. Puck unintentionally anoints Lysander instead of Demetrius. Lysander awakes the following morning to Helena, not Hermia and falls in love with her. After realizing what Puck has done, Oberon orders Puck to remedy the situation. He anoints Demetrius with 'love-in-idleness' causing him to also fall in love with Helena. Helena thinks it is a mockery of her love for him and runs away, being chased by both Lysander and Demetrius. Throughout the course of the night, more chaos ensues between the four lovers. Eventually, Lysander returns to Hermia and Demetrius stays with Helena only to be woken the next morning by Theseus, Hyppolyta, and Egeus. Theseus orders that the couples shall be married and all is well with The Lovers in *Midsummer*.

The Laws of the Land

When examining Crowley's concepts closely, we see that his theorems one through five identify and characterize what I have referred to as the 'laws' pertaining to what is defined as a magickal act. As previously discussed, magick is defined by Crowley as causing change to occur in conformity with Will. His first concept dealing with magick states that "Every Intentional Act is a Magickal Act". While this is a sweepingly broad generalization, he is stating simply that every change that is caused intentionally to the status quo is magick. Within the context of this script there are several events that take place that are, according to Crowley's first theorem, a magickal act. The first event that comes to mind is Oberon's use of the flower 'love-in-idleness' to bring Demetrius round to Helena's pleading and to seek revenge on Titania. This intentional act by Oberon then attempts to fulfill the qualifications of a magickal act by Crowley. According to the previous concept, Oberon is not only (presumably) a master of illusion, making him a

magician, but perhaps he is also a ‘magickian,’ one who is capable of creating change in conformity with Will. However, this magickal act only comes to partial fruition. Oberon ordered Puck to “...anoint [Demetrius’] eyes/but do it when the next thing he espies/May be the lady” (II,i.266-268). However, because Puck anointed Lysander’s eyes and not Demetrius’ – it was not an intentional act by Oberon thereby nullifying Crowley’s first theorem in Oberon’s eyes. This failure of Oberon’s magickal act is what causes chaos to reign in the forest. Going back to the first four words in the Wiccan rede, a phrase that was taken directly from Crowley’s teachings “An it harm none...” Unfortunately, Puck did harm. Not in the traditional sense, but he, being the harbinger of chaos, is the cause of the dysfunction for The Lovers this midsummer’s eve. Just because Oberon did not initiate magick that night, however, does not mean that none took place. Crowley reasons that the “...failure proves that one or more requirements of the postulate have not been fulfilled.” Which of the requirements of the postulate was not fulfilled? The postulate states “Any required Change may be effected by the application of the proper kind and degree of Force (anointing the eyes with drops of ‘love-in-idleness’) in the proper manner (when asleep) through the proper medium (Puck) to the proper object (Demetrius)”. So it is within the last qualifier of the postulate that we see this magickal act fail. Ultimately, the basis of The Lovers struggle throughout the play is dependant on this failed magickal act. One may even go so far as to say that Oberon’s True Will was to aid in The Lovers burgeoning affection by wanting to put the ‘love-in-idleness’ in Demetrius’ eyes, however Puck seemed to foul up this process.

Oberon’s fault was in trusting someone else to carry out his intentions. Unfortunately, Oberon fell victim to the old adage “If you want something done right, you have got to do it yourself.” By choosing Puck as medium to carry out his magickal act the reliability is vastly narrowed. In fact, Robin Goodfellow (Puck’s nom de plume) was seen as a devil spirit and

extremely mischievous until Shakespeare's play entertained the notion that he was more playful (Berst 14). While the magick did initiate from Oberon, the ultimate magickal act stemmed from Puck. His drop was intended as he understood his instructions from Oberon; however vague they may have been. Oberon's lack of proper communication did not lead to the magick that he intended. It is a failed magick attempt in his eyes, but a successful one in Pucks.

Then what The Lovers story tells is of the failing of a magickal act and its effect on those that are involved (Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius, and Helena). With this knowledge, it gives new reason for Oberon and Puck to set things right. While Puck is seen as more of a mischievous sprite, Oberon is still the King, and, although it is never specified in the script, we may assume that he wants to keep peace between the faerie and human world. Therefore he sends Puck to fix the problems caused by love-in-idleness. Directorially, it opens the doors to a varied way of portraying both Puck and Oberon. Instead of it being a game to be watched and enjoyed, the motivation for these characters (Puck and Oberon) could change to sympathize more with The Lovers and to actively want to set things right with their world.

What I find fascinating is that one does not need to be of the faerie realm to initiate a magickal act. It is Theseus who performs one of the final intentional acts of magick within the play. "Egeus, I will overbear your will;/For in the temple, by and by with us,/These couples shall eternally be knit" (IV.i. 173-174). What Theseus has done, which will be discussed in detail later, is to fully accept his True Will by allowing The Lovers to get married. He recognized that the love that these four people shared could not be bound by traditional laws (in fact The Lovers committed a magickal act themselves by intentionally fleeing Athens) and thus he, like Oberon, became a 'magickian' and cast a spell granting them the ability to wed. If intention were the only qualifier for magick, Crowley would have stopped writing at one theorem.

Practically, what this shows is that when we do look at any intentional act within a script that wants to change the status quo of a character, situation, or relationship we should be asking ‘Who is the magickian and why?’ What are their reasons for willing this change to occur? In the case of Oberon, his only explanation is unheard by Helena, ‘Thou shalt fly him and he shall seek thy love’ (II.i. 250). He is attempting to provide a service to a lover’s quarrel, one that is oddly parallel with his situation with Titania. It might be that Oberon empathizes with Demetrius. They both want something from their partners, Oberon desires the changeling child and Demetrius desires Helena’s hand. Oberon knows he has the power to change Demetrius’ situation if not his own, so he decides to act on his momentary compassion. This momentary compassion is Oberon’s True Will. Perchance he already knows that Demetrius’ True Will, which will also be discussed in more detail later, is to be with Helena. The idea of “Who is the magickian anyway” can also be expanded to other plays as well. As Nora slams the door in *A Doll’s House*, isn’t she then following her True Will and not her conscious will?

The Course of True Will Never Did Run Smooth

Examining the first of The Lovers to exhibit a glimpse of her True Will is Hermia. David Marshall sees Hermia “...as a character whom other characters see as a puppet and a mind to be controlled...” (Marshall³⁰ 543) I would not disagree with this statement. However she is one of the first to exhibit outwardly the notion of her individual course, an issue that Crowley holds dear. He even speaks on each person “being a star” meaning that we are all individuals on an individual path. This individual path is presumably what will lead to our True Will. When Theseus coaxes her into choosing Demetrius, her response is short and pointed:

³⁰ Marshall, David. "Exchanging Visions: Reading A Midsummer Night's Dream." *ELH* 49.3 (Autumn 1982) pp. 543-575

Theseus: Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia: So is Lysander.

(I.i.53-54)

The conversation continues, while she stands firm, if not somewhat shaken:

Hermia: I do entreat your grace I am made bold,

I know not by what power I am made bold,

Nor how it may concern my modesty

In such a presence here to plead my thoughts:

But I beseech your grace that I may know

The worse that may befall me in this case

If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

Theseus: Either to die the death or to abjure

Forever the society of man.

(I.i. 60-68)

Such a stance in the latter half of the 16th century (when the show was supposedly penned) was not only very bold but also very dangerous. Merry Wiesner, an authority on early modern European women, writes “Ideas changed somewhat from 1500 to 1750 with the intellectual changes of the Renaissance, the religious reformations of the sixteenth century, and the development of science in the seventeenth century, authorities of all types began to be questioned” (Wiesner 14). In this manner we can see how forthcoming and truly ahead of her time Hermia was. Knowing the consequences of her actions she chose to run off with Lysander to the forest that evening. This brazen move further illustrates her forward thinking and her

bravado to risk her life for love. I feel that this without a doubt shows Hermia's reluctance to be a pawn in her own life and have the authority and gumption to speak her mind. This is Hermia's True Will at its best. Hermia's journey, using Crowley's lens, actually changes very little throughout the play. She knows that her True Will is to be married to Lysander, and ultimately that is what she does. As previously stated, Crowley was entranced with the idea of the individual. In his sixth concept he writes 'Every Man and Woman is a Star' which seems to dictate that we, as individuals, must travel on a completely independent and 'proper' path. This proper path is one in which we are able to follow towards our True Will, similar to Dorothy followed the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City. It is our path to Enlightenment. At first, it seems that this is deviant of what Shakespeare may have intentioned within the confines of this script. Many critics, such as David Marshall, see *Midsummer* demonstrate how humans can be simple marionettes in the grander scheme of love; however as Hermia proved in the aforementioned example, that is not necessarily always the case.

This text can be arguably based on faeries (Nature) meddling in personal lives (essentially saying that man is not in control of his own life); however, I feel that Shakespeare wanted quite the opposite. I feel that what Shakespeare wanted to say (which aligns with Crowley) is that there are forces in our life that we have no control over (things that happen in Nature) however, we are ultimately responsible for our own lives. This goes back to finding our own path to True Will. There may be several obstacles in the way to achieving True Will; and it may never be achieved. It is a person's responsibility to take an active part in his or her own life. Crowley makes no excuses for those that do not follow their True Will. If we become a passive participant in our own life, how can we hope to achieve all that we are capable of? The choices that we make are solely on us, and we must accept any ramifications (positive or negative) that

go along with these decisions. Hermia chose to go against Egeus and is faced with a horrible outcome, so again she chose to run into the forest with Lysander and away from Athens and all of its laws. This is, by Crowley's definition, an 'intentional magickal act'. By following what Crowley referred to as her 'True Will', Hermia caused change to occur in conformity. In so doing, she gains a sense of self with this intentional magickal act, and brings her one step closer to her own personal Enlightenment. While this somewhat existential view of the world is reminiscent of Kierkegaard and his importance of the individual over society; it is important to note that Crowley was not working 'against' society. By allowing everyone to be on their own 'Yellow Brick Road' to find their True Will, there should be limited, if any, crossover or conflicts. We are the carriers of our own destiny, and it is not the fault of others if we fail.

This play, as a whole, relies on what happens when people are thrown from their course by either external or internal opposition. Puck, unfortunately, is the transgressor of these unfortunate events. He may be perceived as the ultimate catalyst for the events that take place in the woods, but he is too a pawn. Oberon, acting as a master of ceremonies, orders Puck to christen the eyes of the man that he shall know "...by the Athenian garments he hath on" (II.i 269). Neither Oberon nor Puck realizes that along with Helena and Demetrius, Hermia and Lysander are in the woods (an external force). Without that knowledge, Puck, Oberon, and all four of the lovers endure a rough night. "Anyone who is forced from his own course, either through not understanding himself, or through external opposition, comes into conflict with the order of the Universe, and suffers accordingly." This direct quote taken from is comically put to use throughout the run of the play. The argument could be made in fact that this theorem underscores the entirety of the play. If we take into consideration that 'the Universe' that Crowley seeks has manifested itself in the forest it is easy to see how this premise of suffering

due to an altered relation to the Universe informs the play. All four lovers suffer from Puck, who suffers from Oberon, who suffers from Titania, who suffers from Bottom, who suffers from Oberon, etc. This endless cycle, comic though it may be, has long lasting effects for everyone involved. From Lysander's lips we find out earlier that Demetrius:

Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul: and she, sweet lady, doets,
Devoutly dotes, doets in idolatry
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.
(I.i. 109-112)

Knowing that not only did Demetrius make love to Helena – but that he ‘won her soul’ tells worlds on their relationship. There must be some connection between these two characters. What Shakespeare meant by ‘soul’ is ‘...the vital, sensitive, or rational principle in plants, animals, and human beings.’³¹ I argue that this vital principle may in fact be Helena and Demetrius’ True Will. Could it be as Crowley says in his eighth theorem that “A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength.”

One of the questions that has always plagued my mind about *Midsummer* was ‘Why was Demetrius still under a spell?’ He was indeed the only one to still be enchanted by ‘love-idleness. Via Crowley, I have been able to devise a brief character analysis of Demetrius that aids in answering this question. This should help other directors, actors, and scholars to better define the character of Demetrius within the context of the play. Demetrius is a man that may be losing his noble credibility. Alexandria Brackett of Roanoke College says “...the love Demetrius

³¹ Onions, C.T. "Soul." Def. 1. A Shakespeare Glossary. Ed. Robert D. Eagleson. Oxford: The Clarendon P. 259.

had for power outweighed his love for Helena” (Brackett 1). Theseus remarks that he has heard of his affair with Helena prior to the story unfolding. I feel that Helena, while she may be of noble blood, may not be of the same pedigree as Hermia. Demetrius may have fallen for Helena but knows that to save his face and that of his family, he must win the heart of Egeus (which Lysander rudely if not comically points out) and that of Hermia. He cannot do this with Helena pursuing him. Demetrius even states “...or rather do I not in plainest truth/Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?” (II.i 204-205) I find this statement to be quite telling into Demetrius’ character. He states that he *cannot* love Helena, which leads me to believe that there is a force preventing him from doing as such. Could it not be possible that the reason that he cannot love Helena is not because of his lack of passion for her, but because he knows he must marry Hermia to save his family’s name? Is he not then, as stated above, a man whose conscious Will is at odds with his True Will? “In many ways, what the night’s activities under the influence of the faeries do is intensify what has already been established under the reasoned and civilized arena of Athens” (Nostbakken 15). It is as if when Puck anoints his eyes and he sees Helena, the blinders and social confines that were forcing his True Will to be subservient to his conscious Will deteriorate and he sees Helena for the woman that he does indeed truly love. This new insight into Demetrius’ character aids in his sympathetic nature. He is not just a man that refuses to accept the accompaniment of another woman. He is indeed a man that is torn between what he should do and what he wants to do. Ultimately he does indeed follow his True Will and marries Helena.

Becoming One with Nature

The relationship between man and nature has been and still is one of harmonious discord. Humans are a parasitic race. We feed off of nature and pollute it; but we are cursed with foresight. We have the unfortunate ability to see our own future destruction and how in an

attempt to preserve nature (and in turn ourselves) we paradoxically give back a fraction of what we destroy. Crowley does not share my somewhat nihilistic view of the relationship between man and nature; rather it seems he focuses on what we have in common with nature, not in the ways in which we are different. His tenth theorem shifts the focus to the interconnectedness of man and nature. He states that “Nature is a continuous phenomenon, through we do not know in all cases how things are connected.” Therefore, with every action regardless of its origin by Nature or by Man, it will affect other actions and decisions even though we may not fully comprehend the causal relationships that tie them together. Oberon’s decision to trick Titania into falling in love with a “...lion, bear, or wolf or bull,/on meddling monkey or on busy ape...” (II.i. 184-185) or whatever else may wake her has then affected the next thing she sees, in this case Bottom, the Weaver. Through a careful analysis of this relationship between Man and Nature, we may be able to unlock the magick that interconnects these two worlds.

Once the Lovers (like Bottom) come out of the forest and are discovered by Theseus, Hyppolyta, and Egeus, their discourse (Demetrius’ in particular) change the minds of the outsiders. While the three elders listen to Lysander’s intent to leave the night before, Egeus, attacks:

Lysander: But, as I think – for truly would I speak,

And now I do bethink me, so it is –

I came with Hermia hither. Our intent

Was to be gone from Athens, where we might be

Without the peril of Athenian law.

Egeus: Enough, enough, my lord. You have enough;

I Beg the law, the law, upon his head. –

They would have stolen away, they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me:
You of your wife and me of my consent,
Of my consent that she should be your wife.
(IV.i.142-152)

It is at instant that Demetrius offers his version of the nights events:

My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood,
And I in fury hither followed them;
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power –
But by some power it is – my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gaud
Which in my childhood I did dote upon.
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betrothed ere I saw Hermia:
But like a sickness did I loathe this food.
But as in health come to my natural taste,
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

(IV.i.153-169)

At this moment Theseus declares that even though he may not completely understand the inter-workings of the night's events, a part of Nature has entered the hearts of the Lovers, and that is something he cannot deny. Theseus is practicing Crowley's concept which centers on uncertainty. He writes "We do not know what consciousness is, or how it is connected with muscular action..." and in the same vein, Theseus may not know why the Lovers have changed their minds nor may he understand exactly why they ran off in the first place; however he does know that something happened. He takes advantage of the love and circumstance that he shares with Hyppolyta and asks the Lovers to join them in a marriage ceremony, resigning himself to the fact that he will hear more on their adventure later:

Theseus: Fair Lovers, you are fortunately met:

Of this discourse we shall hear more anon.

Egeus, I will overbear your will;

For in the temple, by and by with us,

These couples shall eternally be knit.

(IV.i.170-174)

What excites me about this is the knowledge that even though one may not fully comprehend what has transpired (such as Theseus); one is powerless to deny a change when it has occurred. After all, is magick simply not "the Science and Art of causing Change in conformity with Will?" The Lovers then have all been the recipients of change in conformity. Theseus, who also applies change to conformity, once again acts as a magickian changing the laws to appease the will of the young lovers.

“...Hath such force and blessed power...” (IV.i 65)

When Egeus, Hyppolyta, and Theseus find the Lovers, Crowley might suggest that if man feels that he is separate from the Universe, then his own sense of self is an insulator to his Universal awareness. Again, this somewhat existential philosophy falls more in line with Camus or Sartre, “...having people take responsibility for their actions and not to waste time blaming society.”³² When the Lovers wake, Egeus is enraged that Hermia chooses Lysander over Demetrius. His firm words – “I beg the law, the law upon his head” (IV.i.148) – are less than kind. Theseus’ change of heart “These couples shall be eternally knit” (IV.i.174) is purposely made in direct opposition to Egeus wants. When we look at the above concept in relation to Egeus, we see what happens to a man when he is not in touch with the Universe. Egeus is self-involved and has only the defense of the law to justify his actions. He is hiding behind it; ‘insulating himself’ as Crowley might say. Theseus, contrarily, has become in tune with the Universe and has realized that there are more powerful things in the world than the law. In Crowley’s description of this theorem he states “A popular leader is most successful when he forgets himself and remembers only "The Cause". I would say that Theseus exemplifies this remark and it is why we feel that his character is redeemed at the end of the story.

Know Thyself

“Every individual is essentially sufficient to himself.” This concept of Crowley’s is shown by every character in some fashion. Hermia demonstrates her bravado in challenging Athenian authority, Lysander assures himself that Hermia’s love trumps all, and Helena formulates a plan to gain Demetrius’ love, however, I feel that Demetrius is the most self-

³² Mannion, James. Essentials of Philosophy: The Basic Concepts of the Worlds Greatest Thinkers. Barnes and Noble: New York, 1996.

sufficient and self-aware of the four Lovers. He does not buckle under Helena's constant begging nor does he care what might befall him if Lysander and Hermia were to catch wind that he followed them into the woods to break them up. His feelings for Helena have more than likely plagued him since they were together prior to the show's opening. He is indeed the most self-aware of his feelings because he is the one that must keep them in check so that he can outwardly show signs of affection for Hermia. The second part of the theorem states: "But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe." I have seen performances of Demetrius where he is played (at first) as a very unhappy man. This is not only because his bride-to-be has run off with another, but because there is a deeper unhappiness there. Echoing my earlier hypothesis on Demetrius, could it not be that he is unhappy because he knows that if he goes through with this marriage to Hermia, he is damning himself to not only not follow his True Will, but also he is misaligning himself with the 'right relation to the Universe?' This purposeful misalignment eventually fades, and Demetrius finds himself in the 'right relation' when love-in-idleness takes off his blindfold and lets him see his true destiny.

I have already referred to Theseus as a magickian, and it should come as no surprise when I say that he exemplifies what Crowley means when he is stating that magick is both an art and a science, which seems at first a conflict of terms. Examining this seemingly oxymoronic theorem closer, however, it is easy to see how simple this concept is to understand. "Magick is the Science of understanding oneself in one's conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action." The faeries understand the conditions in which the Lovers are in, but do not have the ability to accurately applying the understanding into action. The Mechanicals have the ability to perform greatly, but they lack the audience (the proper conditions). It is only

when Theseus agrees for the Lovers to wed that the faeries understand the true nature of their actions and the Mechanicals have the conditions to perform greatly. The importance of Theseus' role as magickian is just as important as Oberon's. He is indeed the master of his domain and 'applies his understanding' that something magickal happened to The Lovers. We then see the transformation of the world of Athens from a place where magick is absent, into a place magick can live and thrive so long as Theseus is open and willing to acknowledge its existence.

Empowerment

The audience learns, along with Theseus and Egeus via the Lovers that Crowley's concept "Every man has an indefeasible right to be what he is" has merit. This simple sentence speaks volumes on the theme carried forth with the Lovers in *Midsummer*. The sole reason that Hermia and Lysander fled was for the fact they knew that what they were doing was not only necessary, but it was indeed their right. In the 21st century, parents are still struggling with the same issues that Egeus and Theseus struggled with; things such as letting people live their own lives, having their own problems, and working their own issues out for themselves are struggles that every parent and elder must deal with at some point in their lives. The more that a parent, guardian, or supervisor tries and forces others into one's own will, the faster they will come to the realization (parallel to Lysander and Hermia) that they do not have to live by one's rules.

Hermia and Lysander fled to the woods because they know that the cost of returning would be death. Some will argue they fled for love (and I do not disagree) but I think the overarching reason that they fled was for two simple words: self preservation. It is a base instinct that drives us all. It is so innately engrained in us; one could argue that it is one of man's primal instincts. Along with eating and sleeping, it is probably one of the instincts we hold over most from our time in Nature. Darwin bases his whole theory of evolution on the idea of self-

preservation, so why not Crowley as well? This is the basis for theorem twenty-six. “Every man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.” What is interesting is that Crowley calls it a right. In other words, we cannot be faulted for self-preservation tactics. Could this be another reason why Theseus granted the Lovers acquittal? Helena pursues Demetrius in the woods for love, but moreover, again, for self preservation. She and Demetrius and have already been intimate; perhaps she is with child? It is never stated as such in the script, but it is not out of the realm of possibilities. For a woman to raise a child out of wedlock even to this day is still looked upon with some disdain. We know that both couples do indeed love each other and promise to each other that they will be together to take care of each other for the rest of their days. What more proof does one need of self-preservation than that?

The use of magic within *Midsummer* has never been denied. Illusion and trickery are just one of the multitude of themes this play centers around. We are forced into a world of faeries, modified Grecian mythology, and the harmony and discord that can be found between Nature and Man. Fascinatingly; I have found that in writing this chapter I have been exposed to a deeper level of not only magic, but magick as well in this play; more than what I was originally aware.

In this Chapter I have used Crowley to examine The Lovers and their relative associates. Each character has their own way in which they manifest magick. The magick does not lie strictly with the faeries, but in the Athenians as well. For years I did not understand why Demetrius was the only character that was left ‘under a spell’. Now I have learned that it is not that he is under a spell, but the spell has been lifted off of him and he is free to carry out his True Will. I realize now that Theseus is more like Oberon than I had first realized, and that they are both powerful magickians in their own right. Bottom has become a conduit for expressing (or rather, the inability to express) the feelings and emotions that are associated with magick and

things that we may not fully be able to understand or explain. Hermia's strong willed nature proves that there is risk involved in following True Will, but a life lived risk free is not a life lived at all. Helena's pursuance of Demetrius is a constant reminder of the power of self-preservation. Lysander's confession of love to Hermia and then to Theseus, Egeus, and Hyppolyta the morning after remind us that an honest love is truly magickal, and there is no explaining how or why it happened – just that it exists. Like Demetrius, I have found that I enjoyed this play in the past with blinders on. As 'love-in-idleness' took the blinders off of Demetrius, Crowley's theories have taken my blinders as well. My goal with this chapter was to take Crowley's concepts of True Will and conscious will and its relationship to The Lovers in *Midsummer* and hopefully to illuminate the characters choices leading up to their breaking point in which they must ask themselves "Do I follow my True Will, or my conscious will?" Eventually, all four Lovers do indeed follow their True Will and they reap the rewards for their perilous night in the woods.

CHAPTER THREE: MARISOL

J. Chris Westgate writes of *Marisol* “The New York City represented within *Marisol* is governed, literally and figuratively, by an ethos of exclusionary violence against anyone regarded as being out of place,”³³ *Marisol* Perez included. This ‘out-of-place’ ideology is similar to Crowley’s feelings on spirituality. *Marisol*’s life has been led entirely by her conscious will. She then is awakened (both literally and figuratively) one day to realize that what she thought was her True Will was in fact her conscious will, and she is now lost and out of place in this new world. Crowley feels that by following his teachings and philosophies on magick and wills, then the uncertainty felt by the degenerates will turn into certainty, and the violence will end. Once *Marisol* does realize her True Will, to lead others to revolt against a vengeful God, her self-sacrifice is the catalyst for the ending of bloodshed. This is similar to both *Hermia* and *Demetrius* from the previous chapter. We learned that as *Hermia* and *Demetrius* found and followed their True Will, their salvation was realized; *Hermia* for standing strong against the laws of Athens and *Demetrius* for letting go of societal standards.

Crowley saw magick as a practical approach to realize the teachings of Thelema (achieving True Will). He felt that magick should be used in daily life, as much as prayer or meditation is considered a way of life in other eastern and western religions. It is therefore impossible for me to ignore religion when speaking on Crowley and magick. Knowing this, I felt that I had to choose a work that was not only known for its religiosity, but its ‘magicalness’ as well. While *Marisol* does host a plethora of other various themes, homelessness, war, and

³³ Westgate, J. Chris. "Toward a Rhetoric of Sociospatial Theatre: Jose Rivera's *Marisol*." *Theatre Journal* 59 (2007): 29.

prejudice upon the first read the religious overtones is what stood out to me. I felt that these were important themes and I was interested to see how Crowley's ideas would align or mis-align with this show's religious overtones. I will examine the play as a whole to see how the religious nature of this script reacts with or against Crowley's concepts True Will and conscious will and the concepts set forth by his descriptions of magick. Jose Rivera freely admits that he "...drew inspiration from the magic-realist tradition in Latin American literature as well as the dramatic work of Federico Garcia Lorca, Calderon de la Barca, and American pop culture..."³⁴ *Marisol* by Jose Rivera was a natural fit. Robert Brustein summed up what I feel is an accurate description of the setting and feel of the play:

The city [New York] has become a kind of celestial Vietnam with
God and the angels in mortal combat, and with all surviving
civilians forced to spy for one side or the other (Brustein 30)

In this play, the moon has been lost for nine months and we find Marisol Perez's guardian angel informing her that she is leaving to fight a war against a senile God. Along with her two friends, Lenny and June, Marisol must find her True Will in this crazed world of 'magical realism' that Rivera has created both for the reader and audience member alike. I plan through the course of this chapter to shed light on the religious nature of this play using Crowley's lens to highlight (and possibly obscure) the journey that the three main characters take to on their path to find their True Will.

Have Faith

³⁴ Svich, Caridad. "'An Urgent Voice for Our Times'. An Interview with Jose Rivera." Contemporary Theatre Review 14 (2004): 83.

As with Shakespeare, Rivera has a dual nature about his writings. In the Foreword to Marisol and Other Plays, Tina Landau has several choice words that are very apropos to this chapter. “I saw the city as Jose does...a glimpse of both heaven and hell, cloud and metal, the magic of the celestial and the odyssey of the earth-bound” (Landau ix). It is this marriage of the celestial and the ‘earth-bound’ that I find fascinating about *Marisol*. It is truly an odyssey that Marisol, June, and Lenny travel. Over the course of one’s life, it can be argued that life will take several odysseys. More often than not, the experience and knowledge is gained on the journey, and not the destination. Marisol’s odyssey is filled with near-death experiences and personal tragedies. Landau eloquently concludes in her Foreword : “I would say it all comes down to something as simple – and complex – as Faith” (Landau xiii). Through all of the hardships that Marisol faced, it was her faith that I feel kept her strong. It was the knowledge that she would not let her conscious will ‘win’ aided by her perseverance to fulfill her True Will.

Not only is faith a theme throughout *Marisol* but it is also a deeply intrinsic value that Crowley holds dear in Thelema. Have Faith, not only in the Universe but in oneself and one’s own destiny. God is only a figment of human imagination. In no other species do they rely on faith or God. Humans need that spiritual connection with an outside force to make themselves feel whole. Marisol constantly begs for answers from God, and when her guardian angel leaves her, she is devastated by this news. However, she perseveres because she has faith in herself that she will (1) Find her best friend June, (2) Attempt to figure out what happened to her world, (3) and ultimately fight alongside the battlefield with the angels. Crowley would say that it is her faith that brought her to her final destination, to realize her True Will and set things right with the world.

Odysseys

Throughout the play, Marisol's personal odyssey is a search for answers. The angel has alluded to what her True Will is "And that is what you have to do, Marisol. You have to fight... You can't *endure* anymore. You can't trust luck or prayer or mercy or other people....so get yourself some *power*, Marisol, whatever you do" (italics in original, Rivera 17). Such as in the case of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, Marisol cannot be told what her True Will is, she must discover it for herself. Therefore, she does not understand yet what her True Will is, so she hopes that through constant questioning she will be able to fully realize her destiny. Śākyamuni, otherwise known as Buddha, shares a similar path as Marisol, at least in part. The legend goes that he was constantly questioning how to attain Enlightenment, and no one could answer the question for him. He then sat down by a bodhi tree and vowed not to get up until he had found the Truth. In a similar vein, Marisol's constant questioning does not answer specifically how she will find her True Will. It is a philosophical realization she must discover on her own.

After fending off an attacker on a subway and a bizarre celestial dream, Marisol is relieved to find friend and confidant June at work, and follows June home. Here Marisol encounters June's brother, Lenny. Lenny's overt attraction to Marisol leaves her feeling both uncomfortable and vulnerable; feelings that she was trying to escape by being with June. As the protagonist of the play, we see the world through Marisol's eyes. She is unsure of why reports of her dying due to a subway attack are on the radio, newspaper, and television. As far as she knows, her guardian angel saved her from it. She questions why the angels are leaving their posts, and what the ramifications with a war on God are. Marisol's journey, however bizarre it may be, is still relatable to the audience. Like her, we are on a constant quest to find out True Will. Crowley feels that by utilizing his theorems for magick, we will be able to reach that goal. Unfortunately, Marisol does not have this list so she must rely solely on her instincts to see her

through. We become passengers on this ride to further find out what is happening with the war in Heaven, and to ultimately get home – the only place in which she feels safe. Once there, she will be able to fulfill her True Will (self-sacrifice) and save humanity.

When we first meet June, she has just heard news that a ‘Marisol Perez’ was found dead after an attack on a subway train and she is expectantly concerned. She then, however, quickly angers against the attacker “Fucking barbarian beat her with a *golf club*... Like a caveman kills its *dinner*, fucking freak.” She continues later with her rant, telling Marisol “There’s a prevailing sickness out there... You gotta be prepared to really *fight* now” (italics in original, Rivera 19-20). Ironically, when June tells Marisol to ‘fight now,’ she is referring to the degradation on the streets. However, it echoes what Marisol’s guardian angel has told her the night before, to fight in a war on Heaven. After realizing that it must be another Marisol Perez that was found dead, June is relieved and consoles her friend. She is seen as the only salvation for Marisol after her guardian angel departs. Her attitude towards her invalid brother Lenny is both nurturing and domineering. She sees him as both a man below societal standards which gives her cause to verbally abuse him, but she also knows that they are, above all, family and must ultimately look after each other. June’s character is one of severe opposites. Her conscious will is driving her to degrade the homeless and lash out against the ‘barbarians’ and ‘freaks’ (her brother included), while her True Will seems more maternal and caring. This brief insight into June’s character can be seen throughout the first act. She is compassionate to Marisol, but has issues with the plight of the homeless and her brother Lenny. These issues are glimpses of her conscious will and its ongoing fight with her True Will, that of a friend and confidant to Marisol. and as a caregiver (though mildly abusive) to her brother, Lenny.

As intense as it is bizarre, Lenny's journey stands out as the most perplexing. We find out that, like the archetype of an idiot savant, he knows that the world is in trouble, only no one believes him. According to Lenny, he died and was brought back to life with a message: "...I returned to the living to warn the world that big changes are coming... I've been warning people for years but no one believes me" (Rivera 29). Combine this knowledge with his unyielding love for Marisol and we have a further glimpse into Lenny's True and conscious wills. One possibility is that he has been told prior to the play (perhaps by June) that in life, boy meets girl, they fall in love, and have a child. June admits that Lenny has developed feelings for Marisol over the past two years due to June's constant chatter. If indeed he does have the mental capacity of a child as June says, then Lenny's 'conscious will' is also that of a child leaving him to literally believe his sisters steps to a better life. After a near death experience, he realizes his True Will, which for someone with the mental capacity of a child must bring great questioning. He feels that an angel was sent and give him the above message, and with such a child's mind as he has, that is all he can think of. Kids typically seem to have one-track minds, perhaps because of Lenny's post-death awakening, he could be considered to have a two-track mind. His conscious will is telling him to focus on living a blissful life with Marisol, while his True Will is telling him to let the world know of impending doom.

"...and I wouldn't recognize the world..." (Rivera 42)

At the beginning of Act II we realize that the world has shifted. Rivera comments on it in his stage directions saying "On this street, reality has been altered – and this new reality is reflected in the lighting" (Rivera 41). The first person Marisol encounters is The Woman With Furs, (who ultimately kills Marisol) and in a brief but harried exchange Marisol comes to the realization that her angel was right. "It's what she [the angel] said would happen, isn't it? She

said she'd drop her wings of peace...and I wouldn't recognize the world..." (Rivera 42).

Through their discourse it is evident that The Woman With Furs has had the same encounter with her guardian angel as well. All of the guardian angels of the world have ripped off their wings and waged war against God, because of this act a new world has been created. Marisol has now become our guide through this bizarre land. We are on the search with her for the possibly extinct June, and as Marisol laments "...I have to...I have to...reclaim what I know: I need June. Where's June? Brooklyn. South. I gotta go south, find my friend, and restore her broken mind" (Rivera 42).

I feel that the answer to the bizarre world shift from Act I to Act II is because this has become a world overrun by conscious will, and not Free Will. Could it not be possible that the guardian angels of the world kept the Universe in balance by acting solely on their conscious will? Conscious will is, after all, a life lead by what one 'should' do, rather than what one 'wants' to do. While the angels are acting within their conscious will in a state of quasi-servitude, humans have always been able to act on their Free Will. When God created human kind, he granted them the ability to choose a.k.a. Free Will (in accordance with most Christian beliefs). Angels, on the other hand, did not have this choice. When examining Crowley's concepts of True Will and conscious, is it not easy to see that Free Will is then the ability to choose to follow one's True Will or one's conscious will? Traditional Christian belief then begs the question "Could it not be possible for only one of Gods master races (angels and humans) to have the privilege of Free Will (a.k.a. the ability to choose between True and conscious will)?" Breaking down for a moment Marisol's guardian angel, we find out that she is purposefully and willingly able to leave her 'conscious will,' meaning her job as sentinel to Marisol Perez. When the angel then leads the rebellion against Heaven, she 'chooses' to fight against God. This lends credit to the theory that

suddenly angels had Free Will. Free Will, as described above, is the ability to choose to follow either one's True or conscious Will. Perhaps one of the reasons that the angel is able to do this is because the angel realizes that God is aging, and perhaps the command over the angles that He once had is now faltering. If indeed all of the guardian angels are now agents of Free Will, and God were only able to make one of his master races able to use Free Will it then follows that if angels started living by Free Will then it is humans that would then revert to living exclusively by their conscious will.

In Act II, we in fact do see a takeover by all of humanity's conscious will. June's conscious will of degrading the lower class, as seen in Act I, has transformed her into a vengeful and dangerous skinhead. Lenny's love for Marisol has made a mother out of him. Recounting what June may have possibly told him in his childhood (fall in love, get married, and have a baby) Lenny is indeed pregnant with Marisol's child. His miraculous conception is a product of his mind. Thanks to his sisters steps to a better life, he is literally (consciously) willing himself to become pregnant. "For days and days all I did was think about you and think about you and the more I thought about you, the bigger I got!" (Rivera 59). Marisol's longing for answers (and Brooklyn) has brought her to one final conclusion: She must, as her angel (and June) have said, fight. In this bizarre world in which conscious will reigns, Marisol is beginning to awaken to her True Will. By fighting she brings this world, in which conscious will has ruled, back into stasis.

Devil's Advocate

Every man and every woman has a course, depending partly on the self, and partly on the environment which is natural and necessary for each. Anyone who is forced from his own course, either through not understanding himself, or through external opposition,

comes into conflict with the order of the Universe, and suffers accordingly. (Crowley XIV)

This is Crowley's seventh theorem on magick and I find it somewhat contradictory to the message of *Marisol*. By dissecting this theorem and looking at Lenny, June, and Marisol in Act II, we shall see that both Lenny and June fall victim to this theory, however Marisol does not. Lenny and June's course in Act II is dictated (as Crowley says above) '...partly on the self and partly on the environment...' Lenny's pregnancy and June's neo-nazi transformations are examples of this. The environment in which they are living is ruled by their conscious wills. June's desire for social cleansing and Lenny's desire to have a child therefore manifest itself within this world. The second half of this theorem dictates either by not understanding oneself or through external forces if one is tangent of one's course (True Will) then one will suffer accordingly. I feel that both Lenny and June do not fully understand themselves and their suffering is to live out their conscious wills, that of a skinhead and a pregnant man. This philosophy is reminiscent of Schopenhauer "...if we do not satisfy our desires, frustration and pain increase...we are well aware of our rampaging will and suffer from that knowledge" (Mannion 102). Lenny and June are clearly suffering from their conscious wills and might, as Schopenhauer suggests, be aware of their suffering. Combine this with Nietzsche's 'Superman' ideal of living to one's highest potential and it is easy to see where Crowley gets his ideas of doing the best you can for yourself; in essence, finding True Will. If left to live life by our conscious will, we are inherently not living up to our potential, leaving us in suffering. This is why it is imperative that people must live their life according to their True Will. Marisol, however, does not fall victim to following her conscious will. as stated earlier, her conscious will

is to "...reclaim what I know" (Rivera 42). As stated earlier, as Lenny and June (and the rest of society) are falling victim to their conscious wills, Marisol is awakening her True Will. She must, in essence, find a way to return to the world of Act I and destroy the world of Act II. She is in fact 'in conflict with the order of the Universe' for no other reason than existing in this 'conscious will world'. She alone is realizing her True Will and she must return the Universe back to its original state. Her suffering therefore comes not from being in opposition to the Universe, but comes from trying to put the Universe back into stasis again, going against what Crowley's theory states.

Back to Reality

Throughout the play Lenny is seen as someone who is a-little-left-of-center, and even into Act II, Marisol does not believe that he is pregnant until their baby is stillborn. Marisol, comes to realize that he was telling the truth, and in burying their child – it leads her June's home in Brooklyn. Throughout this entire play it seems that Marisol is searching. If her part of her True Will is to 'reclaim what she knows' then she is diligently on the search for it. She travels to different parts of New York searching for something familiar, a figurative home where she feels comfortable. She does not know the world in which she is living and does not recognize many of the people in it. Could it also be her job to bring them figuratively home as well? To help others in their search to find out what is right in this post-apocalyptic New York City. She has finally 'broken-through' to Lenny and comforts him not only in his loss as a mother/father but also in the fact that there is someone in the world who trusts what he says is true. In so doing, she becomes both a catalyst and a receiver for Lenny to fully realize his True Will. After he buries his child, both his True Will and his conscious will have been realized. He falls asleep only to wake once when his sister comes in. He apologizes to her for all of the bad deeds he has done.

With that he has now been absolved of all of his sins, he has let go of his conscious will (giving birth) and his True Will (trustworthiness) and can now live the rest of his life in peace. His sister, whom we find out is a skinhead and has been burning bodies in Central Park, takes a bit more convincing.

June presumably goes missing at the end of Act I. The implication is that Lenny may have harmed her with a golf club. After the entombment of their child late in Act II, Marisol and Lenny are discovered by June. June has also strayed drastically from her True Will, just as Lenny did. Her attitude towards the indigent people of New York has led her to become a skinhead. Marisol then tries to break through to June, who cannot stop ranting about how she and her followers will clean up New York. The longer June and Marisol converse, the more June starts to remember. Rivera even alludes to something similar in his stage directions: "...the prolonged and violent contact with Marisol's body has started to awaken June's memory" (Rivera 64). When it does awaken June's memory of her True Will, she can only respond "I can't understand these nightmares I'm having..." (Rivera 65). Again we see Marisol acting as a catalyst for the re-awakening of June. Like Lenny and even Demetrius (see page 29) June has been freed of the bonds of her conscious will, now she only has to focus on fulfilling her True Will. As discussed earlier, this is due to the fact that Marisol's conscious will is to be opposed to the Universe ('...to reclaim what I know') and in doing this, she liberates both Lenny and June.

The last fight that Marisol must fulfill is the fight that ends her life. "June, Lenny...don't you guys worry...I have a clear vision for us. I know what I want to do...We're going to find the angels...And then we're going to join them. Then we're going to fight with the angels" (Rivera 65). She has succeeded in fulfilling Crowley's eighth theorem on magick. "A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength. He cannot hope to influence

his environment efficiently.” Her conscious and True Will are finally aligned, and she now knows how to effectively ‘influence her environment’ – and that is to fight.

I am unclear if Marisol knows that she will be killed for her actions against God. The Woman With Furs acts as a messenger of the machine that is Heaven’s army. When Marisol asks her “...Unless you want to join us- [in the fight against God]” (Rivera 66) she is asking for God’s own army to turn against Him. I think that Marisol’s question to The Woman With Furs is an honest attempt at starting a revolution and it is unacceptable in the eyes of God. Marisol is beginning to fully realize that her True Will is as the angel and June have told her “to fight” and to not only reclaim what she knows, but to aid others in reclaiming what they know. Remember, this world has been turned upside down because the angels have chosen to fight in a war on God. By them choosing another will (their True Will) than the one that God has prescribed (to protect humans) they are practicing Free Will; a privilege that God only gave to humans. Because of this, humans have been relegated back to the position that the angels once held, to live only by their conscious wills. Marisol realizes that by fighting and helping others reclaim their Free Will it will restore the world to its previous state.

Crowley’s twelfth theorem speaks on man being “...ignorant of the nature of his own being and powers...” which is apparent in final moments of *Marisol*. It is not until The Woman With Furs guns down Marisol does a homeless man (a representation of this bizarre world) along with June and Lenny fight against Heaven. Marisol was indeed ignorant of her powers. She was able to align both her True Will and her conscious will and in that moment she had the clarity of mind to fight against God. In an ironic sense, she was crucified as Jesus was for the sins of others. People of that world not only remember her death, but also the reason that she died and continue her unfinished fight, leading humans and angels to victory against God. While there are several

themes that run throughout the script, the religious nature of this piece cannot be stated enough. As Tina Landau said in the foreword to the play, it all comes down to faith. Faith that Marisol will find June and Lenny, faith that the angels will win the war on God, and faith that the world will be returned to its stasis before the war on Heaven began.

Intention

One of the first intentional acts that we hear spoken of is when The Man With Golf Club announces to Marisol that his guardian angel has left him. This announcement serves not only as a warning to an unknowing Marisol but also to inform us (the audience and the reader alike) that in this world that Rivera has created, angels themselves have the power of Free Will. According to traditional Christian beliefs, angels lack this uniquely human trait. The only angel that successfully utilized free will was Lucifer in his rebellion against God. He was then cast out along with a third of the angels and archangels in heaven (those who followed in Lucifer's rebellion) to live a cursed life. This obvious parallel within *Marisol* leaves the audience member to question the role of guardian angels. If angels really do protect us, as the angel does Marisol Perez, we are left with the question that Marisol's angel so blithely answers:

At last count, one plane crash, one collapsed elevator, one
massacre at the hands of a right-wing fanatic with an Uzi, and
sixty-six-thousand-six hundred-and-three separate sexual assaults
never happened because of me" (Rivera 15).

It is human nature to question "What if?" and the angel provides a morbidly realistic answer. The angel is letting us know that not only has it purposely and intentionally (magickally) intervened a sum total of 666 times within Marisol's life but that she is also willing to bring to a close her

designated post and take up another. The magickal intention behind this changing of the guard is presumably to fight the greater fight. In a parallel manner, this is the same intention that Marisol makes when she dies for the same cause.

Marisol's guardian angel tells her in a dreamt-conversation that "You have to fight. You can't endure anymore. You can't trust luck or prayer or mercy or other people...so get yourself some *power*, Marisol, whatever you do" (italics in original, Rivera 17). As stated previously, this is her True Will. However, the difference between telling someone to fight and the process of self-discovery that person goes through to realize that they must fight are vastly differing. In the plays closing, we find that Marisol does indeed discover the need to find her inner strength and fights. It costs her life, but because of her final intentional magickal act others start fighting against Heaven as well. Rivera poetically describes the scene after Marisol's death: "...then as if one body, one mind, the innocent of the earth take to the streets with anything they can find-rocks, sticks, screams-and aim their displeasure at the senile sky and fire into the tattered wind on the side of the angels..." (Rivera 68). As I have stated earlier, I feel that this is a conscious will driven world, where the power of Free Will should not exist. Could the massive collective awakening of the general populous' True Wills be the final intentional magickal act that we can assume the omniscient God was not foreseeing? It is what ultimately gives birth to the new world and offers, as the closing line of the play suggests "What hope" (Rivera 68). This hope is indeed a message that must be looked at. It is the hope that the world that has been turned around and due to one person realizing their True Will (Marisol), it lead to "...billions of poor, of homeless, of peaceful, of silent of angry...fighting and fighting as no species has ever fought before" (Rivera 68). This awakening of the masses caused God to lose his Heavenly war, and in so doing the world was able to return to normalcy. This hope is exactly what Crowley wished for the

followers of his religion. He wanted the masses to achieve their personal greatness and live a happy and fulfilled life.

Self-less Preservation

Self-preservation is an instinct that is familiar to all of us. It is a base impulse that keeps all animals on a daily fight-for-life. Humankind, however, is the only animal that is conscious of its own instincts. Crowley states in theorem twenty-six that “Every man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.” The act of self-preservation is, indeed, a personally selfish act but it can also be a very selfless act as well. The guardian angels of the world, following Marisol’s angel’s convincing, lay down their jobs and their lives to ‘fulfill themselves to the utmost.’ Many of them know that sacrifice is necessary for the greater survival of the species and to preserve the old way of life. However, in so doing they will be able to “...restore the vitality of the universe with His blood” (Rivera 16). The angels are selflessly giving over their lives, as Marisol does, so that “Men and women will be elevated to a higher order. All children will speak Latin. And Creation will finally be perfect” (Rivera 16). By re-creating creation, the angels (hypothetically) will be able to fix all of the mistakes that God made the first time around, such as original sin. Marisol’s selfless act of martyrdom is the catalyst for the final front against God. Because of her sacrifice, the world was able to break free of their conscious will driven lives and attained the privilege of Free Will. They then all chose to follow their True Will, and follow the message given to them (presumably) by all of their guardian angels and fight against Heaven.

This situation is not far removed from *Midsummer Nights Dream*. All four lovers ultimately run into the forest for self-preservation. They know that the world in which they are living in (Athens) is chaotic and does not suit them. So, they fight against it. In forcing Theseus

to recognize their love, they have preserved themselves not only in the eyes of the law, but for possible future generations. As the angels were able to fix all of the mistakes that God had made, The Lovers were able to change Theseus' mind and he was able to fix his own mistakes. Theseus' selfless action gained him favors with both The Lovers and Hyppolyta. Puck himself address the audience at the end selflessly asking "If we shadows have offended, / Think but this and all is mended (V,i, 393-394). In this, Puck is saving himself from humiliation and possibly victimization from the crowd if they were offended at what they had just seen.

In the end, perchance it comes from having faith in oneself or one's own destiny that sparks such a strong need for self preservation. Crowley felt that by following his 'Twenty-Eight Commandments' to magick, then the possibility of attaining a fulfilling life having a fully realized True Will was possible. Marisol's death, then, is oddly cathartic. We must have a sense that the hell that she has gone through meant something. Her struggle must not have been in vain. She may have lost her life, but she has preserved an entire way of life in the process. Although the title character may have died, this play is about salvation. This concept was not lost on Crowley either, being he the son of a minister. Through Crowley's lens I have been able to discover three main themes within this show; faith, salvation, and self preservation. The inevitable moral of the story then is this: faith in True Will leads to self preservation, which leads us ultimately to find salvation.

CHAPTER FOUR: WICKED

A confession must be made before reading any further into this chapter. In many ways, *Wicked* was the inspiration for this thesis. I remember reading the book by Gregory Maguire in 2002 and then watching it unfold on live television on the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade a year later. I remember thinking 'This is something special'. I was one of the few around who had read the book, and the following day I purchased the soundtrack. Years later, I come back to this musical for my thesis for several reasons. I feel that not only will it aid in my illumination of Crowley's ideas of magick within theatre, but also serve as an opposing bookend to *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. In Chapter Two and Three Crowley's theories both highlighted and conflicted varying themes in *Midsummer* and *Marisol*. I was hoping for the same with *Wicked* and was not disappointed. I felt the need to compare both modern and historic plays so that if any universality existed between these shows, these genres, and Crowley's theories (which will be discussed later) they would be revealed. As Crowley's theories highlighted *Marisol*'s religious nature of magick and *Midsummer* reflected the mélange between Nature and Man, *Wicked* centers itself on the path to True Will. While this can be applied to both Shakespeare and Rivera's stories, I feel that this show embodies that concept to an extreme.

The challenge then became a matter of information, or lack thereof. As of the time this thesis is published, the official script for *Wicked* has not been released. Relying on The Grimmerie (*Wicked*'s companion book published in 2005), attending a Chicago performance in March of 2008, the soundtrack, and an unofficial copy of the original Broadway production that was downloaded from the internet, I laboriously pieced together a full script. As in past chapters, enlightening the reader to a new underlying form of magick and illuminating the protagonists'

tension between True and conscious will is paramount. Much like Chapter Two, I am unable to speak solely on Elphaba (the main protagonist) without a cursory analysis of other characters as well. These include her lover, Fiyero, her father, The Wizard, her sister, Nessarose, her tutor, Dr. Dillamond, and her best friend, Glinda.

Gregory Maguire's book takes a classic tale, *The Wizard of Oz*, and by retelling the story from the Wicked Witch of the West's point of view, changes nature of relationships between all of the main characters. The book tells of the hardships and challenges of being born green. How this affects Elphaba, the future Wicked Witch of the West, is very intricate. It influences everything from her political motivations to her relations with men. Maguire said that he came up with the moniker by taking the beginning of each name in 'Lyman Frank Baum', *The Wizard of Oz*'s original author. Shortened, this became El-pha-ba, or Elphie as she is sometimes referred. While the book was charged with both adult and heavy political content, the musical takes a more lighthearted approach. When Steven Schwartz approached Maguire about writing the musical Maguire's response was "...as long as the fundamental questions about behavior, appearance, deception, honesty and courage were represented, then I was happy" (Cote 22). Like Schwartz, I will attempt to address these fundamental questions and make Maguire happy.

When researching this musical, I also found a quote that struck a cord within me:

Wicked explores the nature of good and evil and allows us to understand how politics, history, and circumstance conspire to create misplaced labels – and how those labels distort the way we view the past and inform the way we approach the future. (Cote 9)

In addition to the aforementioned topics, I would like to address the issue that resonates the strongest with me and that is labels. I feel that it is a subject on which everyone can relate. The reason being that most of us, at some point in our lives, have had a label either put on us or that we have put upon ourselves. Crowley might say that by redefining one's labels, one is redefining Wills, conscious or True. Theseus changed his label from a harsh ruler to a benevolent one after granting The Lovers marriage in *Midsummer* and June's self imposed Skinhead label in *Marisol* both serve this Crowlean philosophy.

In my research, I did not find quotes from either Shakespeare or Rivera on what they felt was important in their plays; however, with *Wicked* consider myself blessed to have that knowledge. By dissecting this show into the areas that I feel Maguire (and myself) cherish, it allows me the opportunity to use Crowley's lens to look directly at what the author deemed important. By examining behavior, appearance, deception, honesty, courage, and labels throughout the script, I hope to bring to the reader a better understanding of the unintentional but seemingly obvious parallels and sharp contrasts between Crowley's handiwork and the creation of Winne Holzman (script writer) Steven Schwartz (composer-lyricist) and Marc Platt (producer), the triumvirate who guided *Wicked* to the show we know today.

The Land of Oz

Wicked is difficult to discuss in a critical analysis without proper knowledge of the script. I will do my best to provide a framework within this paper to establish proper context. Having that said, due to the nature of the multiple storylines, love triangles, and the fact that the script is not published, I feel that a brief overview is necessary. The main focus of this summary is of the main protagonist's journey throughout the script. While other storylines do exist, they are not as relevant as the journey that Elphaba takes. Hopefully the following cursory glance will serve as a

foundation for the framework in the rest of the chapter. The story tells of Elphaba (The Wicked Witch of the West) from her birth to ultimate demise. Born out of an affair, her father was a drifter (whom we find out is The Wizard of Oz). Elphaba's sister, Nessarose (The Wicked Witch of the East) is also born different; she does not have the use of her legs and is wheelchair bound. It is on their first day of school that we meet the majority of the key characters within the show. Madame Morrible (soon to be the Wizard's press secretary) is currently the headmistress and sees to the special training of gifted students. After a botched rooming assignment, Elphaba finds herself living with Glinda (The Good Witch of the North). The two men fawning after Galena's heart are Fiyero, the quintessential 'Big Man On Campus' and Boq, an eager Munchkinland native who is comparatively lower on the totem pole. Galena pawns Boq off on Nessarose and continues a relationship with Fiyero long after school has ended. Mme. Morrible realizing both Glinda and Elphaba's powers takes them both to see The Wizard of Oz. They quickly discover that the Wizard and Mme. Morrible are not as genuine as they first appear, and the ladies go their separate ways. While Glinda is enamored of Fiyero, he harbors feelings for Elphaba. Elphaba meanwhile has gone in exile to seek the downfall of the Wizard; of whom she is still unaware is her father. This is because the Wizard's deep seated prejudice against Animals. Animals (capitalized) are creatures living in the land of Oz that have gained the ability of speech. Dr. Dillamond, Elphaba's favored teacher at Shiz University is one of these Animals, along with The Cowardly Lion. Elphaba becomes a protector of Animal rights and attempts to bring to an end the violence towards Animals, of which The Wizard is leading the charge. Eventually, Fiyero leaves Glinda and finds Elphaba, and with their love is rekindled, they are discovered by Glinda. Seeking vengeance, Glinda tells the Wizard and Mme. Morrible to use Elphaba's sister (Nessarose) to root out Elphaba. Mme. Morrible creates the famous tornado which ends the life

of Nessarose, brings Dorothy to Oz, and ultimately leads to the death of Elphaba. She then returns to Munchkinland to see her sisters' dead body and to retrieve the slippers that Elphaba enchanted to give her the ability to walk. Fiyero enters and as a crowd gathers around him he attempts to defend Elphaba. The crowd overtakes him and places him on a wooden stake in a corn field. Elphaba flies back to her castle in time to turn Fiyero into The Scarecrow. Just prior to her death, Elphaba reconnects with Glinda and they both realize that after a lifetime together, throughout their fights, they still remain friends and that they have each changed each other for good. During the last moments of the song we also find out that Elphaba is not really dead. It was an illusion that she melted and Fiyero comes to rescue her. They presumably live out their days happy and in exile from Oz.

Are You a Good Witch, or A Bad Witch?

As stated earlier, the first question that Maguire wanted to keep constant from the book to the musical was "behavior". To further inspect these behaviors, I have used Crowley's theorems and filtered several examples hoping that something significant would arise. My goal in looking at behavior through Crowley is to examine if there is a correlation between the two. If indeed True Will is us achieving our personal greatness, then it should follow that our behavior should mimic this philosophy. First, I needed a basis for determining what behavior is. According to Merriam-Webster, behavior is defined as "the response of an individual, group, or species to its environment"³⁵. Taking this into account, one of the first prominent times that we see a recurring behavior (an individual responding to [her] environment) is within Elphaba herself. She was instructed to keep constant vigilance over her sister; and throughout the course of the play – that

³⁵ "Behavior." Def. 1C. Merriam Webster. 11th ed. Merriam-Webster, 2003.

is exactly what she does. When Madame Morrible attempts to wheel Nessarose to a differing dorm room than the one assigned on the first day of school, not only do we see a glimpse of Elphaba's true powers, but moreover we see the compassion that she has for her sister. This compassion, I feel, is just one example of what Maguire was talking about when he refers to 'behavior'.

The environment is unfamiliar to both Elphaba and Nessarose, and with Mme. Morrible adding to the unpleasanties, the combined surroundings become a catalyst for Elphaba's sudden discharge of power. If Crowley is right in saying "Magick is the Science of understanding oneself in one's conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action." Elphaba knows in this case how to deal with her conditions (surroundings). Her compassion drives her outburst. With a point of her finger and some intense (but direct) words "Let her go!" Elphaba is able to stop Morrible in her tracks while Nessa's chair automatically wheels back to the awaiting arms of her sister. Her behavior has then aligned with Crowley's definition of magick. Elphaba 'understood herself in her conditions'. She realized that she was told by her father to look after her sister at all costs. When she casts the spell she is 'applying that understanding in action' and by Crowley's definition her behavior is indeed magick.

After coming to the realization that The Wizard wanted to use Elphaba for personal gain she sings her call to action (and arguably the most famous song from the show) "Defying Gravity". She knows that much to her chagrin, she will never be a part of the environment in which she was raised. Having been ostracized by most of Oz, she now understands that to live her life the way in which she wants, she must be proactive and initiate the proper behavior.

Glinda pleads with Elphaba in the beginning of the song:

Glinda: You can still be with the Wizard, what you've hoped and waited for. You can have all you ever wanted -

Elphaba: No. I don't want it – I can't want it, anymore.

Elphaba knows that the path that she is headed on is not the right one. The Wizard has promised her everything she has ever wanted, but at too high a cost. Elphaba will not allow herself to become a pawn in something that she does not believe in. She has just found out that The Wizard is championing a cause in which she is fighting against. The Animals (monkeys) according to The Wizard wanted to be more independent, so Elphaba gave them wings. Instead, The Wizard plans to use the winged monkeys as his own personal spies across Oz. This is something that Elphaba cannot tolerate. Reaching back to discussions in both the *Midsummer* and *Marisol* chapters, if she were to stay with the Wizard, it would be her conscious, not her True Will that she would follow. Her conscious will has always wanted to align herself with greatness, and the greatest man in Oz is The Wizard. However, her True Will will not allow such a falsity. At this moment her behavior dictates the rest of her life. There is an anonymous verse that might better explain Elphaba's dilemma:

Sow a thought, and you reap an act;

Sow an act, and you reap a habit;

Sow a habit, and you reap a character;

Sow a character, and you reap a destiny (Anonymous)

By Elphaba changing her thoughts and actions to better align with her True Will she is creating within herself the seeds to her destiny. She realizes that it is 'time to trust her instincts' (i.e. her True Will) and follow the (literal) higher ground to be the woman she knows that she can be.

Inadvertently following her True Will she trusts that her behavior in the past has been wrong and the forthcoming changes to it will be right. She sings in her opening lines ‘I’m through with playing by the rules of someone else’s game’ this motivating shift leads to a manifesto of sorts that Elphaba will live her life by. ‘I’m through accepting limits / ‘cause someone says they’re so / some things I cannot change / but till I try, I’ll never know’. This new behavior echoes a sentiment in Crowley’s theories almost perfectly.

Crowley speaks on the limits within our own selves in relation to the Universe. He states “Man’s sense of himself as separate from, and opposed to, the Universe is a bar to his conducting its currents. It insulates him³⁶.” Elphaba can be seen as being in opposition to the Universe up until this point. She has been trying to fit into a box in which she does not fit. She is the quintessential round peg in a square hole. The people of Oz have not accepted her behavior so far and they certainly have chastised her appearance more than once. Her only option then, is to oppose society. Elphaba’s change in behavior then is a direct result of her mindset shifting. She starts to own her contrary place in society. Aligning herself as such, she is inherently aligning with chaos. This has been argued to be the natural order of the Universe. If so then, Elphaba, who is no longer insulated changes her behavior and in the process is able to again channel Crowley’s “There is no limit to the extent of the relations of any man with the Universe...his power to utilize that force is limited by his mental power and capacity, and by the circumstances of his human environment.”

Prior to this, Elphaba has already let go of her mental capacity that ‘insulated her’; When she sings ‘Something has changed within me / something is not the same’ that is the moment that she recognizes that she has freed herself from her own mental and social barriers, allowing

³⁶ In Crowley’s writings; he uses the masculine pronoun.

herself to utilize the ‘circumstances of [her current] human environment’ and enchant the broom to help her fly. In so doing, her behavior has become markedly different than when we first meet her. Instead of seeing her green skin as a detriment, she now sees it as an advantage. Her response to her environment (behavior) was to change her lifestyle by owning her estrangement, all the while inadvertently aligning herself with Crowley on two theorems.

Glinda, The Good Witch of the North, poses the questions “Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?” Subtextually, she really asks “Are people pre-determined to behave in a certain manner? Or is their behavior determined by the choices they make?” Perhaps it is, as Crowley might say, our wills that determine our behavior. Either magick may light the path of True Will or conscious will may still clutter life with unnecessary behavior. Without getting into a true philosophical debate, it is my personal belief that people are not born evil as Thomas Hobbes thought, but I consider myself more of a scribe of John Locke’s ‘tabula rasa’ theory – that everyone is born with a blank slate and one makes their own marks upon it. I feel that both Crowley and Elphaba would agree. It is up to us to recognize improper behavior patterns within ourselves and to fix them as needed. In essence, I agree moreso with Glinda’s second question, however the Darwinist in me feels that a case for genetic predisposition cannot be ignored. If this is true, then I feel that these two ideas (1) tabula rasa and (2) genetic predisposition fit well within the margins of this show and coincide well with the questions on behavior posed by Glinda. In one of Elphaba’s final songs “No Good Deed” she further discusses her own behavior and how she will ultimately change it and find her True Will.

The saying ‘No Good Deed Goes Unpunished’ means: “Life is so unfair that one is more likely to get into some sort of trouble than be rewarded if one attempts to do a good deed...”³⁷ As

Elphaba sings she objectively and scientifically examines her entire life’s work:

One question haunts and hurts
Too much, too much to mention
Was I really seeking good
Or just seeking attention?
Is that all good deeds are
When looked at with an ice-cold eye?
If that’s all good deeds are
Maybe that’s the reason why...
No good deed goes unpunished...

She is questioning her behavior – something that is familiar to most of us. Within these lyrics lie the seeds of Elphaba’s True Will. Her entire life her behavior has been focused on ‘fitting in’ with others, her green skin being a natural obstacle. Her True Will is one that opposes society and when she realizes that she has found her correct course, she sees the world in a new light. If good deeds are nothing more than selfish acts to boost egos, then why do them? People long to feel better about themselves and in doing ‘proper behavior’ it may be a temporary fix for a larger need. We must ask ourselves, as Elphaba does, to look at the situation ‘with an ice-cold eye’. Who is the ultimate benefactor? It becomes hard not to agree with her sentiment. Ultimately, good deeds (behavior) can be seen as a selfish act.

³⁷ Titelman, Gregory. “No Good Deed Goes Unpunished” Random House Dictionary of America's Popular Proverbs. New York: Random House, Incorporated, 2000.

Throughout the entirety of the show, Elphaba's conscious will drives her to be seen in a more favorable light by conforming to proper behavior and binding her to the idea that she must save and protect. Nessarose pleaded with Elphaba to save Boq's life by correcting a botched spell that Nessarose's performed directed at him. The only way that Elphaba could save the Munchkin Nessa both dotes on and controls, is by turning Boq into the Tin Man. This transformation was not looked on favorably by either her sister or the new Tin Man, Boq. Instead of being grateful for his life, Boq and Nessarose's behavior drives Elphaba further away from society. Elphaba realizes that her behavior thus far has dictated a life of good deeds, and this had gotten her nothing but heartache and death threats. She has no other choice then, to change her behavior and become "wicked".

Tint Adjustment

Although Crowley states nothing specifically about appearance in any of his theorems, I feel that it is necessary and should be discussed within the context of the show. Not only because it is the second of the five questions that Maguire wanted to keep constant from book to musical, but also because in the land of Oz appearances are almost never what they seem. L. Frank Baum filled his books with characters and places that seem purposely to go against the natural perception of the reader.

The Emerald City is considered to be the most glorified place in Oz. However, appearances can be deceiving. According to Michael C. Riley, author of the book Oz and Beyond: The Fantasy World of L. Frank Baum, one theory is that the walls of The Emerald City are green, but the buildings are not. It was explained that upon entering the city guests had to don green glasses to avoid blindness. Really, the wearing of the glasses was to make everything appear green. Understandably, it is the first place that Elphaba feels as home. Is it not ironic then

that this world that she feels at home in is based on illusion and magic? In reality, no one in The Emerald City is green (save her), and according to Riley neither are the buildings. As Demetrius took off his blinders and opened his eyes to his True Will in *Midsummer* when he was kissed with ‘love-in-idleness’, Elphaba has put on her blinders (emerald glasses) skewing her path to her True Will. Unfortunately, she does not realize that by putting these on she has lulled herself into a false sense of reality. In a sense, her accepting magic has impaired her ability to follow her True Will. The illusion and trickery that the Emerald City is based on (including The Wizard himself) is ultimately cause for alarm and a hindrance to her achieving her True Will.

She relishes in confidence and acceptance moments before going into Wizmania (a Broadway style revue) with Glinda “I want to remember this moment...always. Nobody’s staring, nobody’s pointing...for the first time I am somewhere where I belong.” This sentiment speaks to the fickle nature of finding the correct path in life. What this shows is that even though we may be on the path to our True Will, there are several situations that may lull us into a false sense of belonging. This false sense of belonging will inevitably cause us delay on our path to True Will. It is akin to taking the wrong fork in the road. Sometimes backtracking is needed to return to the correct path. As an audience member, we embrace her confidence and join with Elphaba in celebrating a place where she can feel at home. She has fallen victim to the magic of The Emerald City. Critically speaking, we already know the end of the story. The last reference point that most have of the Wicked Witch of the West and The Emerald City is when Maragret Hamilton circled around the city and wrote “Surrender Dorothy!” in the 1939 movie. So then we ask ourselves, how does one who is so enamored of The Emerald City and of The Wizard change paths so drastically? Crowley would say “Magick, of course”. If magick is indeed as Crowley states a tool to aid on one’s path to True Will, then what magick must have happened to take the

emerald glasses off of Elphaba (i.e. breaking the illusion of magic), and like Demetrius – was awaked to her True Will? The answer is transformations. While Elphaba facilitates several transformations throughout the show, the most intriguing one is with her love, Fiyero. Each transformation gradually leads her down the path to her True Will and away from what she thought was the correct path.

Fiyero's transformation into the Scarecrow is in part due to his long standing love for Elphaba. This love ultimately saves them both in the end. After Dorothy has thrown the bucket of water on Elphaba, what is traditionally meant to be the death of the Wicked Witch of the West, we find out that Elphaba did not melt; she just performed a bit of magic or illusion. Come to find out, she just disappeared through a hole in the ground. Fiyero then comes to save her. She has not seen him since her transformation of him. At first, she is obviously taken aback by his appearance, but he reassures her that he is fine. "Go ahead – touch. You did the best you could. You saved my life." However, in transforming Fiyero she ultimately proves Crowley wrong. His definition of magick states simply that it is 'the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will' and Elphaba is able to bring about change to Fiyero without proper (qualitative and quantitative) understanding of specific conditions with which he is faced, this in itself is the first requisite for causing change. Elphaba states within the song "No Good Deed": 'What good is this chanting? / I don't even know what I'm reading / I don't even know what trick I have to try / Fiyero where are you? / Already dead or bleeding?' She does not know where the target of her magick (Fiyero) is, she does not know what the words in the Grimmerie mean, and she does not know what spell would most accurately help him because she has no idea what has been done to him. Even with all of this data unknown, she is still ultimately able to spare his life by casting a spell that ultimately turns him into the Scarecrow. Thanks to Elphaba, we see

that change can occur without fully knowing all of the information that Crowley dictates. What this suggests is that the power of magick may lie beyond even what Crowley comprehends. Could it be possible that even though Crowley was attempting to quantify and script lessons and qualifiers of magick, that because of its grandeur and mystery, there are ways of producing magick that Crowley could not have conceived? If ever there was a case for the affirmative, it is the aforementioned one.

Fiyero has changed, but he is still the same person with the same ambitions. Via this magickal act we see that Elphaba has tried to help those whom she cares about with mixed results. She finally comes to the realization that in order to live the life she wants, death (or the appearance of it) is inevitable.

(Dis)Honesty in Oz

The third and fourth questions that Maguire addresses I feel need to be discussed in tandem. To talk about honesty without speaking on its counterpart, deception is, well – deceptive. As the previous section alluded to, appearance is one deception that reigns supreme within the land of Oz. What I find most fascinating, however, is the relationship between deception and honesty within several of the characters. If one is not being honest with themselves, then one is living life by a will other than one's True Will.

Out of all of the characters in this thesis from all three shows, there are only two characters that I feel clearly do not attain their True Will. The first being Egeus in *Midsummer* (see Chapter One) and the second is Nessarose. For that reason, I feel it imperative to show what when a person follows their conscious will and ignore their True Will. When Elphaba and Nessa's father died, he left his gubernatorial status to Nessa. She has been placed in a very sad and precarious position. At this point, everyone in Nessa's life has disappeared. The passing of

her father, along with the ostracization of Elphaba by all of Oz cause her fears of abandonment grow steadily. Nessa is unfortunately a prime example of Crowley's theorem eight gone awry. "A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength. He cannot hope to influence his environment efficiently." Her conscious will (the need for people around her to feel safe) is causing her to hold all of Munchkinland captive, Boq included. She is deceived in thinking that she must force people around her to feel safe. Remember that Elphaba is forced to turn Boq into the Tin Man after Nessa botches a spell to make Boq fall in love with her. After Elphaba turns Boq into the Tin Man Nessa then rejects Boq ultimately making herself a slave to her self-imposed abandonment. The audience never finds out if Nessa was ever honest with herself about her possible unconscious abandonment issues, but the closest I think she comes is when she was singing to Elphaba prior to getting the use of her legs:

All of my life I, I depended on you
How do you think that feels?
All of my life, I've depended on you
And this hideous chair with wheels
Scrounging for scraps of pity to pick up
And longing to kick up
My heels...

Elphaba is able to grant what her sister so desperately wants. Unfortunately, this leads to more abandonment for her sister. Once she has the use of her legs, Boq feels that he does not have to be her slave and is ultimately transformed by Elphaba and flees Munchkinland and Nessa. Ironically, this charitable act of imbuing her sister's shoes with magickal powers leads to

Elphaba's ultimate illusionary death. I feel that Nessa would say that her self-deception of force-filling her life with others was not worth the ultimate heartache. Who knows where her True Will would have taken her had she not been blinded by her conscious will. We never find out what happens to her after this moment, except that The Wicked Witch of the East was ultimately killed by a little girl from Kansas.

Courage v. Crowley

Random House defines courage as "...the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery."³⁸ If this is the case, then *Wicked* has courage in spades. What strikes me about being courageous is anyone can become brave at any time in their lives. They may not always think through all of the possible outcomes, but they know what must be done and some are willing to take that risk. Some might say that knowing everything about a situation causes a person to not be courageous. Knowing too much about a given situation affects one's judgment and one's decision making skills. For example, in *Wicked* Elphaba's goat-professor, Dr. Dillamond is visibly shaken when someone writes "Animals should be seen and not heard" on his chalkboard. He knows that the bigger picture involves the de-humanization of all the Animals, including him. He futilely asks "Who is responsible for this? I'm waiting?" he then bows his head and mutters "class dismissed." It seems that he is already aware of the growing plot against the Animals in Oz. Ironically, Elphaba attempts to comfort Dr. Dillamond and tells him that The Wizard can help. Unbeknownst to either of them at this point, The Wizard and Mme. Morrible are behind these attacks on the Animals of Oz. Elphaba has the blessing of naïveté in her favor, unlike Dr. Dillamond, who seems to be jaded by the current events.

³⁸ "Courage." Def. 1. Random House Dictionary. Random House, 2005.

This sentiment by Elphaba seems to go directly against Crowley's fourth theorem, "The first requisite for causing any change is thorough qualitative and quantitative understanding of the conditions." In this case Crowley's theories on magick seem to obscure the intention of the story. Dr. Dillamond is very familiar with both the 'qualitative and quantitative conditions' that surround this dispute in Oz and has shied away from the situation because of it. It is as if Dr. Dillamond and Elphaba represent the classic psychological dichotomy of 'fight or flight'. Perhaps the reason that Elphaba is able to 'fight' is because of her not understanding all of the conditions that are surrounding this issue. Looking at the aforementioned example of Fiyero changing into the Scarecrow (page 70) it is easy to see how change occurred without a fully developed idea of the 'qualitative and quantitative understanding of the conditions'. Courage has the ability to transform a coward to a hero in the blink of an eye, it is an internal change that Crowley did not acknowledge but is no less magickal than any of the concepts that he has penned.

Wonderful and Wicked Wills

The last topic I wish to discuss in *Wicked* is not an issue that Maguire stated directly that he wanted to keep in the translation from book to musical, but it is something that I feel cannot go unspoken of when writing critically on this musical, and that is the issue of labels. We have the innately human ability to not only label others, but also label ourselves. This label may act as a magnifying glass to our innermost wants and desires or it may act as a facade to hide our true directives and motivations. Once labeled, we have two choices, either accept or reject the label. Some have called this acceptance 'owning the term'. Crowley might argue that a label is nothing more than an outward admittance of one's Wills. Mislabeling causes not only harm to the ones

that are labeled, but also it may affect the way in which one sees oneself, inherently changing their Will.

The reason in which we are able to identify and empathize with Elphaba is that even though she is labeled ‘wicked’ and ‘evil’ we see that she has people’s (and Animals) best interests at heart. We are watching the story unfold from her subject position. Inevitably we sympathize with all of her decisions. It is her path to True Will we are watching unfold. Just as The Lovers and Marisol struggled with what they were supposed to do with their life, we witness Elphaba go through that same struggle. She is portrayed as a victim of those seeking power, attention, and a dictatory way of life. In a somewhat humorous but ultimately ironic scene, Dr. Dillamond asks his class who knows what a scapegoat is. Elphaba raises her hand while no one else speaks. The humorous irony comes not only from the fact that Dr. Dillamond is an anthropomorphized goat, but it also foreshadows Elphaba ultimately being mislabeled a scapegoat by Mme. Morrible and The Wizard.

These two sages are intently following Crowley’s last theorem to the letter. It states “Every man has a right to fulfill his own will without being afraid that it may interfere with that of others; for if he is in his proper place, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him.” The Wizard wants to use the flying monkeys as spies and when both he and Morrible realize that Elphaba will not join with them in their attacks against the Animals, (ergo interfering with their Wills) they act by taking Crowley’s theorems to the next logical step. They decide to act on the force that is blocking the way to their True Will (Elphaba). Mme. Morrible, now the Press Secretary to The Wizard, sets out a decree to all of Oz letting them know Elphaba’s new label. She is the first to claim that Elphaba is not only ‘evil’ but ‘wicked’ as well:

Mme. Morrible: Citizens of Oz, there is an enemy that must be found and captured. Believe nothing she says, she is evil. Responsible for the malformation of these poor innocent monkeys. Her green skin is but an outward manifestory of her twisted nature. This is torture! It's repulsive! This wicked witch!

Elphaba throughout the majority of the show rejects her titular label, but through the course of the show we see her transformation from denying to accepting this label. The first instance that we see of her changing her Will (or her label) is during "Defying Gravity". She discloses to Glinda:

Glinda: You can still be with The Wizard

What you've hoped and waited for.

You can have all you ever wanted...

Elphaba: I don't want it

No, I can't want it

Anymore..."

She has come to the realization that both The Wizard and Mme. Morrible, the two people with whom she trusted, are not whom they seemed. She has mislabeled them in her mind. Once their true colors are shown – she cannot bear the thought of aligning herself with them.

The title of 'evil' and 'wicked' has been thrust upon Elphaba by two misleading authoritarians and she cannot bring herself to align with these two people who have tricked her. Unfortunately, Mme. Morrible and The Wizard are living under the guise of a skewed version of Crowley's final and most self-centered theorem (see above). No person ever feels themselves evil or wicked; it is the perception of others that make it so. Mme. Morrible and The Wizard feel

that they are in their proper place and it is the fault of Elphaba that she is getting in their way. I do not feel that Crowley meant this theorem to be as self-centered as it comes across, but the fact remains that stating that it is the fault of others for getting in one's way leads to a self-righteous attitude and a Machiavellian way of life as shown by these two characters.

Elphaba returns to The Emerald City to set the winged monkeys free, there she is stopped by The Wizard who begs to give him one more chance. In his song "Wonderful" he speaks on labels:

A man's called a "traitor" – or "liberator"
A rich man's a "thief" or "philanthropist"
Is one a "crusader" – or "ruthless invader"?
It's all in which label
Is able to persist.

Moments later, Dr. Dillamond is found completely reverted back to his animal state. His Animal status (True Will) was not strong enough to stand up against the smear campaign, and he was indeed a victim of what labels can do to a person. Elphaba, who feels completely betrayed after seeing this sight, exclaims "You and I have nothing in common. I'm nothing like you and I never will be. And I'll fight you till the day I die!" It is here that Elphaba realizes what she must do.

After she and Fiyero flee the castle (he was one of the Wizard's guards) she admits to him "It's just, for the first time – I feel wicked." She has finally come to the realization that the term bestowed upon her by Mme. Morrible can align with her True Will, destroying what The Wizard and Mme. Morrible have done to Oz and the Animals. She knows her mission now, and she will dedicate the rest of her (short) life to fulfilling it. She is channeling Crowley: "Every

individual is essentially sufficient to himself. But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe.” At the moment she owns the term ‘wicked’ she becomes satisfied with herself and her relation to the Universe, allowing her True Will (that of being wicked) to manifest.

During the last song, we find out that Elphaba and Fiyero (now the Scarecrow) are alive and the melting with water was just a guise to fake her own death. Though different than both L. Frank Baum and Gregory Maguire’s books, this illusionary ending is still satisfying. But we must ask ourselves ‘Why?’ The reason is the concept mentioned above. Elphaba is content with her life, but her behavior has never in truly fit with the others she has come into contact with. The first time that she admits that she is indeed ‘wicked’ is after running away from The Wizard into the woods with Fiyero. If being wicked is nothing more than opposing the status quo, this falls in line with Elphaba’s True Will, she has met someone with whom she can relate within Fiyero.

Like her, he opposes the status quo in his own way. Fiyero’s song, ‘Dancing Through Life’ is nothing more than a guidebook to skirt around and bend rules to one’s own advantage. When they are with each other, they are in their ‘right relation with the Universe.’ Elphaba and Fiyero find their True Will’s together and they align perfectly. In the ultimate act of opposing the status quo we find out that Elphaba succeeds in a bit of magic of her own and fakes her own death with the help of Fiyero. Through this bit of illusion, they are able to live out their True Wills together. As Crowley’s simply states “Every man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.” They have succeeded in challenging others their entire lives, now they are able to fulfill themselves with the knowledge that even in death Elphaba (and

Fiyero) are able to challenge the status quo, even if in secret by living the life they have always wanted.

Magick is, as I have stated, nothing more than the science and art of causing change to occur in conformity with will. Some of the magick, like when Elphaba turns Fiyero into The Scarecrow (page 70), opposes what Crowley states, while with Mme. Morrible and The Wizard we see examples of what happens when his words are taken too literally (page 75). However, the main struggle for all who are trapped in Oz is the struggle to find True Will. This is the reason why it is so relatable to us, it is a journey which we must face in our lives as well.

Fiyero and Elphaba find that their True Wills align. They both oppose a society that fears both of their ideologies and appearances. Mme. Morrible and The Wizard feel that they have achieved their True Will, and oppose anyone (like Elphaba) who may be unfortunate enough to stand in their way. Boq's True Will is actually aided by Elphaba's Tin Man spell, to help send Dorothy home, and in so doing, ironically aid in (supposedly) killing Elphaba, the person who set him on his proper path. Nessa's conscious will reigns after the psychological trauma of losing her father, her sister, and Boq and she dies (presumably) unhappy with her life and not fulfilling her True Will. Glinda realizes that her True Will all along has been to take care of people, now she has the chance to take care of all of Oz with the absence of both The Wizard and Elphaba.

Lastly there is Dorothy Gale of Kansas, whom is stuck in this bizarre world. Her True Will is simply stated "There is No Place Like Home." She knows that she must return there, whatever the cost. At the behest of the Wizard (according to Baum and Maguire) it is she that is ultimately responsible for the death of the Wicked Witch of the West. Crowley might say that along with Mme. Morrible and The Wizard, she was aligning herself with the last concept of magick "Every man has a right to fulfill his own will without being afraid that it may interfere

with that of others; for if he is in his proper place, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him.” Selfishly, she ‘destroys’ a good woman (even if only by the request of The Wizard) with whom she had never met to achieve her True Will – to get home to see her Aunt Em and Uncle Henry...and Toto too.

CONCLUSION

Contained within the last three chapters of this thesis are multitudes of questions and answers. In *Midsummer*, one of the most interesting discoveries that I found was contained within the character of Demetrius. For years I had questions about why Shakespeare left him, and only him, under ‘a spell’. I realized that the problem with this question was in the phrasing. In truth, Demetrius was anointed with the juice of 'love-in-idleness' but instead of it acting as an enchantment to aid in finding love, it actually aided in his realization of whom he already loved. It also fascinates me that while I knew that Theseus was a strict but forgiving ruler, I did not realize the parallels between Oberon’s magickal prowess and Theseus’ unique brand of magick. I must say that Lysander was the only character that I did not find anything ‘new’ to focus on using Crowley. It is not that his character was diminished as a result of using Crowley’s lens, but I struggled to find more about him than already known. Both Helena and Hermia’s story are vastly different in my mind after this study. Hermia is not as I originally thought, a victim of forces set upon her, but a powerful and strongly driven woman who will stand up to her father’s iron hand. Helena’s backstory, while somewhat of my own creation, may be played with validity and it gives her character much more to fight for than just a lovesick courtier.

I was hesitant on writing the *Marisol* chapter because I knew that it would be different than the other chapters, mainly because of its focus on religion. It is the chapter that I used the least amount of Crowley’s concepts (six of them) to aid in my discoveries within the script. The strongest argument that I found within the script was the concept of True will and conscious will and how they differ. Crowley’s religion is based off of the mantra ‘Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law’ meaning ‘The only requirement (law) is to do what you feel you are meant to do’. Both Marisol and the Angel exemplify this sentiment. To me it is unclear if Marisol knows

that she is going to die at the hands of The Woman With Furs, and unfortunately this lens did not clarify this sentiment. However, something that was very exciting was to find that Crowley's twelfth theorem speaks on man being '...ignorant of the nature of his own being and powers...' and I feel that this is one of the most vital statements within this play. It is because of Marisol's sacrifice that others wage war against heaven and eventually win. I feel she had no idea that she was capable of instigating such a change.

There is no question that *Wicked* is both a critical and commercial success. The universal themes that Gregory Maguire held dear (behavior, appearance, deception, honesty, and courage) along with what I feel is a main theme, labeling, all combine to form a truly unique and powerful work. I found myself getting caught in the writing of this work and expressing my own ideas on it that at times I had to go back and re-analyze using Crowley's theories, not solely my own.

What is so difficult about this script is that it deals with so many sub-textual layers that it honestly becomes difficult to separate one from the other simply because they all interconnect. I think one of my favorite moments in writing about this play was not writing on Elphaba, but her sister, Nessarose that intrigued me. She was a victim of herself and who I feel is the one truly tragic character in the show. I am somewhat upset that there was not more of her as a character to study but I was thrilled to make such great discoveries about her character with such limited given circumstances.

I really did enjoy coming across Crowley's final theorem and when applied to this show, seeing how self-centered the theorem can be taken. Although I cannot say if Crowley meant it as self-centered as it comes across, I still feel that both the Wizard and Madame Morrible are prime examples of what can happen when one takes Crowley's theories and attempts to live by them out of the context in which they were meant.

I originally thought that because of the nature of magic(k) in this play I would not find such a striking confrontation between what Crowley says and what is in the script. Elphaba decisively proves Crowley wrong, which is always an exciting venture. While Crowley feels that it is necessary to know all ‘qualitative and quantitative’ data relating to a subject to affect it; Elphaba does not know the condition of Fiyero, where he is, or what has been done to him and still manages to change not only his appearance but spare his life in the process.

Arguably the most interesting discovery throughout my entire paper is that after writing the three literary chapters, I decided to see what, if any, theories had been talked about in all three chapters. I was curious to know if there were any ‘underlying truths’ between all three plays. In fact, there was. Only one concept, out of the possible twenty-eight, was repeated in all three chapters. “Every Man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.” Within all three chapters there is at least one example of self-preservation. All four of The Lovers in *Midsummer* run to the forest for one reason: self preservation. The angels and Marisol Perez in *Marisol* lay down their life for one reason: self preservation. Elphaba fakes her death and exiles herself with Fiyero for one reason: self preservation. To me this was the most exciting truism that I could possibly encounter. How more base of an instinct can one get than the act of self-preservation? Doesn’t this concept, at least on some level, affect every decision we make? I feel that there can be much more research done along these lines. How many other characters in literature and plays base their actions on self-preservation? Isn’t Nora leaving Torvold at the end of *A Dolls House* just that, an act of self-preservation? How do we use it in our personal lives? When is it considered apropos and when is it considered uncouth? I encourage those who have read this thesis to look at other works with this idea in mind. I also

encourage readers to re-examine Crowley's theories and to take it upon oneself to use his theories as a lens, not a guide, to either blur or focus one's perception.

Possible Practical Applications

While all of these theories and speculations have stimulated the mind, the practical application of these theories can be much more exciting. Directors and actors can apply Crowley's theories as a tool to aid in their aesthetic choices. Does this mean that Crowley will help with every character and every play? That claim seems too broad and pompous; however, the idea of 'magick' that Crowley prescribes can be applied to specific moments. Does this mean that applying 'magick' to every moment in every play will make the play better? Again, the claim seems fallacious. When used with discretion and careful examination of the context in which the 'magick' has transpired, Crowley's magick may serve a very useful tool for theatre practitioners. The main focus, must always remain, however, on the struggle between True Will and conscious will. That is in what context Crowley used magick and it will remain the easiest and most simplified way of understanding magick, True Will, and conscious will.

The Dramatic Triad as described by Louis Catron in his book The Director's Vision will serve as a model for some of the practical applications of Crowley and the theatre. The point of attack, the time at which the first major action of the play happens, is the first clue in understanding Crowley's practical applications. In essence, the point of attack is part and parcel of the inciting incident and all of the major plot devices come from this moment. If we as actors and directors understand the point of attack it will lead us to a greater understanding of how each character works within it. True Will can be redefined as a character's superobjective, a term I would hope that most actors are familiar with. Whether this is fulfilled or not is obviously the intent of the playwright. The protagonist's goal (superobjective) can be rephrased as stated

earlier to encompass True Will. Therefore, what the character is fighting against is their own conscious will. The thought comes from the relationship between the protagonist's goal and the plot. The major dramatic question must be at the forefront of every directors' mind. Catron describes it as "...when the protagonist faces a dilemma and must set goals to solve it" (Catron, 76). Is this not the decision that Hermia, Helena, Demetrius, Lysander, Marisol, and Elphaba have faced? By taking Crowley's twenty-eight theorems and using them as guiding questions or exploratory descriptors of one's character, a more in-depth analysis will most assuredly become available. By replacing True Will with the 'Protagonists Goal' in Catron's Dramatic Triad, it becomes another method of attempting to find the Major Dramatic Question of the play.

Another practical use of Crowley's theorems are shown by the psychologist Abraham Maslow. He theorized that man's needs are met in a hierarchical fashion (See Appendix B). The lowest of the levels of needs, that which Maslow calls 'Physiological Needs' and 'Safety Needs,' align with Crowley's ideas of self-preservation. The idea of self preservation, as addressed earlier, is something that Crowley understood very well and rang true in all three plays. Maslow tended to see his hierarchy's needs as universal, ones that every person can relate to. Crowley takes on a more individual approach to Maslow's hierarchy. While conscious will may be anywhere on the hierarchical levels that Maslow has prescribed, it is always subordinate to an individual's True Will. Both Maslow and Crowley did understand that the idea of self-preservation is at its core a base instinct that must be satisfied before attaining any higher levels of fulfillment. Crowley and Maslow also differed on their ideas of 'Self-Actualization'. Crowley posits that every human being has the right to achieve their True Will, or become self-actualized. Maslow, on the other hand, posits that while we are constantly striving to achieve this, few, if any, ever attained it. By examining Maslow's hierarchy and comparing it with that of Crowley's,

it becomes more of a visual tool to help in understanding where a character's needs may lie. There are several theorists that can be associated with Crowley other than Maslow; Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Kant are of great use when attempting to understand the background and nature of Crowley's writings. Crowley's theorems I hope will serve as a tool so that other directors, actors, and scholars will be able to initiate proper character analyses in order to perform to the best of their ability. In time, this thesis may serve as a conduit to direct future theatre practitioners to avoid their conscious will at all costs and attain their True Will, offstage or onstage.

**APPENDIX A:
ALEISTER CROWLEY'S THEORIES ON MAGICK**

Aleister Crowley defines magick as "...the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will" (Crowley xii). The following postulate and theorems, as he calls them, have been prescribed as qualifiers to his definition of magick. The postulate and theorems themselves are in bold, his definitions are italicized, and my thoughts on each are in normal font. If the reading of this thesis is to be successful, I feel that it is essential to not only understand Crowley's theories, but also my views on them.

Definition:

Magick is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.

It is my Will to inform the World of certain facts within my knowledge. I therefore take "magical weapons", pen, ink, and paper; I write "incantations" – these sentences – in the "magical language" i.e. that which is understood by the people I wish to instruct; I call forth "spirits", such as printers, publishers, booksellers, and so forth, and constrain them to convey my message to those people. The composition and distribution of this book is thus an act of Magick.

I see this as Crowley teaching us that we can give new definitions to the processes that we act out on a daily basis. Following his logic putting gas in a car is a 'magical act'. The 'magical weapons' is the gas pump, 'incantations' and 'magical language' is my pin number and what grade of gasoline I want to put in my car, and the 'spirits' that are being called forth is the actual gas from inside the pump. Knowing that Crowley's language and definition of magick is somewhat far-fetched – I find it still very interesting and thought-provoking to look at the world with this new lens.

Postulate:

Any required Change may be effected by the application of the proper kind and degree of Force in the proper manner through the proper medium to the proper object.

I wish to prepare an ounce of Chloride of Gold. I must take the right kind of acid, nitro-hydrochloric and no other, in sufficient quantity and of adequate strength, and place it, in a vessel which will not break, leak, or corrode, in a such a manner as will not produce undesirable results, with the necessary quantity of Gold: and so forth. Every Change has its own conditions. In the present state of our knowledge and power some changes are not possible in practice; we cannot cause eclipses, for instance, or transform lead into tin, or create men from mushrooms. But it is theoretically possible to cause in any object any change of which that object is capable by nature; and the conditions are covered by the above postulate.

The most telling part of this postulate is not in the postulate itself, but in Crowley's explanation. "But it is theoretically possible to cause in any object any change of which that object is capable by nature..." My mind immediately hearkens to the opening line of *Wicked* when Glinda poses the question "Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?" I feel that what Crowley is defining magick is can be related to (in theatrical terms) a catalyst, inciting incident, or even the climax of the plot structure. This is where Crowley's theories are most apparent at where they intersect theatrical works.

Crowley seems to have written these theorems to not only stand alone, but work together to reiterate his beliefs on magick. In studying them individually, I have noticed that there are sections of these theorems that deal with the same concepts. Much like the Ten Commandments are grouped together in the Bible. The first three Commandments govern the relationship between God and humans, the fourth through eighth govern public relationships between people, and the last two govern private thoughts. Similarly, Crowley's theorems when grouped show a

much more organized religious view. While reading these theorems, I brokedown the groupings in the following order:

Theorems 1-5 identify and characterize the 'laws' of a magical act.

Theorems 6-9 give details on man's course in life

Theorems 10 -11 enlighten us on the relationship between man and nature

Theorems 12-14 pronounces man's control over himself and the universe.

Theorems 15-21 bring to light the forces at play between man and the universe.

Theorems 22-23 marries mans proper place in his own life and the universe.

Theorems 24-28 speaks on mans right and necessity to use magick in his daily life.

Theorems:

1. Every Intentional Act is a Magical Act.

- *By "intentional" I mean "willed". But even unintentional act so-seeming are not truly so. Thus, breathing is an act of the Will-to-Live.*

- This seems at first a blanket statement. As though it is a rationale in his own mind that you cannot steer away from magick. Further investigation of my own personal beliefs will determine if I agree with Crowley on this theorem.

2. Every successful act has conformed to the postulate.

- Crowley gives no explanation for this theorem; it is just his way of stating that you must follow the postulate to achieve magick.

3. Every failure proves that one or more requirements of the postulate have not been fulfilled.

- *There may be failure to understand the case; as when a doctor makes a wrong diagnosis, and his treatment injures his patient. There may be failure to apply the right kind of force, as when a*

rustic tries to blow out an electric light. There may be failure to apply the right degree of force, as when a wrestler has his hold broken. There may be failure to apply the force in the right manner, as when one presents a cheque [sic] at the wrong window of the Bank. There may be failure to employ the correct medium, as when Leonardo da Vinci found his masterpiece fade away. The force may be applied to an unsuitable object, as when one tries to crack a stone, thinking it is a nut.

- Crowley asserts that for various reasons, either by the unknowingness or unwillingness, all the extraneous forces must be completely taken into account when performing magick. It is bizarrely reminiscent of the scientific method; in which all factors must be taken into account otherwise the entire experiment is compromised.

4. The first requisite for causing any change is thorough qualitative and quantitative understanding of the conditions.

- The most common cause of failure in life is ignorance of one's on True Will, or of the means by which to fulfill that Will. A man may fancy himself a painter, and waste his life trying to become one; or he may be really a painter, and yet fail to understand and to measure the difficulties peculiar to that career.

- Crowley is simply twisting the Aristotelian idea of 'know thyself'. Crowley agrees with Aristotle that you must 'know yourself', but magick is the way or the process in which we do this. We must understand our surroundings before we continue on our path to knowing, as Crowley says, our True Will.

5. The second requisite of causing any change is the practical ability to set in right motion the necessary forces.

- *A banker may have a perfect grasp of a given situation, yet lack the quality of decision, or the assets, necessary to take advantage of it.*

- Magick just does not 'happen', you must take the initiative and not be a passive member of your own life.

6. Every man and every woman is a star.

- *That is to say, every human being is intrinsically an independent individual with his own proper character and proper motion.*

- Each person is solely responsible for what they are and who they want to become. No other person can be the same person you are, with your own experiences and your own drive and ambition and you therefore are the master of your own destiny. However, by saying 'proper motion' Crowley does not dictate that there is one path only that we journey down, but that the journey that we take will intrinsically be the one that suits us best.

7. Every man and every woman has a course, depending partly on the self, and partly on the environment which is natural and necessary for each. Anyone who is forced from his own course, either through not understanding himself, or through external opposition, comes into conflict with the order of the Universe, and suffers accordingly.

- *A man may think it his duty to act in a certain way through having made a fancy picture of himself, instead of investigating his actual nature. For example, a woman may make herself miserable of life by thinking that she prefers to love social consideration, or vice versa. One woman may stay with an unsympathetic husband when she would really be happy in an attic with a lover, while another may fool herself into a romantic elopement when her only true pleasure are those of presiding at fashionable functions. Again, a boy's instinct may tell him to go to sea,*

while his parents insist on his becoming a doctor. In such a case, he will be both unsuccessful and unhappy in medicine.

- This is a very long-winded way of stating that if you are not following what you want to be doing and what you feel that you should be doing, and you stray from this path, you will be unhappy in your life and you will not succeed. You must listen not only to the voice in your head, but also the environment that surrounds you, however, you must keep in mind that overexposure to outside stimuli might cause you to stray from your own path.

8. A man whose conscious will is at odds with his True Will is wasting his strength. He cannot hope to influence his environment efficiently.

- When Civil War rages in a nation, it is in no condition to undertake the invasion of other countries. A man with cancer employs his nourishment alike to his own use and to that of the enemy which is part of himself. He soon fails to resist the pressure of his environment. In practical life, a man who is doing what his conscience tells him to be wrong will do it very clumsily. At first!

- Crowley is restating his earlier point that if you cannot mentally get beyond your current station in life, then you are wasting your time and your energy. You are essentially doing harm to yourself if you do not follow your 'True Will' in life.

9. A man who is doing his True Will has the inertia of the Universe to assist him.

- The first principle of success in evolution is that the individual should be true to his own nature, and at the same time adapt himself to his environment.

- Once you find your path and your calling in life, then, as long as you are malleable in terms of your situation, then you will be unstoppable.

10. Nature is a continuous phenomenon, through we do not know in all cases how things are connected.

- Human consciousness depends on the properties of protoplasm, the existence of which depends on innumerable physical conditions peculiar to this planet; and this planet is determined by the mechanical balance of the whole universe of matter. We may then say that our consciousness is causally connected with the remotest galaxies; yet we do not know even how it arises from – or with – the molecular changes in the brain.

- Everything is interconnected, even though we may not completely understand how. Practically, this may be taken as a sign to (a) look beyond the superficiality of things and attempt to see the deeper meaning, or (b) always remember that every decision you make effects not only you, but others as well and you must make a conscious effort to keep this in mind. The reverse of this is true as well – you are a product of outside decisions that you had no control or even possible knowledge of; even still – those decisions inevitably helped shape who you are today.

11. Science enables us to take advantage of the continuity of Nature by the empirical application of certain principles whose interplay involves different orders of ideas connected with each other in a way behind our present comprehension.

- We are able to light cities by rule-of-thumb methods. We do not know what consciousness is, or how it is connected with muscular action; what electricity is or how it is connected with the machines that generate it; and our methods depend on calculations involving mathematical ideas which have no correspondence in the Universe as we know it. (Footnoted: For instance, “irrational”, “unreal”, and “infinite” expressions.)

- We may not completely understand the ways in which connections are made or the way the world works. We understand that when we turn on the lightswitch, the light goes on. However,

we either take for granted or do not understand the complicated nature of circuitry and wire that it takes to light a room. In the same nature, we may not fully understand the ‘electricity’ that binds people together but we should take advantage, but not take for granted these connections whenever possible.

12. Man is ignorant of the nature of his own being and powers. Even his idea of his limitations is based on experience of the past, and every step in his progress extends his empire. There is therefore no reason to assign theoretical limits to what he may be, or to what he may do.

- A generation ago it was supposed theoretically impossible that man should ever know the chemical composition of the fixed stars. It is known that our senses are adapted to receive only an infinitesimal fraction of the possible rates of vibration. Modern instruments have enabled us to detect some of these suprasensibles by indirect methods, and even to use their peculiar qualities in the service of man, as in the case of the rays of Hertz and Rontgen. As Tyndall said, man might at any moment learn to perceive and utilize vibrations of all conceivable and inconceivable kinds. The question of Magick is a question of discovering and employing hitherto unknown forces in nature. We know that they exist, and we cannot doubt the possibility of mental or physical instruments capable of brining us into relation with them.

- We should ‘focus’ on these imperceptible forces and use them to our advantage, such as magnetism or solar radiation. However, the theorem suggests that by setting limitations on ourselves we automatically assume that these goals are unattainable. What we should be doing is saying that nothing is unattainable. During medieval times the idea of man flying seemed ludicrous, however, the Wright brothers decided not to limit themselves and history was made because of it.

13. Every man is more or less aware that his individuality comprises several orders of existence, even when he maintains that his subtler principles are merely symptomatic of the changes in his gross vehicle. A similar order may be assumed to extend throughout nature.

- One does not confuse the pain of a toothache with the decay which causes it. Inanimate objects are sensitive to certain physical forces, such as electrical and thermal conductivity; but neither in us nor in them – so far as we know – is there any direct conscious perception of these forces. Imperceptible influences are therefore associated with all material phenomena; and there is no reason why we should not work upon matter through those subtle energies as we do through their material bases. In fact, we use magnetic force to move iron, and solar radiation to reproduce images.

- Crowley is suggesting that there are separate energies within us and within the universe that we may not foresee or consciously take advantage of; but that does not mean that they do not exist. Within these energies is an untapped resource for us to take advantage of. This may be where the origination of invoking, spellcasting, and praying comes from. If we can harness or become in tune to forces beyond our knowledge (such as extra-sensory perception and divine will) then we may have one more key in unlocking our relationship with the universe.

14. Man is capable of being, and using, anything which he perceives, for everything that he perceives is in a certain sense a part of his being. He may thus subjugate the whole Universe of which he is conscious to his individual Will.

- Man has used the idea of God to dictate his personal conduct, to obtain power over his fellows, to excuse his crimes, and for innumerable other purposes, including that of realizing himself as God. He has used the irrational and unreal conceptions of mathematics to help him in the

construction of mechanical devices. He has used his moral force to influence the actions even of wild animals. He has employed poetic genius for political purposes.

- In essence, he is stating that just because you can justify a causal relationship between two subjects does not mean that the justification is correct. However, he then goes on to state that you may have the ability to tap into the previously stated ‘forces beyond our knowledge’ and thereby have the entire Universe at your fingertips.

15. Every force in the Universe is capable of being transformed into any other kind of force by using suitable means. There is thus an inexhaustible supply of any particular kind of force that we may need.

- Heat may be transformed into light and power by using it to drive dynamos. The vibrations of the air may be used to kill men by so ordering them in speech so as to inflame war-like passions. The hallucinations connected with the mysterious energies of sex result in the perpetuation of the species.

- In theory, I understand what Crowley is saying. He wants us to believe that at any given time, we have a number of resources at our fingertips, and those that we do not have access to we can find a way to them by this ethereal transitive property of changing one form into another. In practicality, this theorem is severely flawed. Energy cannot be created nor destroyed, true – and because of this fact energy must be transferred into other forms to continue ‘existing’. However, alchemists, chemists, and laymen have been trying to turn lead into gold and have not yet been successful.

16. The application of any given force affects all the orders of being which exist in the object to which it is applied, whichever of those orders is directly affected.

- If I strike a man with a dagger, his consciousness, not his body only, is affected by my act; although the dagger, as such, has no direct relation therewith. Similarly, the power of my thought may so work on the mind of another person as to produce far-reaching physical changes in him, or in others through him.

- It seems as if this 'trickle down' concept of force does have some reality for its basis. The idea that I not only affect you, but the people around you as well is a common dilemma or blessing depending on the situation. An unhappy home causes not only both parties to be unhappy (and unhealthy), but their friends and family to change to accommodate their needs as well.

17. A man may learn to use any force so as to serve any purpose, by taking advantage of the above theorems.

- A man may use a razor to make himself vigilant over his speech, by using it to cut himself whenever he unguardedly utters a chosen word. He may serve the same purpose by resolving that every incident of his life shall remind him of a particular thing, making every impression the starting point of a connected series of thoughts ending in that thing. He might also devote his whole energies to some one particular object, by resolving to do nothing at variance therewith, and to make every act turn to the advantage of that object.

- Crowley is simply stating that if you want something badly enough, then you must take every available opportunity and use every resource available to fulfill that something that drives you forward.

18. He may attract to himself any force of the Universe by making himself a fit receptacle for it, establishing a connection with it, and arranging conditions so that its nature compels it to flow toward him.

- *If I want pure water to drink, I dig a well in a place where there is underground water; I prevent it from leaking away; and I arrange to take advantage of water's accordance with the laws of Hydrostatics to fill it.*

- He is saying that you must not only intellectually and philosophically know what you want, but you must also be a catalyst and an active participant in your own life so that you are able to set in motion the appropriate conditions to continue your path to your True Will.

19. Man's sense of himself as separate from, and opposed to, the Universe is a bar to his conducting its currents. It insulates him.

- *A popular leader is most successful when he forgets himself and remembers only "The Cause". Self-seeking engenders jealousies and schisms. When the organs of the body assert their presence other by silent satisfaction, it is a sign they are diseased. The single exception is the organ of reproduction. Yet even in this case its self-assertion bears witness to its dissatisfaction with itself, since it cannot fulfill its function until completed by its counterpart in another organism.*

- The main function of this is to let us know that to achieve your goals, not only must you be willing to self-sacrifice, but you must be willing to get completely lost in the idea of your pursuance. This seems very dangerous, for if you lose yourself completely then you run the risk of why you are pursuing what you pursuing to being with.

20. Man can only attract and employ the forces for which he is really fitted.

- *You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. A true man of science learns from every phenomenon. But Nature is dumb to the hypocrite; for in her there is nothing false.) (Footnote: It is no objection that the hypocrite is himself part of Nature. He is an "endothermic" product, divided against himself, with a tendency to break up. He will see his own qualities everywhere,*

and thus obtain a radical misconception of phenomena. Most religions of the past have failed by expecting nature to conform with their ideals of proper conduct.)

- One cannot try and apply random concepts and ideas (forces) to his own philosophies and hope that they conform at will. We must learn from varying forces and then use the newfound knowledge to apply to our own lives instead of holding strong to ideas we may hold dear and force various phenomenon upon them.

21. There is no limit to the extent of the relations of any man with the Universe in essence; for as soon as man makes himself one with any idea the means of measurement cease to exist. But his power to utilize that force is limited by his mental power and capacity, and by the circumstances of his human environment.

-When a man falls in love, the whole world becomes, to him, nothing but love boundless and immanent; but his mystical state is not contagious; his fellow-men are either amused or annoyed. He can only extend to others the effect which his love has had upon himself by means of his mental and physical qualities. Thus Catullus, Dante and Swinburne made their love a mighty mover of mankind by virtue of their power to put their thoughts on the subject in musical and eloquent language. Again, Cleopatra and other people in authority moulded the fortunes of many other people by allowing love to influence their political actions. The Magician, however well he succeed in making contact with the secret sources of energy in nature, can only use them to the extent permitted by his intellectual and moral qualities. Mohammed's intercourse with Gabriel was only effective because of his statesmanship, soldiership, and the sublimity of his command of Arabic. Hertz's discovery of the rays which we now use for wireless telegraphy was sterile until it reflected through the minds and wills of the people who could take his truth and transmit it to the world of action by means of mechanical and economic instruments.

- You are a product of your situation. You may have the ways and means to accept the limitless connections you may have to the Universe, but the limit lies in your feeble human capacity to understand the greatness that surrounds you. You must figure out a way to work within your local environment to access all of the great powers that lie within your conscious.

22. Every individual is essentially sufficient to himself. But he is unsatisfactory to himself until he has established himself in his right relation with the Universe.

- A microscope, however perfect, is useless in the hands of savages. A poet, however sublime, must impose himself upon his generation if he is to enjoy (and even to understand) himself, as theoretically should be the case.

- It is a constant battle to ascertain your place in the Universe. You must constantly rework your ideas of perfection to attain the highest place you can. Constant personal critiques of your own life, goals, and your ongoing projects are a must if you want to succeed in life.

23. Magick is the Science of understanding oneself in one's conditions. It is the Art of applying that understanding in action.

- A golf club is intended to move a special ball in a special way in special circumstances. A Niblick should rarely be used on the tee or a brassie under the bank of a bunker. But also, the use of any club demands skill and experience.

- There is a delicate art to knowing what you are able to do with your own body of knowledge and expertise. Crowley is saying that Magick is the art and science of living your life to its fullest potential.

24. Every man has an indefeasible right to be what he is.

- To insist that any one else should comply with one's own standards is to outrage, not only him, but oneself, since both parties are equally born of necessity.

- Crowley is giving us license to live our lives the way we choose, and that no one can tell us differently. If we feel that our true purpose is to wrap buildings (a la Cristo) then who is it for anyone else to say that we are wrong or damn us for doing as such.

25. Every man must do Magick each time that he acts or even thinks, since a thought is an internal act whose influence ultimately affects action, though it may not do so at the time.

- The least gesture causes a change in a man's own body and in the air around him; it disturbs the balance of the entire Universe, and its effects continue eternally throughout all space. Every thought, however swiftly suppressed, has its effect on the mind. It stands as one of the causes of every subsequent thought, and tends to influence every subsequent action. A golfer may lose a few yards on his drive, a few more with his second and third, he may lie on the green six bare inches too far from the hole, but the net result of these trifling mishaps is the difference between halving and losing the hole.

- You must make a conscious effort every time you breathe, make a move, or even think as to how this might effect your final outcome. You should not obsess and make yourself neurotic about every single move, just know in the back of your mind that the decisions you make today will affect you tomorrow. When losing weight, one must make a conscious effort at every moment to keep their body in top physical shape, eat right, and not have stress interfere with your daily routine.

26. Every man has a right, the right to self-preservation, to fulfill himself to the utmost.

-(Footnote: Men of "criminal nature" are simply at issue with their true Wills. The murderer has the Will to Live; and his will to murder is a false will at variance with his true Will, since he risks death at the hands of Society by obeying his criminal impulse.) A function imperfectly performed injures, not only itself, but everything associated with it. If the heart is afraid to beat for fear of

disturbing the liver, the liver is starved for blood and avenges itself on the heart by upsetting digestion, which disorders respiration, on which cardiac welfare depends.

- The act of self-preservation is innately primitive in humans. We cannot nor must not get rid of this, in fact – we must use this to advance. Darwin does not select the weakest link he selects against the strongest link. By making ourselves the strongest link we can possibly be, we will automatically continue on while others whose True Will has not yet been attained, are at risk for elimination.

27. Every man should make Magick the keynote of his life. He should learn its laws and live by them.

- The Banker should discover the real meaning of his existence, the real motive which led him to choose that profession. He should understand banking as a necessary factor in the economic existence of mankind instead of merely a business whose objects are independent of the general welfare. He should learn to distinguish false values from real, and to act not on accidental fluctuations but on considerations of essential importance. Such a banker will prove himself superior to others; because he will not be an individual limited by transitory things, but a force of Nature, as impersonal, impartial and eternal as gravitation, as patient and irresistible as the tides. His system will not be subject to panic, any more than the law of Inverse Squares is disturbed by elections. He will not be anxious about his affairs because they will not be his; and for that reason he will be able to direct them with the calm, clear-headed confidence of an onlooker, with intelligence unclouded by self-interest, and power unimpaired by passion.

- Do not take your station in life for granted. My station in life, at this current moment, is to tell others via this thesis to not take their station in life for granted. When you realize that your life is a part of something that is bigger than you even possibly imagined, it comes as a great shock but

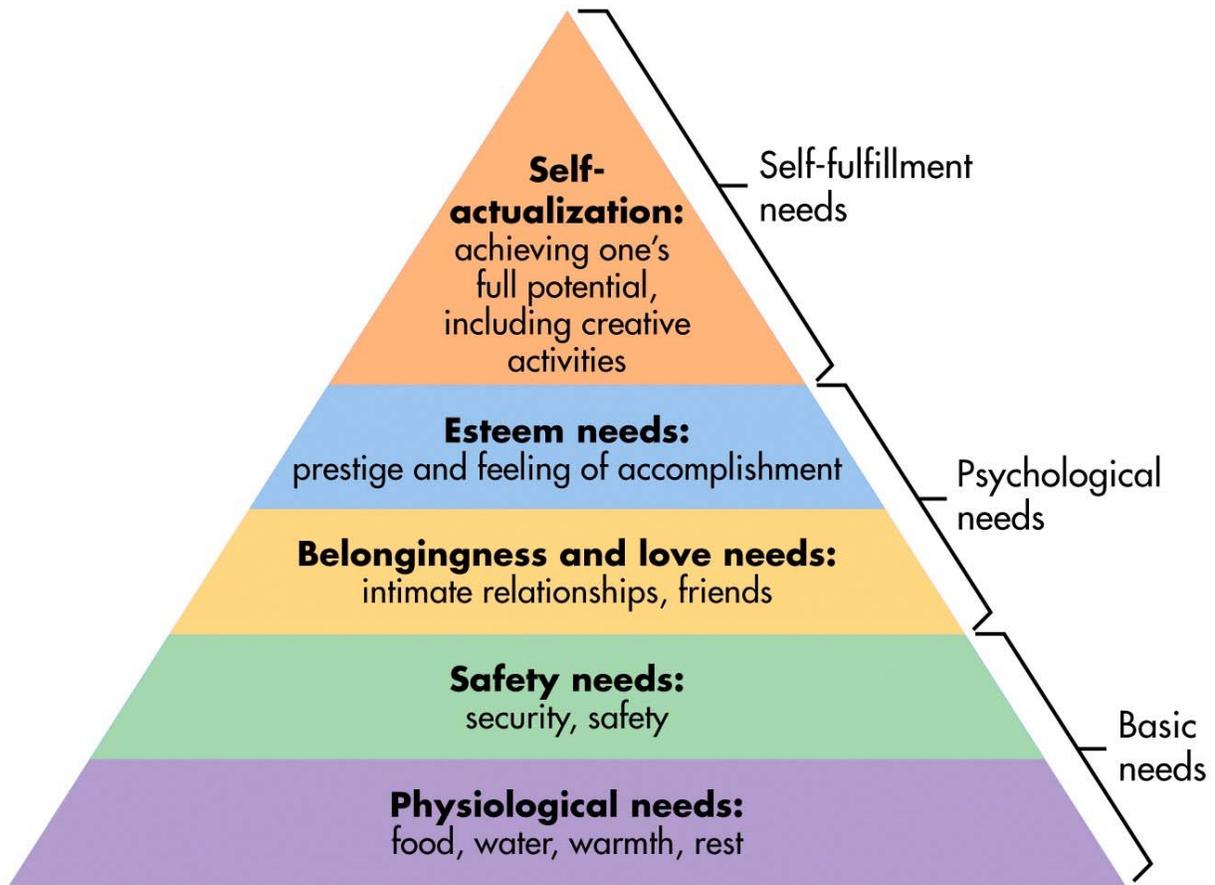
also a great sense of entitlement. You must persist in your station so that others will do the same in theirs, they depend on you as you them.

28. Every man has a right to fulfill his own will without being afraid that it may interfere with that of others; for if he is in his proper place, it is the fault of others if they interfere with him.

- If a man like Napoleon were actually appointed by destiny to control Europe, he should not be blamed for exercising his rights. To oppose him would be an error. Any one so doing would have made a mistake as to his own destiny, except insofar as it might be necessary for him to learn the lessons of defeat. The sun moves in space without interference. The order of nature provides an orbit for each star. A clash proves that one or the other has strayed from its course. But as to each man that keeps his true course, the more firmly he acts, the less likely others are to get in his way. His example will help them to find their own paths and pursue them. Every man that becomes a Magician helps others to do likewise. The more firmly and surely men move, and the more such action is accepted as the standard of morality, the less will conflict and confusion hamper humanity.

- If you are truly on your path, the right path, your True Will, then not only can nothing stand in your way but nothing should stand in your way. If it does, then you must realize that it is a hindrance towards your True Will and that you will defeat it because you know that you are on the right path and the opposing force has been misguided into you.

**APPENDIX B:
MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS**



Explanation: Essentially what Maslow and Crowley had in common was their belief in self-fulfillment. By redefining 'Self-Actualization' as True Will it is easy to see that both men agreed that reaching one's full potential was the ultimate goal. The difference being that Maslow thought that reaching the 'Self-Actualization' pinnacle was nearly impossible, Crowley thought that everyone has the potential to achieve their True Will, or to become Self-Actualized.

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