

Breaking the Stereotypes: Sexuality and Gender Roles in *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Dr. Namita Chouhan

Associate Professor,
Department of English,
S. S. Jain Subodh P. G. College,
Jaipur.

namitanathawat1@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-5697-1970>

<https://doi.org/10.66376/galaxy.v15.n5.2>

Abstract:

This paper examines gender and sexuality in Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* through a synthesis of feminist, queer, and psychoanalytic theory. Drawing on Judith Butler's performativity, R. W. Connell's hegemonic masculinity, Michel Foucault's discourse of sexuality, Laura Mulvey's theory of the gaze, Adrienne Rich's compulsory heterosexuality, Jacques Lacan's symbolic order, and Eve Sedgwick's account of homosocial desire, itself indebted to Gayle Rubin's earlier anthropology of kinship, the analysis traces how Stanley Kowalski's masculinity is socially rewarded while Blanche DuBois and Stella Kowalski negotiate, resist, and ultimately submit to patriarchal expectations. Close readings of key scenes, including Blanche's arrival, Allan Grey's suicide, the poker night, and Blanche's rape, show how discourse, spectatorship, and economic precarity combine to police gendered identity, at considerable psychological cost.

Keywords: Gender Performativity, Hegemonic Masculinity, Compulsory Heterosexuality, Patriarchy, Trauma, Tennessee Williams.

1. Introduction

Every society organises life around differentiated expectations for men and women, boys and girls, expectations so pervasive that they shape how people move, speak, dress, want, and hope. For a long stretch of intellectual history these differences were simply assumed to be nature's doing. That assumption has since come under sustained pressure, because what cultures call "natural," a great deal of contemporary theory insists, is more often the sediment of social conditioning and institutional power, built up over time until it hardens into something that looks like biology. Simone de Beauvoir's famous line, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (Beauvoir 283), anticipates the sex/gender distinction that later theorists of the body and its social scripting would go on to sharpen. Beyond the basic facts of reproduction, most of what gets assigned to men and women is culturally produced and historically variable, which is exactly why a play as precisely situated as *Streetcar*, set in postwar New Orleans, gives gender criticism so much to work with: it preserves, in dramatised form, the specific norms a culture uses to organise bodies, desire, and labour.

Gender, on this view, is not a fixed essence so much as a shifting arrangement that bends with time, place, class, caste, and moments of historical rupture. War, migration, and economic scarcity all tend to loosen established divisions of labour and desire, though the old hierarchies have a habit of reasserting themselves the moment stability returns; *A Streetcar Named Desire* stages that reassertion with unusual clarity. The play unfolds in the years just after the Second World War, precisely when women who had claimed new economic and social freedoms during the war were being pushed back toward domestic and reproductive roles. Blanche DuBois's arrival in New Orleans, penniless, unmarried, and with no institutional protection to speak of, dramatises that pressure almost literally. Her world, the plantation economy of Belle Reve and the genteel

Southern code that went with it, has collapsed, and she is left to navigate a masculinised, working-class world for which nothing in her upbringing has prepared her.

This study is organised around three questions. First, how does the play construct hegemonic masculinity through Stanley Kowalski, and what does that masculinity earn him socially? Second, how do Blanche and Stella attempt, and ultimately fail, to sustain alternative or resistant femininities, and at what price? Third, what do the play's treatment of Allan Grey's homosexuality and of Blanche's rape reveal about the discursive, visual, and physical mechanisms by which "deviant" desire gets produced, watched, and punished? Answering these questions calls for a deliberately plural theoretical toolkit, since a text operating simultaneously at the level of discourse, spectacle, psychic structure, and embodied violence resists being pinned down by any single framework. Section 2 lays out that toolkit; Section 4 applies it to the play in detail, so the close readings of individual scenes appear once, in the analysis proper, rather than twice.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Sex, Gender, and the Social Construction Thesis

The starting point here is a distinction that has by now become fairly standard: sex as a biological classification, gender as the socially assigned, culturally variable roles and traits attached to that classification. Candace West and Don Zimmerman pushed this distinction into sociology, arguing that gender is not something one *has* but something one continually *does*: it is "accomplished" through interaction, through closely monitored, routine displays of masculinity and femininity that others hold one accountable for (West and Zimmerman 126). Robert Stoller's earlier clinical work with intersex and transgender patients had already suggested that gender identity could diverge from anatomical sex, and West and Zimmerman build on that opening to insist that gender is less

a private psychological fact than a public, ongoing performance one is required to keep bringing off successfully in front of others. This idea of gender as an accomplishment rather than a fixed trait leads naturally into Butler's more explicitly poststructuralist account of performativity below, and it also supplies the analytic vocabulary this paper needs for characters who, as the textual analysis in Section 4 will show, spend a great deal of the play performing gender for an internal audience.

2.2 Judith Butler and Gender Performativity

Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* argues that gender is not the expression of some prior, interior identity but is instead built up through the "stylised repetition of acts" (Butler 179): gestures, speech patterns, dress, and bodily comportment that, through sheer repetition, manufacture the illusion of a stable, natural gender. Because gender is performative rather than expressive, it is also unstable. Every repetition carries the possibility of slipping, of variation, or of outright failure, and it is precisely in that gap between the performance and its intended effect that Butler locates the possibility of subversion. Butler's account also reworks West and Zimmerman's sociological description of gender as something "done" by giving that doing a genealogy: performativity is not simply repeated behaviour but repetition compelled by regulatory norms that punish deviation, so that what looks like free personal style is in fact tightly disciplined. This distinction between performativity as compelled repetition and mere habitual behaviour matters for a play in which characters are not simply behaving in gendered ways but are visibly straining to hold a performance together under threat of exposure, a dynamic Section 4.2 develops at length in relation to Blanche.

2.3 R. W. Connell and Hegemonic Masculinity

R. W. Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity names the culturally exalted form of masculinity that occupies the dominant slot in a given gender order, organising relations not just between men and women but among men themselves, some of whom perform "complicit," "subordinate," or "marginalised" masculinities relative to that ideal. Hegemonic masculinity does not need to be numerically common to be dominant. It dominates because it is held up as normative, because other men and women feel pressure to accommodate it, and because its legitimacy is continually renewed by the consent, rather than the coercion, of those it subordinates. Connell's crucial point, easy to miss in a cursory reading, is that hegemonic masculinity is relational rather than absolute: it exists only in a hierarchy of masculinities, and its dominance depends as much on the cooperation of women as on the compliance of other men. That relational quality, elaborated further below, is what makes Connell's framework useful for a play whose masculine hierarchy (Stanley's hegemonic position, Mitch's initially complicit one) shifts visibly across the action, a shift Section 4.1 and 4.5 trace scene by scene.

2.4 Michel Foucault and the Discourse of Sexuality

Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality, Volume I* pushes back against what he calls the "repressive hypothesis" (Foucault 17), the assumption that modern Western societies have mostly silenced or suppressed talk about sex. Foucault argues the opposite happened: the nineteenth and twentieth centuries produced an explosion of discourse about sex, turning sexuality into an object of medical, psychiatric, legal, and pedagogical knowledge, organised around figures he calls strategic, among them the hysterical woman, the masturbating child, the Malthusian couple, and the perverse adult. Sexuality, on this account, is less repressed than incited, classified, and thereby

made available as a tool of social regulation; what looks like silence around a given desire is frequently, on closer inspection, an intensifying and highly specialised discourse that produces that desire as an object of knowledge in the very act of condemning it. This distinction between silence and productive discourse is the analytic tool this paper needs for reading how “deviant” sexuality circulates in *Streetcar* not through simple suppression but through gossip, confession, and surveillance, a mechanism examined in Section 4.3.

2.5 Laura Mulvey and the Politics of the Gaze

Laura Mulvey’s essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” argues that mainstream visual narrative organises itself around a structuring “male gaze,” positioning the male character as the bearer of the look and the female figure as its object, coded for “to-be-looked-at-ness” (Mulvey 11). Mulvey developed this argument for classical Hollywood cinema, but its logic extends usefully to theatre and to the promotional apparatus built around dramatic properties. Two related claims matter for the analysis that follows: first, that the gaze is not a neutral optical fact but a structuring position the spectator is invited, and to some extent trained, to occupy; and second, that the “to-be-looked-at” figure is denied the reciprocal position of looking back, so that visibility itself becomes a form of vulnerability rather than power. Read together, these claims give this paper a vocabulary for a play that stages its own acts of looking almost obsessively, a dynamic Section 4.6 takes up in relation to both the play’s stagecraft and its promotional imagery.

2.6 Adrienne Rich and Compulsory Heterosexuality

Adrienne Rich’s essay “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” argues that heterosexuality functions in patriarchal societies not as one option among several but as a

compulsory institution, enforced through economic dependency, the erasure of alternative desires from cultural representation, romantic ideology, and, failing all of that, direct physical coercion, all of it channelling women's desire toward men and toward marriage as the only legitimate horizon of female fulfilment (Rich 648). What makes Rich's argument more than a description of social pressure is her insistence that these mechanisms form a single, cumulative system rather than a loose set of separate constraints: economic dependency and romantic ideology do the ordinary work of compliance, and coercion is simply what the institution falls back on once the softer instruments have been exhausted. That systemic, cumulative logic is what makes Rich's framework so exact a fit for the ending of *Streetcar*, where, as Section 4.7 argues, one form of pressure after another closes off Blanche's options until only the harshest remains.

2.7 Jacques Lacan and the Symbolic Order

Jacques Lacan's account of the symbolic order describes the register of language, law, and social convention into which the subject is inducted, and through which desire gets structured and, inevitably, only partly satisfied. Three features of this account matter for the reading developed in Section 4.8. First, the symbolic order is not optional: the subject can only exist as a socially legible "I" by submitting to its terms, which is why failure to be recognised within it is experienced as a kind of psychic catastrophe rather than mere social awkwardness. Second, Lacan's "real," the dimension of experience that resists symbolisation altogether, tends to return in disruptive, often repetitive forms, such as intrusive sounds, images, or compulsions, precisely at moments when the symbolic order's capacity to explain or contain experience breaks down. Third, because the symbolic order is a shared, public structure rather than a private possession, a subject's exclusion from it is never simply personal; it is enforced by other people's refusal of recognition. Together

these three features give this paper the vocabulary for a psychic disintegration that is at once involuntary, recurrent, and socially produced.

2.8 Eve Sedgwick and Homosocial Desire

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between Men* theorises "homosocial desire" (Sedgwick 1), the intense bonds between men that structure patriarchal societies, often mediated through the exchange, discussion, or triangulated desire for a woman. Sedgwick draws explicitly on Gayle Rubin's earlier essay "The Traffic in Women," which supplies the anthropological groundwork for this claim by arguing that kinship systems have historically organised the exchange of women between men as a way of consolidating homosocial bonds and social power (Rubin 174). What Sedgwick adds to Rubin's anthropological account is a literary-critical apparatus for reading how homosocial bonds are consolidated not only through formal exchanges such as marriage but through informal circuits of gossip, evaluation, and shared information about a woman, in which she functions less as an autonomous subject than as a kind of currency passed between men who, in the process, consolidate their own fraternal authority. That distinction between formal exchange and informal circulation is the one Section 4.5 relies on to read the poker table as a homosocial institution in its own right.

3. Critical Context

The critical reception of *Streetcar* has long divided along roughly the same lines this paper tries to integrate. Feminist criticism has tended to foreground the play's exposure of patriarchal violence, reading Blanche's breakdown and institutionalisation as the social silencing of a woman who violates normative sexual and moral codes and is punished for it far out of proportion to anything

a man would face for similar infractions. Queer criticism has centred Allan Grey's homosexuality and the play's fraught, closeted treatment of same-sex desire, noting that Allan exists in the text almost entirely as an absence, a foreclosed possibility that nonetheless organises Blanche's entire subsequent erotic history. Psychoanalytic criticism has emphasised trauma, guilt, and the fragmentation of identity, a line this paper extends through Lacan. Postcolonial and materialist critics, drawing on scholars such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, caution against applying metropolitan Western theory to any text without attending to its specific class, regional, and racial formations¹; here, that caution bears on the decline of the plantation-owning Southern gentry and its replacement by an immigrant, urban, working-class world, both of which shape the particular version of patriarchy the play depicts. Rather than treating these critical traditions as competitors, this paper reads them as complementary, each illuminating a different mechanism, whether discursive, visual, psychic, or economic, within a single, overdetermined system of gendered power.

4. Textual Analysis

4.1 Stanley Kowalski and the Performance of Hegemonic Masculinity

Stanley's characterisation is built, from the opening scene onward, around a cluster of signifiers: physical vigour, sexual bravado, blue-collar competence, and a proprietary relation to domestic space that together constitute hegemonic masculinity in Connell's sense (see 2.3). His habitual address to Stella in the imperative, "Hey, catch!" (Williams, sc. 1), and his casual assumption of authority over the household budget and over Stella's inheritance dispute with Blanche, both dramatise a masculinity that expects, and generally gets, unquestioned deference. Crucially, the play does not present this masculinity as monstrous in isolation. It presents it as socially legible

and rewarded. Stella's evident sexual attraction to Stanley, and her repeated choice to return to him even after his violence, are what make Stanley's hegemonic position sustainable in the first place. Connell's point that hegemonic masculinity depends on the complicity of women as well as of subordinate men is fully dramatised here: Stella's desire is not incidental to the gender order but one of its load-bearing structures.

4.2 Blanche DuBois: Performativity, Artifice, and the Costs of Non-Conformity

Blanche's introduction, arriving in a white suit "incongruous to this setting" (Williams, sc. 1), fussing over lighting and her own reflection, establishes from the start a femininity that is conspicuously staged. Her insistence on paper lanterns to soften electric light is not mere vanity but a sustained act of symbolic self-fashioning: through controlled visual conditions she is trying to produce a version of herself calibrated to Southern ideals of feminine delicacy, ideals her actual history, her sexual relationships, her dismissal from teaching, and her drinking have already disqualified her from claiming. Read through Butler's account of performativity as compelled repetition rather than free self-expression (see 2.2), Blanche's performance is not fraudulent so much as exposed: the play makes visible the labour of gender construction that ordinarily passes as natural and unremarkable. Her line "I don't want realism, I want magic!" (Williams, sc. 9) is a moment of startling self-awareness about her own performative labour. She is not naïve about the artifice of her femininity; she is actively, if desperately, curating it, knowing that without the "magic" she has no socially legible identity left. When that performance fails to secure social legitimacy, when Mitch, informed of her past, tears down the paper lantern and demands to see her "under a light" (Williams, sc. 9), the play literalises the violent unmasking that awaits any performance judged inadequate or duplicitous within a rigid gender order. For Blanche, the cost

of non-conformity turns out to be total: social exile, the loss of marriageability, and finally institutionalisation.

4.3 Allan Grey's Confession and the Discourse of Sexuality

The revelation of Allan Grey's homosexuality functions as the play's originary trauma, and it is also the clearest illustration of Foucault's claim that sexuality is discursively produced rather than simply repressed (see 2.4). Blanche's discovery of Allan with an older male friend, and his confession afterwards, does not silence the matter. It sets off an accelerating discourse: Blanche's cruel remark at the dance, Allan's suicide immediately after, and Blanche's lifelong compulsion to narrate and re-narrate the event, to Mitch and to the audience alike. The Varsouviana polka, recurring at moments of psychological pressure, functions almost like an acoustic trace of that originary scene of discursive exposure, confirming Foucault's point that what gets punished is rarely sexuality itself so much as its public, discursive visibility. Blanche's history at the Flamingo Hotel and with a teenage student becomes, in Stanley's hands, a dossier to be compiled and delivered to Mitch, exactly the mechanism Foucault describes: sexuality put into discourse precisely so it can be surveilled and punished. It is also worth noting that Allan never speaks in the play's present tense; he exists only as reported speech and memory, a structural absence that queer critics have read as symptomatic of the period's near-total exclusion of gay male subjectivity from direct representation, even as that excluded subjectivity organises the entire emotional architecture of the play.

4.4 Stella Kowalski and the Reproduction of Patriarchal Order

Stella occupies a structurally different position than Blanche. Rather than resisting or elaborately performing against the prevailing gender order, she has largely internalised and accommodated it. Her explanation to Blanche that Stanley's violence is bound up with a desire she finds hard to renounce—her admission, essentially, that she has chosen to stay—illustrates West and Zimmerman's account of gender as something continually “done” and reaffirmed through routine accommodation rather than adopted once and settled (see 2.1). Stella's final choice to disbelieve, or to let herself disbelieve, Blanche's account of the rape in order to preserve her marriage is the play's starkest illustration of complicity. Her decision reproduces the very structure that has just destroyed her sister, showing how women's accommodation of hegemonic masculinity, however psychologically understandable, becomes one of the mechanisms through which that order perpetuates itself across generations and households.

4.5 Mitch: The Disciplining of Deviant Masculinity

Mitch's arc dramatises Connell's account of complicit masculinity being disciplined back toward the hegemonic norm (see 2.3). His early characterisation—devotion to his ailing mother, a cigarette case inscribed with a dead sweetheart's sentimental verse, and a comparatively gentle courtship of Blanche—marks him as occupying a softer masculine register than Stanley's. Once Stanley supplies him with an account of Blanche's sexual history, though, Mitch's demeanour hardens quickly. He arrives late, drunk, and confrontational, and his subsequent treatment of Blanche turns punitive rather than protective. Read through Sedgwick's distinction between formal exchange and informal circulation of a woman as a medium of homosocial bonding (see 2.8), the poker table functions here as exactly such an institution, and Stanley's transmission of information

about Blanche to Mitch reads as an act of homosocial bonding conducted at Blanche's expense. In that exchange, Blanche functions less as an autonomous subject than as a circulating object of masculine knowledge and evaluation, her worth assessed and passed between men who, in the process, consolidate their own fraternal authority. The transformation shows how the homosocial transmission of "damaging" sexual knowledge does double duty: disciplining the woman being discussed while re-aligning the listening man with hegemonic expectations, on pain of being seen by other men as insufficiently masculine himself should he remain loyal to a "compromised" woman.

4.6 The Gaze, Visual Culture, and Spectatorship

The play's own stagecraft repeatedly organises the audience's look in ways Mulvey's framework helps specify (see 2.5): lighting cues consistently expose Blanche's body and face to visual scrutiny at precisely the moments she is straining hardest to control how she is seen, while Stanley moves comparatively unimpeded through both light and shadow. This dynamic intensified in the play's afterlife in promotional and film imagery, including the publicity surrounding both the original Broadway run and Elia Kazan's 1951 film adaptation of *Streetcar*². Posters and promotional photographs from that publicity apparatus consistently foreground Stanley's physical dominance, his stance, his grip on Stella or Blanche, his direct address to the camera, while Blanche is more often framed in postures of vulnerability, retreat, or fragmented visibility, partly veiled by light or caught in a mirror. Read through Mulvey, this visual grammar does more than illustrate the plot. It trains the spectator to identify with Stanley's point of view, and it draws the audience into the very structure of looking, judging, and consuming Blanche's body and history that the play itself dramatises as violent. The gendered structure of looking that Mulvey identifies

in narrative cinema thus operates across *Streetcar's* theatrical and promotional apparatus alike, training audiences into a visual relation to Blanche that mirrors, rather than critiques, Stanley's own controlling gaze.

4.7 The Rape Scene: Compulsory Heterosexuality and Symbolic Violence

The play's climactic assault on Blanche should be read, following Rich's account of coercion as the institution's last resort once softer mechanisms have failed (see 2.6), as the coercive endpoint of a system that has already exhausted its gentler instruments of control. By this point, economic dispossession, the loss of Belle Reve, professional exile, the loss of her teaching post, and romantic foreclosure, Mitch's withdrawal, have already stripped Blanche of every institutionally sanctioned route to security. Stanley's assault does not introduce a new form of coercion so much as it makes explicit, in physical form, the coercive logic that has been narrowing Blanche's options across the whole play. Read this way, the rape is not an aberration from the play's gender politics but their culmination: the point at which discursive, economic, and visual mechanisms of control give way to direct physical enforcement.

4.8 Trauma, the Symbolic Order, and the Language of the Body

Blanche's psychic disintegration can be productively read through the three features of Lacan's symbolic order outlined above (see 2.7). Her recurring auditory hallucination of the Varsouviana polka, the tune playing at the moment of Allan's suicide, is a textbook instance of the traumatic real intruding on a symbolic order she otherwise works hard to maintain through euphemism, soft lighting, and elaborate self-narration; it returns, involuntarily and repetitively, precisely because it cannot be integrated into that order. Her compulsive bathing rituals read similarly, as attempts to

symbolically cleanse a self that experiences its own history as contaminating, while her avoidance of direct light literalises her refusal to be fixed and named within a symbolic order that has already judged her morally suspect. That refusal is never merely private: it depends, and ultimately fails to secure, other people's recognition. Her subsequent breakdown, her retreat into euphemism, her confusion of past and present, her final surrender to the doctor's arm rather than the matron's, can be read as the collapse of a subject who can no longer sustain herself within an order that has already classified and rejected her. Taken together, these motifs dramatise a failure of symbolic mastery: Blanche's language, her poetic euphemism, her insistence on "magic" over "realism," is exactly what the play shows breaking down under the weight of a trauma too large for the symbolic order to contain. Her famous closing line about depending on the kindness of strangers reads, in this light, not just as pathos but as the terminal form of a performative strategy that has organised her entire trajectory in the play: unable to secure recognition through the codes of respectable Southern femininity, she extends her performance one last time to a stranger, hoping a new audience might grant what her known social world has already withdrawn.

5. Discussion: Stereotypes, Self-Fulfilling Prophecy, and Social Reproduction

Sex-role stereotypes, oversimplified, rigid beliefs about the traits proper to men and women, saturate the social world the play depicts, and the play shows them operating through socialisation and self-fulfilling prophecy: people internalise the traits expected of them and then enact those traits, thereby reproducing the very stereotype that shaped their conduct to begin with. Stella and her neighbour Eunice's tacit acceptance of male domestic violence exemplifies this reproductive mechanism with particular clarity, showing how communities of women can become instruments of a gender order's perpetuation even while bearing its costs. This kind of conformity also reshapes

self-image and self-worth. Susan Basow, in a survey of the research literature on gender socialisation, argues that repeated conformity to sex-role expectations reshapes both self-image and self-esteem, so that women's sense of their own worth becomes disproportionately dependent on external, and often specifically male, evaluation (Basow 128). Blanche's compulsive self-scrutiny before mirrors, and her anxious dependence on others' judgment of her appearance and reputation, dramatise exactly this pattern. Read across these theoretical registers, Williams's play does not simply give us one villain and one victim. It maps a distributed system in which economic structure, discourse, visual culture, homosocial bonding, and psychic structure interlock to produce and enforce a rigid gender hierarchy, one that none of the characters, including Stanley and Mitch, is wholly free of, even as its costs fall overwhelmingly on Blanche.

6. Conclusion

A Streetcar Named Desire dramatises gender and sexuality as fiercely contested terrain, where power, desire, and social order are continuously negotiated rather than settled once and for all. By bringing together Butler's performativity, Connell's hegemonic masculinity, Foucault's discourse of sexuality, Mulvey's theory of the gaze, Rich's compulsory heterosexuality, Lacan's symbolic order, and Sedgwick's account of homosocial desire, itself building on Rubin's earlier anthropological analysis, this paper has argued that the play stages gender not as a natural given but as something socially produced, materially enforced, and psychically costly. Stanley's hegemonic masculinity is rewarded, not merely tolerated; Blanche's alternative, performative femininity is exposed and punished; Stella's accommodation reproduces the very order that has just destroyed her sister; and Allan's excluded homosexuality organises, from its structural absence, the entire erotic and psychic economy of the play. The tragic culmination of Blanche's

story, her removal from the social stage into institutional confinement, registers not merely as personal collapse but as the sedimented weight of discursive, visual, and physical mechanisms of control acting together. Nearly eight decades after its premiere, Williams's play still rewards this kind of theoretically plural reading precisely because it refuses to locate gendered violence in any single cause. It insists, instead, on showing how economic precarity, discourse, spectatorship, homosocial bonding, and psychic structure combine to produce and police the categories of masculinity and femininity, which is exactly why it continues to speak to contemporary debates over gender normativity and patriarchal authority.

Notes:

1. Spivak's original question was developed in the context of colonial and postcolonial South Asian historiography; its application here to the postwar American South is analogical rather than direct, intended to flag class and regional stratification rather than to equate the two historical contexts.

2. Elia Kazan's 1951 film adaptation, produced under the constraints of the Motion Picture Production Code, altered the play's ending so that Stella leaves Stanley with the baby rather than remaining with him, a revision that softens the play's more troubling suggestion that she chooses to stay.

Works Cited:

Basow, Susan A. *Gender Stereotypes and Roles*. 3rd ed., Brooks/Cole, 1992.

Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, Vintage, 2011.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.

Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*. University of California Press, 1995.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Pantheon, 1978.

Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits: A Selection*. Norton, 1977.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1975, pp. 6-18.

Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." *Signs*, vol. 5, no. 4, 1980, pp. 631-660.

Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, edited by Rayna R. Reiter, Monthly Review Press, 1975, pp. 157-210.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Columbia University Press, 1985.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 271-313.

Stoller, Robert J. *Sex and Gender: The Development of Masculinity and Femininity*. Science House, 1968.

A Streetcar Named Desire. Directed by Elia Kazan, Warner Bros., 1951.

West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1987, pp. 125-151.

Williams, Tennessee. *A Streetcar Named Desire*. New Directions, 1947.