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Cowboy Boogaloo

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COWBOY BOOGALOO

A Senior Project submitted to

The Division of Arts

Of Bard College

By

Imogen Thomas

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

May 2019

Acknowledgements:

First and foremost, I'd like to thank my friend and senior project partner, Paris Adorno. Paris, you were my strongest support during this process and your friendship and artistic partnership means so much to me. From the bottom of my heart, I love you. Forever forever, truly truly.

Next, I'd like to thank my cast. Maeve O'Brien, Manny Williams, Anya Petkovich, Andrew Roberge, Phil Carroll, Tim Halverson, and Tess Noble Strohm: you brought this show to life. Your support, joy, and generosity mean the world to me. Thank you so much. Love y'all forever.

To Jack Ferver, Jorge Cortinas, and Miriam Felton-Dansky: Thank you for your support in the writing process and your feedback. You are inspirations to me.

To my trashbois, my best friends from home: my dearest, queerest family. I love you so much. Thank you for inspiring me every single day and for helping me find myself. Till death do us part, #trashboisbigadventure2019niagaraherewecome

I'd also like to thank my homeboy Jesus Christ, my family, Mitski, and especially Liz Phair, who has inspired me throughout my life and though not queer herself, tells my queer narrative (even after her disappointing and horrifying career choices post 2000. Liz, I still love you). Thank you Liz Phair.

Choosin' to Ride:

Welcome to my sproj. It is about cowboys. And queers.

My original SPROJ goals were to explore queerness and to have a bitchin time. To this end, I selected Paris Adorno, queen of side-eye and sardonic humor, to be my senior project partner. When we set out on this project, we didn't have much of an idea of where we wanted to go, but we shared the goals of a queer, funky project. I suggested that we adapt Colette's novel, *The Pure and The Impure*, as a western. Though I hadn't read the book, I was familiar with Colette and was interested in beginning with a work by a queer woman that explored sexuality and queerness. I wanted to adapt it to the form of a western for several reasons. One, I had long been attracted to the figure of the cowboy and the western; there's mystery there and it's held a certain mystique to me throughout my life. Two, A western is essentially an epic; A western is a grand tale, that focuses on strength, grit, and feel; all of which I was interested in as they relate to queerness as a journey. Third, a Western is both fun and accessible; there are few people who don't have at least some conception of the Western and/or cowboys, and this makes it a fun and workable theme. In addition, cowboys are very in style now, and Paris and I wanted to take advantage of this.

Despite my attraction to *The Pure and the Impure*, it became clear that adapting it would be fairly difficult. First, it's not a narrative based work; there are some threads that carry through the novel, but there isn't a clear plot, which made adaptation more of a challenge. In addition, because the work is partially biographical, it is very disjointed, both in its flow and in its characters, following snippets of Colette's story and feelings, almost like a diary of recollections.

It's almost written as if one has context of Colette's life and other writings (which maybe at the time of publishing, most readers did), so it was difficult to find any core themes or characters to expand that weren't specific to Colette. Lastly, the book simply didn't capture my interest as much as I'd hoped. Though I enjoyed the read, it didn't leave me with any questions or ideas that I felt excited about pursuing. Because of this, Paris and I decided that it was best for me to abandon *The Pure and the Impure*.

On the advice of my queer studies professor, Natalie Prizel, I began anew with an adaptation of Sarah Waters' *The Fingersmith*. *The Fingersmith* is a Victorian historical fiction crime novel, featuring two lesbian protagonists. I was originally attracted to this novel for the characters of two protagonists, both of whom are somewhat repressed women, who discover their sexuality through a series of twists and turns typical of a Victorian-era novel. I related to their journeys and truly adored both of their characters. The book is an epic of sorts, and many of the qualities of the characters and plot arc mirror that of a western: the leads act outside of the law, often in heroic ways, it is about a journey towards freedom and possibility, and good prevails over evil. In addition, the novel is a wildly fun read, and at 600-some pages, a 20-30 page adaptation was an exciting challenge.

By the end of September I had a completed draft of "The Fingersmith." The product of a fun writing process, the script was a fast moving comedy featuring a western setting, characters, and dialogue. Though I enjoyed some aspects of the script, by and large, it bored me. The story, while fun, didn't hold my attention for very long, and by the end of September, I had become disinterested in my version of *The Fingersmith*. I discovered that while I loved the characters, I

did not feel passionate about telling their stories, and that simply translating a story to a western setting wasn't fulfilling my interest in the Western. So, I left *The Fingersmith* in the dust, and rode further west.

The Cowboy is the Ideal Queer, and he Makes Me Feel Like Shit:

With the help of Paris, I decided to focus on the character of the Cowboy. The cowboy has long held a place of high esteem for me; growing up in Virginia, Marlboro cigarettes, and thus the iconic Marlboro man, have been ever present in my life. The advert cowboy is the glamorous masculine icon; both virtuous and renegade, rough and sweet, and above all else, cool. He holds a sense of hope, possibility, and movement. For me, the cowboy represents the ideal queer. The ideal queer is everything I will never reach; It is an unattainable goal.

I Thought Maybe I Could Be Something Big:

First and foremost, *Cowboy Boogaloo* is an exploration of my own queerness and the constant search for and journey towards becoming. As stated previously, the cowboy represents the 'ideal queer' for me. This is a person who is acknowledged as queer, who achieves queerness and thus selfhood, effortlessly. They aren't trying to be big or small, but simply exist, and achieve queerness and a larger than life persona by doing so. They act as they wish for themselves alone. The ideal queer is completely free and endlessly cool. The ideal queer is an icon, representing freedom, bravery, sexiness, coolness, and charisma. They also exist in a world of androgynous masculinity. This persona has glamor, but one rooted in masculinity. Despite many femme queers, the primary representation of queerness in media and popular culture is a

skinny androgynous one, and one that defaults to male rather than female. Most current queer icons are men, or women who tend towards the butch end of the spectrum, and who have slim, ‘masculine’ shape¹. While there are many gender-queer icons as well, even these people tend to fall into masculine shape, and elements of style. For instance, see the recent Peels fashion campaign, which features only waif-like masculine forms, glamorized through makeup, jewelry, and pageantry.² As such, the ideal queer easily becomes the character of the American Cowboy, a character who is unbridled and undeniably masculine, and a character glamorized through its mythos and presentation.

Personally, I struggle to become this version of queerness. At Bard especially, there is a lot of pressure to legitimize oneself as queer, and one way to do this is by being this sort of queer. The perceived pressure to achieve this version of queerness is echoed in the art world (at least by my own admittedly insecure impression), with the same type of bodies being represented on stage and queer glamor being traded like currency by queer men and AMAB artists.³ I do not at all mean to de-legitimize this type of queerness or anyone’s gender or sexuality identifications, merely to say that the popular queer image is dominated by a glamorized masculine form;

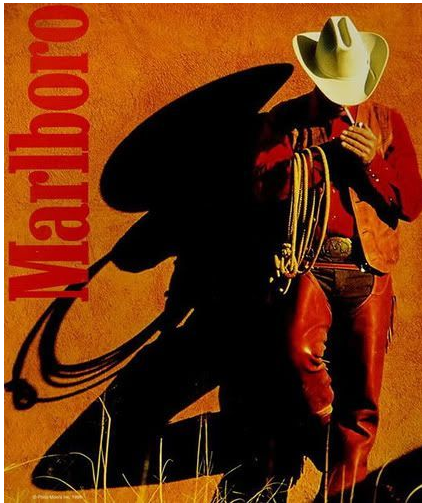
¹ Note: There is no set body shape for masculinity; a masculine body can be any body. What I mean here is a form less associated with femininity and the feminine form, meaning one with minimal curves.

²Elizée, Naomi. "This All-LGBTQ Ad Campaign Proves Clothing Has No Gender." Teen Vogue. January 28, 2019. Accessed April 24, 2019.

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/peels-lgbtq-ad-campaign-is-exactly-what-the-industry-needs>.

³ This is a paper unto itself, so I do not want to make any specific claims about artists here without adequately defending them, but I will note particularly famous cases such as PWR BTTM, a duo featuring two queer amab people, whose rise to the top was firmly grounded in queer marketing and the ‘boldness’ of amab bodies in feminine presentation. This rise is starkly contrasted with the same groups fall, a result of sexual assault allegations against Ben, a member of band. All of these accusations were made by women, and this is a particularly gendered form of violence and power. I do not mean to claim that these facts make Ben any less queer, but just to say that the band’s rise and fall were in part due to the perceived glamor of feminized masculine forms. Being able to take this form as amab queer people grants them legitimacy and power, and that this became power used to market and manipulate. A less controversial example is the Peels campaign referenced above; a literal marketing of this type of queerness, proven successful in the TeenVogue write-up of the campaign, cited above.

femininity is of course present in this image, but is used as a tool to achieve a masculine version of androgynous glamor, rather than it being the achievement. As an AFAB queer person with a markedly feminine form and face, I've long endeavored to keep up with this image. This image became my vision of the cowboy.



The glamorized masculine.⁴

Embarking on this ride west was an excruciating task. Other than my focus on the cowboy as the queer, I had little direction. I attempted to hack away at the piece, writing aimlessly. Paris and I dove into Western research and Western activities. We drove to Ballston Spa to go to a Western wear and boot depot. We immersed ourselves in authentic western cuisine (taco bell, admittedly south western, but the closest we could find in the cultural mecca of Ballston Spa, New York). We listened to Western tunes. We broadcast ourselves doing so via Instagram, to try to embody the mass-marketed cowboy. On the advice of my mother, a former

⁴https://www.pinterest.com/pin/AQNYaxmNtKvlfFOdOKW4mNnC_0A7xiX7axEQimoGzuJ5rr0qaCtXDpA/
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/439523244881370424/>
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/156148312067259600/>

dramaturg, I spent hours reading and rereading Sam Shepard's western plays, *Cowboys #2*, *True West*, and *Cowboy Mouth*, as well as reading his personal essay and poem collection *Motel Chronicles* and bits of *Day Out of Days*, Shepard's short story collection set in the American West. In addition, I read up on Shepard's staging and writing in Lynda Hart's *Sam Shepard's Metaphorical Stage*, an academic dissection of Shepard, focusing on her *Cowboys #2* section. I hoped to echo aspects of this play, using a mostly empty stage with a single object representation of the West (a cactus in our case, a sawhorse in the case of *Cowboys #2*). I attempted to emphasize theatricality in the same way Hart says Shepard does in the show, by having characters obviously taking on the characteristics of a cowboy caricature after coming onstage as themselves, with characters driven to accept their newfound cowboy identity by renaming themselves. In addition, I wanted to extend the child's play inherent to Shepard's *Cowboys #2* to *Cowboy Boogaloo*. I hoped to enforce the idea of theater as play in order to allow my actors to embody their characters as they pleased and to allow them to play their way into their own fantasies and character goals.



Paris and I live-streaming mass cowboy marketing via Instagram *sponsored by taco bell



A Trusty Band o' Boys:

Despite our extravagant attempts to discover our Cowboy, the process was slow. By the time Senior Project group auditions were held, I still had very few pages. I had a vague idea of a lead character, at the time called 'The Cowboy,' a counter character, called 'Cowboy Outlaw', and a want for a large ensemble-based cast. So, going into auditions, Paris and I knew nothing beyond that we were looking to cast 5-6 actors who formed a strong ensemble. In the group audition, we focused on movement ability and had actors read a western sounding sentence ("what are you doin' rustlin' down there in the prairie bush?"). We were really just trying to suss

out who had strong presence and a twinkle in their eye. From group auditions, we called back 22 actors, including two actors who were not able to come to group auditions (Tess and Maeve). In callbacks, we had actors devise several short pieces in small groups, complete physical challenges, such as crossing a river of lava with their team of cowboys, and had them improvise text along with set movement vocabulary of riding and posing.

In callbacks, seven actors stood out:

Phil Carroll:

Loves his mama and loves his friends.

Phil was the first actor we cast. Phil is truly one of the funniest people I know; he has excellent timing and has a talent for physical comedy. His physicality when acting was his most notable characteristic for me in auditions; In each little part he played during auditions, even in single line readings for vague characters, Phil brought specificity to his body. Each character he pulled out was new, detailed, and singular, all through simple physicality changes. Phil continued this through rehearsals, breathed life into the figure of the Cowboy, and jauntily rides on till this day.

Andrew Roberge:

Bites like a snake and hugs like a hog.

Though neither Paris nor I had met or seen Andrew before auditions, he impressed with his capacity for teamwork and humor. He was also a strong physical presence in the audition room. In addition, Andrew has an incredible ability for joy and play. Andrew consistently brought excitement and energy to each and every rehearsal, line, and breath, regardless of his personal

life. Even in a room full of people committed to bringing a sense of play to theater, Andrew stands out among them. He is a delight to work with.

Tim Halverson:

Bites like a poison snake and hugs better than Andrew!

Tim's strength in auditions was storytelling. Tim commit in every exercise to making sure that his audience was on board with his story. At the end of callbacks, Paris and I had Tim and Andrew stay behind and do a storytelling exercise. We had them each improv a story, and while Tim was telling his, he looked back to Andrew while performing, pulling him in and waiting for Andrew's reaction to send him along on his story. I noticed this because I thought it was unusual for him to look to Andrew as audience because we were in an audition, and I expected him to be performing solely for Paris and I. Tim wants to make sure everyone around him is on board with his tale, and it is a joy watching him check in with the entire audience while he performs.

Immanuel Williams:

Hot as a summer's day and distrustin' as a spooked stallion.

Manny immediately stood out in auditions. What can I say? He's just cool. I won't lie, this is why he originally stood out to me. The cowboy is, above all else, cool, and Manny fits that well. In callbacks though, I also saw Manny's impressive physical energy and creativity. In each exercise, Manny would pull something wild; either a huge and somewhat odd physical gesture, or a short but hilarious addition to a line, or a truly silly and creative concept. Manny continued to surprise me with these throughout the rehearsal process, and continues to each time I see him.

Anya Petkovich:

Rides fast and talks only when she's got somethin to say.

Anya couldn't speak during callbacks. She had laryngitis, but still managed to impress. Later in the rehearsal process, Anya's presence and wicked sense of humor came out, and influenced both her character and the rehearsal room. Like other actors, Anya's person inspired her character, and keeping her in mind while writing brought me a lot of joy.

Maeve O'brien:

A lover and a fighter who'll ride till the cows come home.

Maeve is by far the silliest of our performers. I have never once seen Maeve play something the same way twice; each time she performs, she plays something up or differently, bringing more silliness than anyone else I've seen. This energy was critical in the rehearsal room, as Paris and I hoped for an element of the absurd in the show, and really wanted silliness to be present. Maeve encouraged all actors to take risks like this, and truly strengthened our ensemble as a whole, myself included.

Tess Noble Strohm:

The baddest outlaw in town.

Our resident 'Bard Cool' kid (the Bard version of popular), Tess was a natural fit for Outlaw.

She is athletic, she's sleek, she's both aloof and outgoing... She's cool. Tess also brought unexpected reality to the character of Outlaw. Though the character's dialogue and origin story are somewhat absurd, Tess played Outlaw with subtlety, really bringing herself to the forefront of her performance. She was all-in for this project and was a very helpful actor and friend to have in the process for this reason.

The Long Journey West:

Once our cast was finalized, the writing process began in earnest. With the need to have something concrete for the rehearsal room breathing down my neck, I hustled to get pages out. This was excruciating writing process for me. I couldn't unearth a plot, I didn't trust any of my instincts, and I grappled with the characters and purpose of them, confronting my own issues and discomfort with my queerness and my feelings of inadequacy. In order to begin rehearsal with minimal script, we spent a lot of time devising. Our actors really took to devising, consistently bringing excellent short pieces to the table. While few of these pieces seriously influenced the script, they inspired each character, and many found their way into the final script in some way or another, including the group origin story told by the boys, and much of the blocking.



Cowboy Origin Story, based on a scene devised by the cast.



A scene of doubt, blocked to match a devised scene.

Through rehearsals, the script began to take shape. The first scenes written were those about doubt; the final scene between Boogaloo and Phil was the first, followed by the discussion between the cowboys after waking up from sleep. Boogaloo's origin story comes from a place of doubt as well. In this scene, Boogaloo creates a narrative for himself on the spot, building himself into a larger than life figure. This is a coming out story of sorts; it is Boogaloo writing his own queer narrative of becoming. It is the story he wishes he could have. This is echoed in the Boys' creation story as well. These stories are queer creation myths for the characters; they allow them to build themselves into the ideal that they want to be, echoing the idea of identity achievement central to the piece. Cowboy Outlaw's origin story functions this way as well, but

her narrative is not invented, it is true. This enforces her position as a 'true' cowboy (a true queer), effortlessly achieving perfect queerness, placing her in a higher position than the other boys and causing them to admire and emulate her.

Scenes about doubt continued to come, and it became clear to me that doubt was central to the piece. The piece is about a journey to achieve, but this journey is driven largely by self doubt, and in the case of Boogaloo, a creeping feeling of doubt in the journey is critical to his arc. There is the constant question for Boogaloo that if the personhood he hopes to achieve even exists, and if there will be an eventual end to searching for meaning in his life and in himself. Other characters also grapple with doubt, with the boys doubting whether or not they're headed anywhere, and Outlaw doubting her place with the group. This self doubt also carried into the writing process, with me feeling lost, inadequate, and often stupid. I cried many times, often hidden under a table with Paris trying to talk me off the ledge. Despite the self doubt, the script slowly came together. The final push of writing happened over winter break. I travelled to New York City to finalize the script with Paris at the end of January, and managed to get the script to the cast just in time for the beginning of the Spring Semester.

Based on feedback we received following midways, we focused on trying to clarify the queerness of the Cowboy and finalizing an arc. We added the creek scene to this end, making a clear implication that Boogaloo and Outlaw are an item of some sort, and a clearer statement of Boogaloo's want to be free and open, like Outlaw. In some ways, I regret this decision, as it placed their relationship within lesbianism, which was not my intention for the story. For one, Boogaloo is not meant to be a woman (although I think there's a version where he could be), but

because I am am femme in appearance, this may not have been clear. Two, Boogaloo's romantic attraction to Outlaw isn't the crux of his relationship to her. Boogaloo's feelings about Outlaw center around something Paris and I theorize as 'the queer gaze.' This is the gaze of wanting to be with and wanting to emulate, of longing and jealousy, of camaraderie and attraction.⁵

Centering on Boogaloo and Outlaw's romantic attraction felt like a disservice to the 'queer gaze'. I feel that the ambiguity of Cowboy Righthanded and Lefthanded's relationship (one that was between brothers, best friends, lovers) better served this theme. One thing that Paris and I paid special attention to was trying to keep out any aspects of shame in characters relationships. For instance, we made sure that there were no elements of bro-culture, or 'no-homo' moments between Righthanded and Lefthanded (though this was never an issue with Andrew and Tim; they were open and joyful in all their interactions in rehearsal and onstage). Though characters sometimes feel shame based on their own inadequacies, we didn't want there to be any shame based on sexuality or gender. Sexuality and gender are the basis for the character's journeys, and Boogaloo's sense of shame at his inadequacy is the driving force of the play, but none of the character's actions were driven in any way by feelings of shame relating to any queer or gay actions.



⁵ I do not presume this to be a new idea, nor a fully fleshed out one; this was an idea present during writing and creation for me, but it is not backed by much other than my and Paris' own conversations and personal feelings.

Outlaw and Boogaloo at the creek.

I decided to finish the show with the final list-form ‘I want to be a Cowboy’ text because ultimately, it felt like the most clear explanation of my feelings about the cowboy and queerness. Both the poses (which are written into the text, though the specific poses are not set) and the statements informed and explained my complex and difficult feelings about the cowboy. It felt desperate; the journey of longing and want for actualization felt immediate when writing and performing. The stakes felt high during this moment. Paris and I set the movements through exercises with our actors, and worked closely with our lighting designer, Stacy Boggs, to achieve silhouettes reminiscent of shapes against a desert sunset. We also wanted our movements to match our text and to project the recognizable cowboy icon. This is also true in the very end of the show, when Cowboy Boogaloo rides offstage following his line, “... I wanna be a swipe of red, streakin across the prairie.”⁶ Here, Paris and I wanted to match action with text and convey that Boogaloo’s journey will continue, and that more generally, the queer journey is ongoing.



‘I want to be the cowboy’ finale

⁶*Cowboy Boogaloo*,

This is also an ode to Shepard, who ends *Cowboys #2* with the light growing brighter to match the harsh desert sun and with his characters actively searching for shade as they complain about the sun’s rays.

The West, Actualized:

Rehearsals for this show were truly joyful and consistently fruitful. Once the script was finalized, the show took shape very quickly. Paris, the cast, and I worked very well as a team and formed deep bonds. Performances were generally fun and high energy. That said, I did struggle acting in my own piece; it exacerbated my worries about the script and my own insecurities and a queer person and performer. However, I'm glad that I chose to act in the role of Boogaloo. It was a great learning experience, and I gained insight that will inform the next time I write a piece that I intend to act in, which I plan to do. In addition, I can't really imagine anyone else in the role of Boogaloo right now; it's such a personal role that I don't want to see anyone else step into right now.

The decision to come out at the top of the show was a last minute one. Up until the day before our open dress, I introduced the show in a longer form version of this, that was clunky, uninteresting, and awkward. Paris and I disliked it, and wanted a funnier and more succinct version. I wanted this version to also include coming out, though it was self-serving, in part for my own want to rip off the band-aid, but also to obviously place the show in the context of queerness and to make it clear that I and the rest of the cast were stepping into our fantasies as actors and people. I'm not sure this was the strongest theatrical choice, but I don't regret it. It was my official coming out to my parents, and it felt easier (and like a fun little prank on my parents) to do this way, when they couldn't say anything in reply to me. Furthermore, it gave me the ability to be the larger than life figure that I see in the cowboy and want to be as a queer

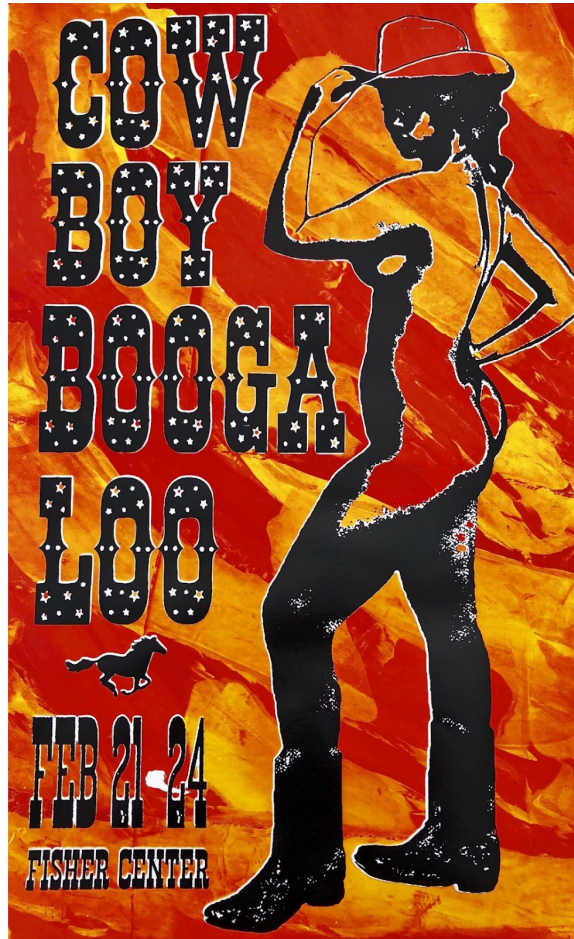
person. In addition, the Bard Community on the night my parents were in attendance (Saturday night) was incredibly positive and made me feel very safe. My cast and Paris were also very loving and supportive, and the experience was very positive.

Leading up to the show, Paris and I worked hard to advertise *Cowboy Boogaloo*. I designed and screen printed our posters and we took two sets of promotion photos for the show. The first set of photos were taken by me and the second were taken by a student photographer, Allegra Tsao Robinson. We have some very beautiful photos from these shoots, and were able to post many photos of each cast member all over social media. However, I regret having used Allegra to take photos; Paris and I paid her a lot for her time, and she returned the photos to us unedited, and the vast majority of the photos were out of focus. Paris directed the shoot and Tess did the lighting, so it felt like we wasted a lot of time. In the future, I would have us do all photography in house.



Cowboy Boogaloo
Promotion Photos

⁷ Photos in blue and pink by Allegra Tsao Robinson



Poster, designed and screen printed by me

I am incredibly proud of my, Paris', and my cast's work on *Cowboy Boogaloo*. Both Paris and my cast were instrumental in my writing process and I am deeply grateful. This project challenged me both as a creator and as a person still trying to form my identity and come to terms with my queerness, and I feel that I emerged with a strong product. I'm pleased with the way that the show flows, I think the staging was creative and visually interesting, we formed a

true ensemble of actors, and we produced a funny and engaging show. Going forward in the piece, which I intend to do, I will make many edits. I will continue to explore Boogaloo's journey and to further clarify the cowboy as queer, likely removing the creek scene and adding others. I will also continue to think of my actors and Paris as I write, as they are ingrained as much in the current text as I am. I will continue to honor our work through my writing process and to write with the sense of joy, play, and support shared by my cast, Paris, and myself.



Our Team. Love you forever.

Love You Forever; An Epilogue

Boogaloo, as defined by the cast:

1. To Boogaloo is to make believe, to say yes and trust.”
2. Boogaloo: A very sexy, very savvy, very hip person. More specifically a Cowboy. In a sentence: “That man is a regular Boogaloo”.
3. Boogaloo, noun. Someone on a journey for self understanding and to overcome confidence issues.
4. To have a good time, to be what you always wanted to be or someone different, to be part of the team.
5. I don’t know, Boogaloo; just made it up because it sounds good/cool.
6. Boogaloo, verb.
 - a. To follow in the footsteps of Cowboy Boogaloo.
 - b. To find purpose in the West.
 - c. In a sentence: “If you ain’t here to boogaloo, you shouldn’t be here at all.”
7. Boogaloo:

Noun: A ruckus, usually one with positive connotations.

Verb: To ruckus, with positive connotations. I.e. to celebrate, bash.

COWBOY BOOGALOO

A play by Imogen Thomas

[IMOGEN]

Enters from stage left.

Hey, everyone. I'm Imogen and that's Paris out there. Mom, Dad? I'm gay. What really matters is: I wanna be a motherfucking cowboy. Welcome to the to the west. I'm riding out to be the coolest goddamn queer there ever was.

Gallops offstage.

Actors enter in western garb. Gather in a circle.

[ANYA]

Manny, I gotta get outta here.

[MANNY]

Yeah? And go where, Anya?

[ANYA]

I don't know man, I'm searchin.

[PHIL]

Searchin' for what?

[ANYA]

Dunno, Phil.

[TIM and ANDREW and MAEVE]

Just... searchin....

SONG PLAYS. THE COWBOY rides in. .

COWBOY:

Y'all searchin? Lookin fer adventure? [*Tumbleweed rolls across stage.*] You wanna be cooler? You wanna be bigger and better? Then look no further. The west is callin'! Grab yer stud and yer ten-gallon and let's beat dirt.

[ANDREW]:

Who are you?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I'm the Cowboy. Cowboy Boogaloo. Now let's ride!

COWBOYS ride in formation.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

I'm Cowboy Buffalo. I'm hot like a summer's day and distrustin' like a spooked stallion.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

I'm Cowboy Mesquite. I'm a lover and a fighter, and I'll ride till the cows come home.

COWBOY PHIL:

I'm Cowboy Phil. I love my mama and I love my friends.

COWBOY GO-GO:

I'm Cowboy Go-Go. I ride quick and talk only when I got somethin ta say.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

I'm Cowboy Lefthanded. I bite like a snake and hug like a hog.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

I'm Cowboy Righthanded. I bite like a poison snake and hug better than lefthanded!

Whoops and Wails.

COWBOY BOOGALOO

C'mon boys, follow me! I'll get ya where ya need to go

(The Cowboys ride together. After a short ride, they re-enter exhausted, they come to a stop.)

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Woououweee, I'm busted like a wagon in the mud!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Aw, you goof, You aint no wagon in the mud; Yer more like a fly that's spent too much time on yer horse's ass!

COWBOY GO-GO:

Aw, shit Mesquite, it don't matter what he is! He's beat, ya barrel boarder!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah, Boogaloo, could we take a rest?

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Yeah Boogaloo, I'm right tuckered.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

You would be ya buffalo sleeper!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED

Why you..!

These two get to wrasslin for a moment. They stop when GO-GO tells them to.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Aw, quit your wrasslin' you two!

COWBOY PHIL :

Boogaloo, would it be ok if we bunked down and filled up?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I 'spose it wouldn't do no harm. Alright boys, tie up yer girls fer the night, this looks like a fine place to roll out.

All cowboys get off their horses and tie em up. End up in a semicircle, as if they're around a fire. Maybe Righthanded and Lefthanded bump into each other and begin to almost wrassle.

COWBOY GO-GO:

I'll get the fire goin.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah, it's bean time!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Real good deal, y'all.

*Fire lights (lighting change to orange I think, maybe a lil crackling sound is heard, I dunno. Stagehand brings out some cans o beans. This bit can be slow, as the cowboys are windin' down for the day. The cowboys eat for a while in 'silence' (sounds of eating and small sounds of mmm and such can be heard, but no vamping of dialogue). Phil breaks silence. **Music fades when talking begins.***

COWBOY PHIL

Say, Boogaloo, how'd you end up a cowboy? If ya don't mind me askin'.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Aw, Phil, I dunno if that's a story y'all wanna hear. Ain't all that exciting

Lines overlap

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Aw c'mon Boogaloo!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Yeah, I don't buy that not exciting junk fer a second!

COWBOY GO-GO

Can't be boring when yer a cowboy!

RIGHTHANDED and LEFTHANDED start a western chant. OTHERS join in. Finally BOOGALOO acquiesces.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Alright alright alright. If y'all really want it, I won't hold it back. But like I's said, it ain't all that much.

[COWBOYS continue encouragement]

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Well, I didn't start as no cowboy. But I ain't too far from no country, ya dig? Ok, so's one night, I'm walkin along, jus mindin my own, an I see an orange light in the distance. I thought maybe it

was some hoe down or something, so I made my ways over towards it. But when I get there, it ain't no wild bat, it's a great blaze; reachin up into the night sky. There's a crowd a people there, an one of em is weepin' an' wailing. He grabs me an he says, my my sister and her family are trapped inside and no one can get em out! So I say, 'that ain't no way ta think'! An I push my way through the crowd, past the lawmen and fire quellers; they try ta stop me but ain't no one keepin me down. I run into the buildin, through the flames and smoke and clamber towards the sound of their screams. And I find a lady, holding her family, tears streamin down her face. She looks up at me, and says, "God? Is it time?" An I say...

[All the cowboys lean in.]

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED

[Gulps] What did ya say?

COWBOY BOOGALOO

I said 'HELL NAH!' and we shared a passionate kiss, and then I grabbed all three of em, man on my back, lady and her girl in my arms and I git on outta there. When I emerged from the smoke, family in hands, the onlookers kept their distance, jaws hangin open like a barn door flappin' in the wind. I laid the family down real careful like, and stared right back. Finally, the lady looked up at the crowd and cried out "This hottie is a regular boogaloo! You're a cowboy hero!" An I lifted my hat, which I happened to be wearin, waved it, and I rode on outta there and never looked back.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Ho-ly shit, Boogaloo.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Boogaloo, that's the baddest tale I ever did hear.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Yeah, real rugged like.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Did ya get burned?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Nah, just a lil rub here an there.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Boogaloo, is that true?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Sure as the sun risin' in the east

COWBOY PHIL :

An what about the family, Boogaloo? Were they ok?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I 'spect so.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Wow Boogaloo, You're MY Cowboy hero.

[COWBOYS start to tell what they wish their own origin stories were, or perhaps what heroic action they will do. BOOGALOO looks on, maybe w some clapping and such as one would clap and stomp while lookin' over a hoe-down.]

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Guys, you wanna hear a tale near good as that?

[Cowboys react positively 'oohs and aahs', maybe they get that western chant going]

COWBOY MESQUITE

When I became a cowboy, I was just groovin down the street, when I saw a little boy, stranded on a rock in a river, cryin out fer rescue.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah! And that river was full a SNAKES!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Yeah, yeah, the poison kind!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Yeah! So I saw this baby! And the snakes were getting up on the rock he was standin' on!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Yeah, he was was gettin more an more scared

COWBOY PHIL

Uh oh

COWBOY GO-GO:

So I's jumped right in there, and started swimmin'.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Yeah, yeah, and I jumped in there on Go-Go's back so's we could get to the boy

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Yeah, an I jumped in there too, so's I could get some of them snakes!

[LEFTHANDED and RIGHTHANDED jump in together in the pantomime]

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah, an I got out my barker, ready to shoot those damn snakes away from the boy!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

So we're swimming, an suddenly a big snake jumps on us, and tries to get us!

COWBOY GO-GO:

Yeah, so I drop Mesquite *[MESQUITE should be seen struggling in the 'water']*, and I grab that snake, an I take him, and I RIP HIM APART. *[should look like the devising]*

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Yeah! An' then another snake comes, and he's goin fer the boy, so I grab him! And I take his body and I whip him from side to side *[as if he's holding a rope and arcing it over his head on both sides]* and then I RIP HIM APART *[Same rip/toss gesture]*

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah, an then another snake makes a pass at Go-Go, So I grab him, and I'm a vegetarian, I don't relish this, but I beat him into the ground OVER AND OVER and over and then I tore him in two *[same rip/toss gesture]*

COWBOY PHIL:

An, then, uh, I got in there too because I don't like snakes tryna get my friends so I got in there and I'm pickin em up and just tossin' them outta there! *[toss]*

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

And then one actually gets the boy *[assumes part of Boy, gets bit, collapses]*

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Righthanded!!!!

[Goes to his side in panic, RH tries to shoo him off as it is just part of the game. All COWBOYS-- (BOOGALOO maybe joins when they lift him from the rock-- Paris up to you) flock to 'boy']
Sad fiddling.

COWBOY GO-GO:

An I thought it was too late

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Thought that boy a goner!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

No! *[sucks poison out]*

COWBOY BUFFALO:

So we lifted him from that rock

COWBOY PHIL:

An we brought him back to shore

[Carry him downstage as group, place on next line]

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

An as we cradled him in our arms

[Freeze for image, Boogaloo at center, cradling Righthanded w/ all cowboys gathered round, Lefthanded very close and concerned, see Pieta]

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

He took a great breath

[All inhale sharply]

And said YEEHAW!!!!

[Cowboys all cheer and there is a moment of general chaos]

COWBOY PHIL:

Boogaloo, bein' a cowboy sure is a bitchin' time.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

It sure is. Alright boys [*cheers*] that was darn tootin excitin'. But I think it's probably time to chase some dreams and lay out. We got a big day a stompin prairie tomorrow.

[Cowboys agree and make to lay out, all in spooning line w/ Phil and Buffalo on either end. Boogaloo falls asleep separately, maybe with straw in his mouth. The Cowboys lay for a second before Cowboy Phil calls out]

COWBOY PHIL:

[sitting up on elbows, over and leaning on the other cowboys] Buffalo! Psst! Buffalo! You still up?

COWBOY BUFFALO:

[also sits up on elbows, also leaning on other cowboys] Yeah, no thanks to you, Phil.

COWBOY PHIL:

Ya know, Buffalo, just the other week I was tryna talk ta my mama, and she asked me where's I was goin', and I right couldn't tell her.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Well Phil, I guess we ain't goin much a nowhere are we?

COWBOY GO-GO:

Aw, will you boys shut up? I'm tryna sleep!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Then sleep ya dang blue belly!

COWBOY GO-GO:

Aw, shut it Buffalo!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

[Rouses and sits up too.]

Blame it, y'all. Can't get a minutes rest!

[RIGHTHANDED AND LEFTHANDED wake and sit up too]

COWBOY GO-GO:

Look, The ways I figure, we're goin just beyond nowhere. Like look, look up! See that star there?

COWBOY PHIL:

Sure do.

COWBOY GO-GO:

That there star is the western star. That star points directly nowhere.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeahs, an we been followin' that, so as I said, we's goin nowhere.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Right, but we're still riding! Well, we ride long enough, we'll be past nowhere.

COWBOY PHIL:

And that's somewhere?

COWBOY GO-GO:

Dunno. But it's just beyond nowhere. That's what you oughta tell yer mama.

COWBOY PHIL:

I'm not sure how she'll be takin' ta that.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Well, it's all we got.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

That ain't all that much...

COWBOY BUFFALO:

I dunno, sounds kinda hip...

[a quiet moment passes]

Say Boogaloo, what do you think? Where's all this headed? Is this it?

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

You don't like it?

COWBOY RIGHT HANDED:

C'mon Buffalo!

[Buffalo stands sheepishly, shrugs]

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Aw, Buffalo, *[Slaps BUFFALO on the back]* I understand. Nah, this ain't it. The buck don't stop here; we got more prairie to beat! C'mon, don't look like we're getting much rest here anyways. Hop on yer boys and let's fly!

All exit/ride

Re-enter. Tumbleweed rolls past. Fog fills the prairie.

COWBOY PHIL:

Boogaloo? Where are we?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I don't quite know, Phil... Awfully foggy...

COWBOY MESQUITE:

I gotta bad feelin' 'bout this...

COWBOY PHIL:

A bad feelin'?

[LEFTHANDED and RIGHTHANDED move into hug. BUFFALO inches closer to PHIL, who's inching closer to GO-GO, who's inching closer to MESQUITE]

COWBOY GO-GO

Boogaloo?

[From the fog, COWBOY OUTLAW emerges, looking bad as heck. Damn, OUTLAW! OUTLAW walks slowly downstage, gives audience chance to take her in]

COWBOY OUTLAW:

What in the blazes is a damn boogaloo?

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Who in the blazes are you?

COWBOY GO-GO:

Yeah, And what brings ya to these parts?

*[CIRCLES OUTLAW IN WIDE STANCE. GETTIN' READY FOR A REAL INTIMIDATIN'.
OUTLAW walks back till she is at top of circle upstage.]*

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Seems ta me like these parts are as good as any. I'm here on a whim.

COWBOY PHIL:

You can't just come in here like milkweed on the breeze! This here's OUR parts!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah if you ain't here to boogaloo, then you shouldn't be here at all!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Now, now fellers, don't get yer chaps in a tangle. Ain't no need to go makin rules.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Actually, I live fer breakin' rules. And I didn't come round fer no boogaloo.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

You lookin fer a fight!

COWBOY GO-GO:

Aw, hell, are we lookin at a good ol fashion shoot out?

COWBOY OUTLAW squares up.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

If a tussle is what yer lookin fer, I won't disappoint. Draw Boys!

[ALL draw their guns, pointed at each other. Everyone has 2 guns, everyone has at least one gun on them, they slowly circle, like in a nice dance. But a duel.]

COWBOY PHIL:

I, I don't like this!
[Guns shaking]

COWBOY GO-GO:

You better watch yerself real careful, Outlaw.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Seems to me it's you who should be watching

[Breaks from line w/ Roll, or maybe a quick groovy dance move, shoots guns in the air twice, whirls on group, and takes aim at GO-GO first. PHIL sees this, and cries out No! And throws himself in front of GO-GO. PHIL is shot, goes down. GO-GO drops, to cradle PHIL. OUTLAW whirls again, this time taking aim at MESQUITE. BUFFALO Shoves MESQUITE out of the way, into RIGHTHANDED and LEFTHANDED. The three get tangled. OUTLAW shoots BUFFALO, he falls. OUTLAW then turns on Boogaloo while the remaining cowboys are still tangled.]

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Looks like it's just you an me.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Not for long
[OUTLAW shoots BOOGALOO. BOOGALOO falls dramatically]

COWBOY GO-GO:

Boogaloo!
[All COWBOYS jump up and run to Boogaloo in panic]

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

[groans]
I'm fine boys. I'm fine. Mighty fine shot ya got there. *[preparing to get up]*

COWBOY OUTLAW:

[Walks to BOOGALOO, give hand to help him up.]
That was mighty fine shootin'.

COWBOY BOOGALOO

[Accepts hand and stands]

Nothin' compared to what you pulled. That was really somethin'. I'm the Cowboy. Cowboy Boogaloo.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Real nice to meet ya Boogaloo. I'm Cowboy Outlaw.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Welcome to our parts, Outlaw

COWBOY PHIL:

Outlaw, that was real cool.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Yeah, Outlaw. Damn.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

You need anythin' Outlaw?

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Some water?

RIGHTHANDED/LEFTHANDED:

I'll get it!

[Start to argue (no, I'll get it.. etc).]

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Actually, I could use some provisions

COWBOY GO-GO:

Beans?

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Bean time!

COWBOY PHIL:

Let's go get some guys! Fer Outlaw!

[the band of cowboys (all except OUTLAW) excitedly ride offstage. BOOGALOO hangs behind, but out of view of OUTLAW. BOOGALOO watches OUTLAW w admiration, attraction, envy, sorrow, the QUEER GAZE]

COWBOY OUTLAW:

When I was kid, my momma wanted me to be something real special. She thought maybe I could be was always talkin' about a doctor, or an architect, or even a big screen star: something real good. She made big plans for me. And I thought maybe I was something big too, but all these plans she was making just never sat right with me. I'd sit an look out my window and just dream about what else could be out there. So one day, I jus' kissed her goodbye, grabbed my hat, my stud, and my trusty barkin irons (*holds up gun hand*) and gave leg bail. I split and rode on west. I wasn't really lookin for anything other than what was out there and boy oh boy did I find it. I been strikin' on my own, stoppin' here and there, meeting who's and whats, seeing all i can, thundering across the landscape like a storm. Now, I ain't big or small or nothin' except that I am. I figure the ground's gonna run out soon, but I haven't hit the edge yet.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Aw, shit, Outlaw. That's beautiful.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Boogaloo! I didn't know you was around.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Out here, I'm always around. I'm the Cowboy, remember?

COWBOY OUTLAW:

I'll buy that deal. Were ya always the Cowboy?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Nah. Not me. But I 'spect someone was. It came easy though; soon as I said it, I was the Cowboy. Didn't take nothin else. Came real natural-like, I guess.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

And that was it?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I 'spose there was more. I wanted to be somethin bigger than I was. But I wasn't so *open* as you. I guess bein Boogaloo was what I was dreamin bout.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

And the others?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

They were lookin fer somethin else, like you. But this is what they got an I don't reckon no one's complain or nothin.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

So you found em out here?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Nah, I brought em with me. What's a cowboy without his trusty band of boys?

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Somethin like me, I reckon.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Well I like that just fine.

The two sit a second.

Lots.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

I know I said earlier that I didn't come here fer no Boogaloo, but I didn't mean nothin by it.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Don't worry nothin'. What the heck is a Boogaloo, anyway?

COWBOY OUTLAW:

I 'spect it's somethin like this (*does a lil cowboy dance*) *OUTLAW pulls Boogaloo into the dance. The two dance wildy*).

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Outlaw, yer free as a bird on the wind.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Ridin like a lone mustang flashing through the dusk!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Bright as a yellow winged bird. Outlaw, Would you ride with us? I think you'd make a real lovely addition to the gang. Could use a new pardner...

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Shit. It would be a bucket o' beans and a barrel a gin!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Aw damn! Boys! Come on out here! Looks like we've got ourselves an outlaw!

COWBOYS run out in celebration

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Aw heck yeah Outlaw!

COWBOY PHIL:

Would ya teach me how to ride in like you? Real dark and mysterious like?

COWBOY MESQUITE:

(playfully tackling OUTLAW) YEAH!!!!!!! And you'll have to teach me to square off like you do.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Outlaw, you know about the western star? I can teach ya!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Alright boys, lets strike dirt! We got more to see!

COWBOY OUTLAW:

More to do!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

More to wrassle!

LEFTHANDED/RIGHTHANDED:

YEAHHHHHH!!!!!!!

Wild riding around stage. Outlaw should lead group offstage, Boogaloo hangs back, watches wistfully but also w admiration? Goddamn this queer gaze

Tumbleweed rolls past. THE BAND OF BOYS re-enter on the opposite side of the stage (run fellas!!!) There is a river!??

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Woah!!! A creek!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Turning to Boogaloo and Outlaw

Feel how cool it is? [looks at O/B longingly--- he wants in that crick!]

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Ain't it a beauty? Y'all wanna hang here for a while?

RIGHTHANDED AND LEFTHANDED say some kind of excited chatter about that. All split off, MESQUITE, BUFFALO, GO, and PHIL go off and play in one section, THE HANDS in another location (we're looking for a fun and interesting stage picture here), OUTLAW and BOOGALOO sitting real close to each other downstage right-- feet dangling over as if in the water?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

How do you do it Outlaw?

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Do what, Boogaloo?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

You got the boys hangin on yer every word! Heck, even the horses!

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Boogaloo, you know they're followin you, right?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Yeah, but it ain't quite the same.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Why do ya worry about it so much? Dontcha just wanna be sometimes? Ya know, live in the moment?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I wish I could! It's real impressive the way you do it...

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Yeah well maybe that's just how it looks...

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

No really, ya sure a real way about ya

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Boogaloo, you got a way about ya too

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Hey Boogaloo!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Hey Boogaloo!

COWBOY MESQUITE:

Hey Outlaw!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Yeah Outlaw!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Outlaw!

COWBOY OUTLAW

Yeah?

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

If I was a mountain I'd be 10,000 feet tall

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

If you was a mountain you wouldn't be you no more

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Yeah, but I'd be strong and hard and old. And I'd live forever!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

But you wouldn't live at all! Mountains don't breathe or think or nothin!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Well how do you know that?

COWBOY PHIL:

Well... They ain't got no brains or lungs or nothin!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

Yeah, can't think without no brains!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED

Yeah! They ain't nothing but a big ol rock!

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Well I LIKE THAT!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED

WELL that's fine but I like you just the way you is

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Aw shit.

COWBOY PHIL:

Yeah! I like you just the way you is too

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Well I'll be darned guys. I like me alright too. I was just talkin

COWBOY PHIL:

Oh well I can just talk too! If I was somethin else I'd be that cloud up there!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

That's just as dumb as the mountain!

COWBOY PHIL:

It's not dumb I aint no gump! I like that cloud cuz he gets to look down at all of us and I think that'd be a mighty fine view. And if I was up there y'all could wave to me.

COWBOY MESQUITE:

I like that. (looks up and waves)

(all wave)

COWBOY PHIL

See. And then I'd be gone with the winds and rains.

COWBOY BUFFALO

That's kinda sad.

COWBOY MESQUITE

Yeah. Do you think we'll be gone like the winds and rains?

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED

Well, sure, eventually.

COWBOY GO-GO

Life and death, ain't nothin but that out here.

COWBOY OUTLAW

Nah. That ain't true.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

How do you figure?

COWBOY OUTLAW

Well life and death sure that's nothing we can outrun, but out here, that ain't what it's about. We come and go soon as we ride through.

COWBOY BOOGALOO

You sayin once we ride on we're dead?

COWBOY OUTLAW

I'm saying that's a life an a death right there. We come in, we come out, we fade into the horizon ahead. Can live a thousand lifetimes like that.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

That sure is a lot

COWBOY PHIL

So we go fast.

COWBOY MESQUITE

Goin.. Goin.. Gone.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Yeah but we leave a cloud of dust behind us, lingerin' in the air...

COWBOY OUTLAW:

That's right.

COWBOY BUFFALO:

That's nice, Outlaw. Sounds like a real excitin way to be, Outlaw.

COWBOY OUTLAW:

It is...

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

[To himself] Kinda scary

COWBOY OUTLAW:

Sometimes. It's one heck of a wrassle.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

It's a heck of a wrassle with you here too

COWBOY OUTLAW:

It really was... But I think it's bout time for me to ride out. I love y'all and I had a wild time, but I gotta strike back out on my own. Hit that open road, cross the prairie, and ride down into my own canyons. I really like ya, and lord knows I love a good wrasslin, but when the sunrise comes, an Outlaw feels best with that growin' shine striking on a fresh horizon. It was a mighty fine ride y'all. But I gotta stir up new dust.

[Outlaw leaves. All watch in sorrow. Turn to Boogaloo]

COWBOY MESQUITE:

What'll we do without Outlaw?

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Yeah, what'll we do now?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

It's OK. We'll keep riding! Keep beating dirt! We'll find something! We'll get somewhere!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

I dunno Boogaloo. I'm feelin like a bag a nails. We just been ridin and ridin. Don't get me wrong, it's been a romping good time, but sooner or later this road's gonna run out. Maybe mine's runnin out now. I think it's about time for me to ride of into a new life-time, like Outlaw was talkin about.

COWBOY GO-GO:

Yeah Boogaloo. I think I gotta go too. Just don't know which way's west no more. I think maybe it's that way! *[turns, looks around, chooses a direction and looks that way before riding off in that direction]*

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Wait! Boys! There's more than this!

COWBOY BUFFALO:

I 'spect there is!

COWBOY GO-GO:

Bye, Boogaloo.

[Boogaloo turns to the remaining boys]

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Well, boys, that's ok *[it's not]*. We can still keep goin!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

Actually Boogaloo, I think Buffalo's got a point. I've loved the ride,

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

We loved it!

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

But now that Buffalo mentioned it, I think I'm ready to ride out to. I think there's something real cool just past another horizon.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Yeah I'm thinkin so too.

[Together] We're thinkin' so.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

I think it's about time fer us to strike out on some different dirt.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

But what's there?

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Well what's here?

COWBOY MESQUITE:

And Boogaloo? Since they're at it, I guess I best be ridin out too. I should be findin' Buffalo and whatnot.

COWBOY RIGHTHANDED:

C'mon, Mesquite. Lefthanded? Let's ride out.

COWBOY LEFTHANDED:

Bye, Boogaloo. Love you!

COWBOY MESQUITE/RIGHTHANDED:

Love you forever!

[Exit.]

*[Boogaloo and Phil left onstage alone, standing real close together (if it looks good).
Tumbleweed rolls past again.]*

COWBOY BOOGALOO

Ya know Phil, sometimes I wish I wasn't nothin at all

COWBOY PHIL:

Don't talk like that Boogaloo! Look out here, look at the grass and the sun and the dirt! You got lots. No reason to wish yerself dead.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I didn't say nothin about dead, Phil. It's just that sometimes when I'm sitting up on my trusty horse here, lookin out at the horizon, sun in my eyes, I get ta thinkin that maybe there's somethin more than this

COWBOY PHIL:

Yeah! The frontier!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Maybe, Phil. But I keep ridin and there's nothin but more ground. I'm startin' ta think, that maybe this West we're aimin at ain't nothin at all.

COWBOY PHIL:

I cain't say I know whatcha mean, Boogaloo.

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Well, how come you're out still here beatin' ground with me?

COWBOY PHIL:

I came out here to be the cowboy, like you said!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

And?

COWBOY PHIL:

Listen, I said I was searchin', and you told me to head out here. I wanted to be somethin bigger. Bigger than a cowbug and bigger than a donkey's behind! And now I got my horse here, and I've got you, and I'll always have Buffalo, and Go-Go, and Lefthanded, and Righthanded and Mesquite! And I guess now I got Outlaw too. Ain't that it?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

I dunno, Phil. I guess I was lookin fer more. I wanna be as big as the sky above.

COWBOY PHIL:

Like Outlaw?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Yeah, but she does it without doin nothin at all. Does it a different way every damn day. She sure is something, ain't she?

COWBOY PHIL:

I reckon so... You think yer gonna find it Boogaloo?

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

Dunno, Phil. Guess there's nothin to but to keep riding.

COWBOY PHIL:

West!

COWBOY BOOGALOO:

West!

[Lights shift. Other Cowboys return to stage and form clump. Text is delivered together, in poses. By end, all exit except BOOGALOO, who says last sentence and is left on stage alone. Lights fade.]

I want to be cool. (pose). I want to be the cowboy. (smokes). I want to fuck. (pose) I want to be the cowboy. (smokes). I want to ride (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be a star (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be no one (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be a hero (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be dirty (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be the sun on the horizon (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be hot dirt on your haunches (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to sex sex sex (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to

smoke (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to shoot straight (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to shoot crooked (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to die in blaze of glory (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be thrown up up up into the sky and dropped down down down into the ground so that I am here forever (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smoke). I want to win (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to kiss goodbye to my mama and be only a swipe of red streakin' across the prairie (pose). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). I want to be the cowboy (smokes). (rides).

END.