

Wonderful wizard of oz as allegory assignment

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**ASSIGN
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Donovan Conner Mrs. Collins College Prep American Literature February 9 2009 In Lyman Frank Baum's, more commonly known as Frank L. Baum, novel *The Wonderful wizard of Oz* Baum describes a story in which a young girl Dorothy and her dog, Toto go on a magical journey from the dull, gray land of Kansas to the colorful, magical land of Oz. This girl and her dog meet three companions, a Cowardly Lion, a Brainless Scarecrow, and a Heartless Tin Man and have adventure in the Land of Oz and untimely help Dorothy get home.

In Baum's allegorical *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* he uses satire and symbols, such as the regions of Oz, the characters of Oz and the Witches of Oz as to represent the Populist movement. Baum himself was fit to write a novel that was an allegory for the populist movement. As a young man he had shared a passion for the stage (Applebaum 1). It was also said that he was "born with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth" and that the "one occupation in which Baum seemed to excel at was story telling" (Discovering Authors 1).

These traits that Baum had would have made him a great satirist, and he was familiar with the utopian issues because he worked at a newspaper (Karp 1) and commented on many political and social affairs (Discovering Authors 1). So with the knowledge Baum made a classic allegorical novel that even starts with a satire "The old-time fairy tale, having served for generation, may now be classified...Having this thought in mind, the story of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was written solely to pleasure the children of today" (Westfaul 1).

In the introduction to his novel he sets in the mind that there is more to his book, because if not why else state something as obvious as that, unless trying to give a clue that his introduction is not all true but has a hidden meaning all its own. When Dorothy came to Oz through a cyclone in which her house falls and kills the Wicked Witch of the West and gets the Witch's silver slippers.

She comes from a place described as “dull and gray” (Baum, 19), to the magical, colorful Land of Oz. In Oz Dorothy meets three companions, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion and they all go to meet the great wizard of Oz so that they can have their problems solved. The Scarecrow wants a brain, the Lion wants courage, the Tin Man wants a heart, and Dorothy wants a way home to Kansas. They go down the yellow brick road and go through challenges and they meet the Wizard in the Emerald City and go through and are told to go and kill the second Wicked Witch, the Witch of the East.

They go through challenges to get this witch. Dorothy and the Lion are the only ones who get to the witch; the Scarecrow and the Tin Man are maimed and left on the way. The Witch imprisons the Lion and Dorothy and attempts to take Dorothy's silver slipper but is unable, and in the end is doused by water, and this ends up being her ultimate demise because “her greatest fear ... was of water because it's a conventional symbol of life and purity” (Bellman 1).

After the Witch's demise they use her golden cap to summon flying monkeys to get the Scarecrow and recruit the people that the Witch had enslaved to

repair the Tin Man. Dorothy also uses the monkeys to get back to the Wizard at the Emerald City. When they do the Wizard gives the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion fake solutions to their problems since they already had the solution to their problems all along, but is unable to give a solution to Dorothy and it is revealed that he is a fake wizard and is unable to send her home, but attempts by using a hot air balloon but fails and leaves Dorothy.

Dorothy now goes to the Good Witch of the south and trades the Good Witch the golden cap, which the Witch uses to send back the Lion, Scarecrow, and Tin Man and then frees the monkeys by giving them the golden cap. She tells Dorothy that she can use the silver shoes to get home and so Dorothy taps the shoes and wishes she was home and is swept away to Kansas, losing the shoes along the way. In the Baum's Land of Oz there are many symbols of the starting with the four Witches of Oz.

The Good Witch of the North, the first witch that Dorothy encounters, bestows a protective kiss upon her forehead but is unable to understand how the silver shoes that Dorothy got from the dead Wicked Witch of the East and was unable to free the munchkins from the East's wrath. This is a symbol of the Midwest support for the Populism, because in the north had considerable support, but this support was no match for the eastern voter, just like the Good Witch was no match against the East Witch (Taylor 5).

Dorothy learns that she is seen as a witch because she has a white checked shirt and white is seen as a sign of sorcery in Oz, this is also a symbol of silver which was known as the "white metal" and free silver was a key point in the Populist party (Taylor 5). While the Witch of the North was the good

Witch, The witch of the East was an evil one who had enslaved the munchkins until Dorothy's house had landed on her and killed her. The Witch of the East's death is a representation of the eastern financial and industrial interest and their gold-standard allies (Taylor 5).

The Wall Street banker and the industrial leader were thought to be in some kind of conspiracy by the Midwestern farmer who blamed their woes on them (Taylor 5). They were thought to be out to "enslave" the "little people", like how the East Witch had enslaved the munchkins (Taylor 5). This shows how the munchkins are symbols of the Midwestern farmers who were "enslaved" by Wall Street banker and their industrial leader, who is represented by the Wicked Witch of the East.

The death of the Witch represents the destruction of eastern power and the eastern power broker and this is a time of celebration (Taylor 5). The munchkins themselves relate to the farmers because even though they knew that the silver shoes that Dorothy is given had great power they knew not of what it could do, which is just like the Upper Midwestern farmers who knew little of monetary values and of silver (Taylor 5). As the Witch of the East represented the Midwestern farmers the Witch of the West is a symbol of Kansas and its harsh conditions.

The Witch of the West represents the harsh parched lands of Kansas that caused many to leave Kansas (Taylor 1). Her domain is reminiscent of the parched lands of Kansas and she is also a symbol of the power broker of that region, because like the power broker make the farmer poor and enslaved them under debts the Witch enslaved her people cruelly (Taylor 6). When the

Wizard sends Dorothy and her companions to go and kill the Witch, the Witch sends after them ravenous crows, ferocious wolves and venomous bees, which also recalls the conditions of Kansas (Taylor 6).

To summon those creatures to attack Dorothy she uses a silver whistle, which Baum is using as a symbol of the malicious use of white metal, and when she is unable to kill them with her beasts she uses a golden hat, to summon winged monkeys to go and get them, but by using this she used it for the third time, first enslaving the slaves of her realm, the Winkies and second to push Oz out of the West. The use of a golden cap show more injustices used in the power of gold which supports the Populist belief in silver and bimetallism which is to use silver and metal together, which is further reinforced that the Witch want Dorothy silver shoe to help use her golden hat which is bimetallism (Taylor 6). This manipulation of gold and silver by the Witch represent the other half of western menace “ the self-interested juggling of metal currency by the western nabobs” (Taylor 6). McKinley of Ohio made the gold standard the cornerstone of his campaign for presidency in eighteen ninety-six (Taylor 6). The Wizard required the Witch’s death in order to grant the parties wish and when her demise comes by water, it “ ends her evil reign, liberates her slaves, and restores the silver shoe she had stolen from Dorothy.

In one fell swoop, the parched lands are watered, the farmers are freed, and silver is returned to its rightful owner, the people” (Taylor 6) This shows how Baum used the death of the Wicked Witch of the West as the westerns and enemies of the Populist and their downfall and how it would have freed the people from under their oppressive reign. The last Witch is the Good Witch of <https://assignbuster.com/wonderful-wizard-of-oz-as-allegory-assignment/>

the South, Glinda. She unlike the northern witch understands the power of Dorothy's silver shoes (Taylor 6). This is a representation of the south because many of the strongest silverite in the Congress were from the south, and the north was more moderate (Taylor 6).

The denizens of the south, the Quadlings, are an odd race who dislike strangers in their land, and in the south, not since there was a southern president immigrants and northerners were unwelcome in the south, and for those who were different, include those such as resident black, the south was a dangerous place (Taylor 6). Dorothy's are also symbols in Baum's novel, such as the Scarecrow. Dorothy finds the Scarecrow and he says he has "no brain at all" (Baum 68). The Scarecrow represents the Midwestern farmer, "whose years of hardship and subjection to ridicule had created a sense of inferiority and self-doubt" (Taylor 6).

Many Populist leaders were ridiculed as being stupid and dismissed as ravings, but as the story progressed we find out that the Scarecrow does have brains, and so the farmers must have brains also and maybe enough to fix the economic situation (Taylor 6). During the walk down the yellow-brick road the scarecrow falls down and hits a yellow brick, "a reference to the Populist claim that the gold standard had a damaging impact on farmers and the people at large" (Taylor 7), but he is not hurt by it so it could be saying that the gold is not the real culprit to the woes of the farmers (Taylor 7).

After Dorothy finds the Scarecrow they come across the Tin Woodman. The Tin Woodman was once a healthy and productive Woodman who was cursed by the Witch of the West and cut off his limbs until they were all replaced by

tin until her was all metal. He how the Witch of the East, or the Big Business reduced him to a machine, who no longer feels, and now he represent the nation workers, and in particular the industrialized workers, with whom the Populist hoped to make a common cause (Taylor 7).

The condition they found him in, rusted and unable to move, represent the condition of labor during the depression, in which the Tin- man like many laborers, was unemployed. The next and last member to join the group is the Lion. The Lion represent the Populist candidate in eighteen ninety-six and nineteen hundred, William Jennings Bryan (Taylor 7). Bryan represents the Cowardly Lion because he was known for his “roaring” rhetoric and was occasionally portrayed in press as a lion, as was the Populist party, and like the Lion he was the last to join the party (Taylor 7).

Bryans defeat in the election was mainly due to the fact that he could sway the eastern worker, just as the lion claws could make no mark on the Tin Man. The symbols that make up Baum’s classical fairy tale, The wonderful wizard of Oz, all points toward the conclusion that his novel was mean to be an allegory and In Baum’s allegorical The Wonderful Wizard of Oz he uses satire and symbols, such as the regions of Oz, the characters of Oz and the Witches of Oz as to represent the Populist movement Work Cited Baum, F. Lyman. The Annotated Wizard of Oz. New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1973.

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