

In Hamilton, Phillipa Soo does an incredible job portraying the colorful and heart-wrenching journey of Elizabeth Schuyler. She is able to master many great characteristics of acting in her portrayal including (but not limited to): being generous, truthful, and embracing her fellow ensemble.

Soo is extremely generous with her movements and emotions when acting as Eliza which was important for the wife of a Founding Father and everything that entailed. In the beginning, she is introduced as a young, somewhat naive sister of her more worldly older sister- Angelica. At the Winter Ball, she becomes infatuated with Alexander Hamilton on sight and spends the rest of the night hoping he would be interested in her. She utilizes many different movements and mannerisms to convey the obvious nervousness and butterflies she feels. She runs around the ballroom trying to catch his attention and stay in his line of sight; she even dances with others, but her attention stays on him as she glances at him every other second. She holds her hands over her heart when she gushes about his eyes. Her feelings can be felt from any corner of the room because she uses so many different techniques to reveal her heart-warming and giddy feelings about seeing Hamilton for the first time.

Soo's portrayal is especially powerful because she stays very true to the real emotions and feelings Eliza had felt throughout her life.

After reading the Reynolds Pamphlet that laid out her husband's fidelity, Eliza burns the letters Hamilton first wrote her that eventually led to her falling in love and marrying him. Throughout the song, the different stages of grief from the moment right after his infidelity registers can be felt very strongly. She starts the song very quietly like she's in shock and tries to make sense of the rubble her husband has left her in; she recounts how her sister had once told her that Hamilton would do anything to get where he wanted to be. She clutches the letters like she is trying to hold on to the husband she once knew him to be. She even tries to re-read the letters to try and remind herself of who she fell in love with. As the song continues, Eliza becomes more impassioned as the reality sets in and she realizes that he used his affair to clear his name without any care for the wellbeing or privacy of his wife. Anger seeps into her voice as she comes to terms with the fact that Hamilton cared more about his reputation and legacy than his family and their lives. She gets up and paces around the room like she wants to fight

him; she stares at the letters like they're her last connection to him. Her voice breaks when she sings her accusations at him like the heartbreak has started to really set in. The flurry of emotions upon realizing her husband's infidelity are very true to what a person would feel in the face of betrayal like that; she tries to navigate many new and terrifying feelings of betrayal, anger, and heartbreak that hit her at different times. The song she sings is able to capture the dizzying changes in her demeanor as she tries to make sense of this new information that permanently changes her perception of her husband.

I argue that the most important characteristic of Soo's portrayal of Eliza was how she embraces her fellow ensemble members and uses them to define Eliza's character. Eliza's defining characteristic was how much she cared about the people around her, and Soo used that to her advantage. In the beginning, Eliza is constantly with her sisters as she begins to navigate being a young woman in a thriving city under the revolution. She holds her sisters' hands as they run around the city— gushing about the excitement of the city and men in it. She laughs and exchanges glances with her sisters when suspicious men try to flirt with Angelica. At the Winter Ball, Eliza- upon seeing Hamilton- grabs Angelica's hands to claim Hamilton as hers; Angelica brings Hamilton over to Eliza where they meet and eventually fall in love. While Hamilton asks for her hand, she nervously sits at a bench with her sisters— holding their hands for support as she anxiously waits for his decision. Soo uses Eliza's close bonds with her sisters to further drive the audience to feel Eliza's emotions and really understand Eliza's kind and caring nature. Eliza is a product of the people around her and the relationships she takes great care in nurturing. Her relationships with her sisters seep into every aspect of her life like when she references her sister's warnings—multiple times —immediately after finding out about her husband's infidelity. Soo takes great care in utilizing these close relationships to help create a more powerful story for the audience as they watch Eliza grow throughout the musical.