Abstract

The three *Henry VI* plays are historically important for a number of reasons: (a) as evidence of the fledgling Shakespeare's evolving dramaturgy; (b) as reflective of the English history play vogue that followed the defeat of the Spanish Armada; and (c) as dramatic samples of the Ordered Universe theory, with its attendant religious, political, and gender assumptions. On stage, however, *Henry VI* is plagued with an equal number of difficulties: (a) historical incidents and characters – no one of which dominates all three plays – with which audiences are increasingly unfamiliar; (b) a story which remains incomplete even after all three plays – requiring *Richard III* for closure; and (c) as a result, requiring a full season's commitment from most theatres, with only a minimal assurance of a favorable box office response.

The production history result has been 300 years of abridgement and adaptation. The best known modern era adaptation is John Barton's *War of the Roses,* staged by Peter Hall at the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1964, in which *Henry VI* was compressed into two plays, and *Richard III* completed the trilogy. More recently, two directors have tried their hands at a single play adaptation of *Henry VI:* Pam Brighton at the Stratford (Ontario) Festival and Howard Jensen at the Utah Shakespearean Festival—in an adaptation titled *The War of the Roses* (2000). "The Compleat Work of *Henry VI* (Abridged)" examines certain key Shakespearean issues in these two adaptations—particularly as they relate to the collapse of order because of intra-familial rivalry and the attempt of women to gain power.

The Compleat Work of *Henry VI* (Abridged): A Comparison of Single-Play Adaptations at the Stratford, Ontario and Utah Shakespearean Festivals

By Richard G. Scharine

Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark, what discord follows! . . .
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead.
Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,
. . . Then everything includes itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite;
And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself.

Ulysses, *Troilus and Cressida,* (1.3.319–320)[1]

Henry, hadst thou sway'd as kings should do,
Or as thy father and his father did,
Giving no ground unto the house of York,
They never then had sprung like summer flies;
I and ten thousand in this luckless realm
Had left no mourning widows for our death;
And thou this day hadst kept thy chair in peace.
Young Clifford, *Henry VI, Part 3,* 2.6.836

There are a multitude of reasons for studying the three parts of *Henry VI:* (1) as evidence of what may have been Shakespeare's earliest dramas—although there is little doubt he revised them later; (2) as reflective of the English history play—a genre which for all practical purposes Shakespeare invented and which came into vogue following the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588; (3) as tests of the resources of the Elizabethan physical theatre—cannons, trap doors, upper levels, and stage doors are all in use; (4) and, as dramatic examples of the Ordered Universe theory, its attendant religious and biological assumptions, and its political corollary, the Tudor Myth.

Onstage, however, the three plays are faced with a corresponding number of difficulties. They cover nearly a half-century of English history—from the funeral of Henry V in 1422 to the murder of Henry VI in 1471, presenting a plethora of historical incidents and characters—no one of which dominates the action in any of the plays—and with which audiences are increasingly unfamiliar. Even after three plays the storyline is still unresolved, requiring for closure *Richard III*—the first Shakespeare play to present a cosmic battle of Good and Evil, and the first to be labeled in the First Folio as a tragedy. To present all four plays demands, from most theatres, a full season's commitment of resources, with only a minimal assurance of a favorable box office response.

The resulting production history has been 400 years of adaptation and abridgement, most of which, like John Crowne's two-part anti-catholic tirade of 1680-81[2], tell us more about the theatre and obsessions of their own time than they do Shakespeare's. Mutilations of the text in the twentieth century decreased in frequency, but the number of productions did not rise correspondingly. Sir Frank Benson staged the trilogy in 1901 and 1906 at Stratford-upon-Avon, where they did not return until 1963 when the best known of the twentieth century adaptations—John Barton's *Henry VI* and *Edward IV*—were combined by Peter Hall with *Richard III* to make the *War of the Roses* trilogy. Only three London seasons in the last hundred saw the three original plays done by a single company—the Old Vic (1953) and the Royal Shakespeare Company twice (1977 and 2001).

Despite the many festivals which have proved "The Bard is good box office," the North American continent has been far less well served. The most diligent of these festivals, the Oregon Shakespeare at Ashland, presented the *Henry VI* plays in

successive years in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.[3] Feeling the pressure of a mandate to produce the entire canon, two other regional theatres adopted a bolder course. In 1980 Pam Brighton combined the three parts of *Henry VI* into a single play, which she directed at the Stratford, Ontario, Festival. Twenty years later at the Utah Shakespearean Festival, Howard Jensen also directed his own single-play adaptation, *The War of the Roses.*[4]

There are marked differences between the plays constructed by Brighton and Jensen, but their ultimate goals were the same: to present in a single performance the essence of Shakespeare's three plays, using only his text, his incidents, and his characters to fulfill his purpose. Both adaptations were successful in terms of length. Shakespeare's trilogy has 79 scenes and 8556 lines (an average of 26 scenes and 2850 lines per play). Brighton's final script has 34 scenes and 3001 lines, to Jensen's 37 scenes and 2869 lines. (As a point of reference from a mature Shakespeare, an uncut *Hamlet* runs 22 scenes and 3930 lines). The cutting process must have been torturous. Brighton's script on file at Stratford—identified by Festival archivist Jane Edmonds as a third draft[5]—is dated May 13, 1980, just three months before the production opened. In that three-month period, eight more scenes were cut from that draft, and much internal pruning can be witnessed. In both adaptations the smaller ratio of lines to scenes suggests how much both Jensen and Brighton relied upon cuts within scenes.

The true test of any adaptation—its success upon the stage—cannot be measured here. However, it is possible to compare the texts with the original. *Henry VI, Part 1* begins and *Henry VI, Part 3* ends with a royal ritual—the funeral of Henry V and the coronation of Edward IV respectively. The action of the trilogy can be summed up in a line spoken by Exeter (retained by Jensen, but not by Brighton) in Act 3, Scene 1, of *Henry VI, Part One:*

> And now I fear that fatal prophecy
> Which in the time of Henry nam'd the fifth
> Was in the mouth of every suckling babe,
> That Henry born at Monmouth should win all,
> And Henry born at Windsor should lose all" (Jensen, 1.5.15)

The first territorial defeat and the storyline of *Henry VI, Part One* is the loss of the French territories conquered by Henry V. The messengers who arrive at his 1422 funeral in the opening scene announce the loss of Champagne, Rheims, Orleans, Paris, and other English holdings, and the French nobility's uniting behind the Dauphin Charles. The plays ends with the papacy-brokered Peace of Tours (1444) and the proposal of a marriage between Henry VI (king of England from infancy) and Margaret (daughter of the King of Naples, who receives for his consent the provinces of Maine and Anjou).

Shakespeare's audience would easily have identified the source of England's collapse as the Original Sin of Ambition—a temporal manifestation of Lucifer's attempted usurpation of God or Adam and Eve's lust for His knowledge. In the medieval Chain of Being, Man was alone in having two souls in conflict with one another: a rational soul which supported God's Universal Order and an animal soul

which strove to fulfill its own desires (concupiscence). As Henry is God's anointed representative on earth, it is the religious, as well as the national and familial, responsibility of his nobles to protect and advise him for the good of the whole. Yet, of the four distinct factions in the English Court, only Humphrey of Gloucester, Henry's uncle and the Lord Protector, has the good of king and country in mind.

The duke of York believes his family line to have a better claim to the crown than Henry's and waits only the opportunity to act on that belief. Bishop Winchester is in the Church only because, as Henry IV's illegitimate half-brother, he is barred from the family hierarchy. In a key scene he delivers a bribe promised to the Pope for making him a Cardinal:

> Winchester will not submit
> Or be inferior to the proudest peer.
> Humphrey of Gloucester.
> I'll either make thee stoop and bend thy knee,
> Or sack this country with a mutiny (Jensen, 1.2.23).

Finally, both sexual and political concupiscence are motives for the Earl of Suffolk, who falls in love with Margaret when he captures her at Angiers. His vivid description convinces Henry to abort a politically and economically advantageous match with the daughter of the Earl of Armagnac and marry Margaret: "Thus Suffolk hath prevailed . . . . / Margaret shall now be queen and rule the king; / But I will rule both her, the king, and realm" (Brighton, 10, 29, Jensen 1.14.31).

Thus, France is lost at court, not on the battlefield. The effeminacy, duplicity, and Catholicism of the French cannot compete with the warlike masculinity and honor of Shakespeare's English. As Sir William Lucy replies to Charles's inquiry about surrender: "Submission, Dauphin! 'tis a mere French word; / We English warriors wot not what it means." (Shakespeare, 1, 4.7.774). The English and the French are personified respectively in Lord Talbot, a hero of mythic attainments, and Joan la Pucelle, whose triumphs are seen in Shakespeare as deriving from sexual wiles, disguise, ambushes, and consorting with fiends from Hell. Talbot would not have lost at Bordeaux had the reinforcements promised by his countrymen been sent. However, because Somerset—in league with the Cardinal of Winchester—will not supply horsemen to the Duke of York, who is to lead the reserves, Talbot and his son John are killed:

> The fraud of England, not the force of France,
> Hath now entrapped the noble-minded Talbot.
> . . . His fame lives in the world, his shame in you
> (Jensen, 1.9.20).

Even so, York and the Earl of Warwick are victorious before Angiers, and Joan is captured when her fiends forsake her. York's heroism, like Talbot's, is wasted, however, when the papal peace negotiated by Cardinal Winchester is imposed.

> Is all our travail turned to this effect?
> After the slaughter of so many soldiers,
> Shall we at last conclude effeminate peace?

O, Warwick, Warwick! I forsee with grief
The utter loss of the realm of France (Jensen, 1.13.29).

It is significant (and almost impossible to convey to a modern audience) that, in Shakespeare's worldview, Joan's leadership confirms the play's negative view of the French. In his time the idea of a woman ruling was religious, as well as political, anathema. Women were ranked below men in the Chain of Being and were thought to be morally weaker because of thinner blood from a heart located further to the left in the breast. Thus, Eve (the root of "Evil") yielded to the Devil first, and because Adam was ruled by her, he too was cursed. Therefore, a man controlled by his sexual desires was said to have the "Old Adam" in him. The myth of Elizabeth the Virgin Queen was less moral than political. If she were not subject to a man, she had to prove that she was not subject to concupiscence, the desires of the flesh, either. It is ironic that the popularity of England's queen depended upon her being at once the symbol of anti-Catholicism and that most Catholic of images, the Virgin Mother interceding for her people.

A woman could not rule and be sexual. Nor could a man allow sexuality to influence his leadership. These truisms define the moral difference between Lord Talbot and Joan la Pucelle, whose name, as David Bevington points out, can mean both "virgin" and "slut" in French.[6] It is the effeminacy of the French that allows Joan to seduce them politically and physically. In two scenes that neither Brighton nor Jensen include, the difference between the French nobility and the English Talbot is made clear. When, with a passionately patriotic speech, Joan convinces the Duke of Burgundy, England's ally, to join Charles, she notes in a triumphant aside: "Done like a Frenchman; turn, and turn again!" (Shakespeare, 1, 3.3.767) However, when the countess of Auvergne attempts to seduce Talbot into a trap, he arrives at the tryst at the head of his army, all of whom the countess must welcome: "With all my heart, and think me honored / To feast so great a warrior in my house." (Shakespeare, 1, 2.3.759) Shakespeare's intent in forcing the Countess to return to a more traditional feminine role can be inferred from the absence of the incident from his sources. It is apparently original with him, as is paralleling Talbot's fall with the rise of Joan, whom, in fact, he outlived by twenty-two years.

A comparison of the two adaptations with Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part One* shows the greater fidelity of the Jensen version. Roughly a third of his text is devoted to Part One, as opposed to a fifth in the Brighton adaptation. Brighton chose to eliminate almost all the action occurring in France. Therefore, while Shakespeare (and Jensen) introduce Margaret immediately after a papal peace is imposed on the frustrated English army, Brighton allows Suffolk to capture her in an unnamed battle, of whose political consequences the audience is unaware. Thus, we fail to realize that when Suffolk is sensually excited by Margaret and sacrifices his rationality to obtain her, it is she who has captured him. Winchester's bargaining English victory for the rank of Cardinal and her father's bargaining Margaret's beauty for Maine and Anjou (mentioned later by Brighton, but not shown) are French victories which derive from English concupiscence. When

Henry yields his country's political advantage to marry Margaret and then yields his right to rule her, the context of his downfall is complete. In *Henry VI, Part 3,* Edward IV will make a similar emotional and political mistake in abandoning a planned marriage to the King of France's sister-in-law in order to marry the widow of a penniless English knight. However, he will be saved because, unlike Henry, he is militarily decisive.

Brighton's focus, like that of Shakespeare and Jensen, is on the destructive political ambitions of the English court. However, it is in France where the effects of these ambitions are seen, and not showing France costs the audience the moral manifestation of seeing good (Lord Talbot) destroyed by petty jealousies, and Evil (Joan la Pucelle) triumphant through sexual manipulation. Margaret, who is sexual, jealous, and manipulative, is a major figure in the subsequent events depicted by Shakespeare and both adaptations. However, by not including Joan, Brighton cannot foreshadow why her participation is inevitably destructive.

Brighton compounds this thematic error by eliminating another Margaret parallel in Part 2: Eleanor, the wife of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. Recognizing that her husband, lord protector and kinsman to a weak, ineffectual, and (at this point) childless king, is the most powerful man in England, Eleanor dreams of being queen. To discover her chances, she consorts with spirit-summoning witches (under the command, of course, of a Catholic priest who has already betrayed her to Duke Humphrey's political rivals). In a scene that prefigures *Macbeth*, the spirit provides ambiguous prophecies of the fates of York, Suffolk, and Somerset. As the spirit fades away, the Dukes of Buckingham and York (Jensen substitutes the Cardinal of Winchester) enter to arrest all the mortal participants. As Shakespeare knew, "Caesar's wife must be above suspicion" politically, and the rival factions at Court unite to use Eleanor's sin to separate Henry from Gloucester, the only advisor with his interests in mind.

Brighton does include (without mentioning Eleanor) the dismissal of Humphrey and the subsequent plan by the conspirators—the Cardinal, Queen Margaret, Suffolk, and Somerset—to murder him. (York uses the pretext of an uprising in Ireland to be far from the scene of the crime when it occurs.) Also included in both adaptations is the death by guilt-induced fit of Cardinal Winchester.

Where Brighton's adaptation does gain in detail and relevance is in its depiction of the next stage of England's spreading chaos. If the Chain of Being is so disrupted as to have the animal soul triumphant over the rational soul and woman rule over man, who can blame the commons for rising up against the nobility? Jensen shows this in part, including the servants of Gloucester and Winchester taking to the streets in the name of their masters' animosity, and the anger of the ordinary people at Gloucester's murder, forcing the exile and subsequent death of Suffolk.[7] Their cry for justice is, of course, positive. More ambivalent (and humorous) is the case of Peter, the Armorer's apprentice—not included in the Jensen adaptation – who is forced to duel with his master, after claiming that his master said that the Duke of York is England's true king. Finally, the rebellion of Jack Cade—also not included

by Jensen—is a sardonic reversal of all social values: "I, John Cade, say our enemies shall fail before us, inspired with the spirit of putting down kings and princes—Command silence." (Brighton, 19, 75).

Even here, however, Brighton's editing is capricious, robbing the scenes of their humor and not showing the extending of Cade's contempt from the nobility to any form of excellence, his very real courage, and the justification he gives for proclaiming himself king. Shakespeare's Cade and his followers resist not only authority; they treat evidence of education as proof of a capitol crime:

> *Dick:* The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.
>
> *Cade:* Is not this a lamentable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? that parchment being scribbl'd over, should undo a man? Some say the bee stings; but I say, 'tis the bee's wax; for I did but seal once to a thing and I was never mine own man since (Shakespeare, Part 2, 4.2.808).

Cade's army drives to the heart of London, where he plans to burn London Bridge and the Tower and to pull down the Inns of Court so that only his word will be law. Like Talbot in the preceding play, he is not beaten militarily, but by the patriotic rhetoric of Old Clifford, who inspires the fickle rabble to yield in the name of Henry V. Cade has based his claim to rule by falsely asserting that he is the lost son of Lord Mortimer—a direct descendant of the third son of Edward III (Henry VI is descended from the fourth son)—and, therefore, the legitimate king. Brighton is denied that detail by having cut—as did Jensen—the imprisoned Mortimer's explanation of that relationship in Act 2, Scene 5, of *Henry VI, Part One.* Interestingly, Jensen did include the claim of Joan la Pucelle that she too was of noble birth (1.13.27), but couldn't use the Cade parallel because of his elimination of the character.

The death of Cade will clear the field for the return of a true scion of the Mortimers, the Duke of York, ready to press his royal claim with the army given to him to put down the Irish rebellion. He is accompanied by his historically better known sons, the future kings Edward IV and Richard III, who end *Henry VI, Part Two,* with the Battle of St. Albans (1455)—the first true conflict of the War of the Roses.

If the subject of *Henry VI, Part One* is the loss of France, and Part 2 the loss of social order, Part 3 is the breakdown of the family. Civil wars are intra-familial by definition, but nowhere was that definition more literal than in the War of the Roses. Both Henry VI and his usurper, Richard of York, were great-grandsons of Edward III, and almost every participant was related to them by blood or marriage. The repeated motifs of the first two plays, including the destructive nature of sexuality and the spread of disorder through all social levels, will reach their nadir in Part 3.

Brighton used two intermissions which extended the length of her production to almost four hours. Jensen begins his second act with the Battle of St. Albans, which occupies the last two scenes of *Henry V, Part Two.* This is a structurally clever choice, in that having cut the Jack Cade scenes, Jensen needs the intermission for

the audience to accept that York has had time to go to Ireland and return. He will have over 45 percent of his text to deal with the War of the Roses, and Brighton nearly 40 percent.

At St. Albans Richard fulfills the second of the prophecies by the Spirit conjured for Eleanor by killing Somerset. Warned to avoid castles, Somerset dies under the sign of the Castle alehouse. Not having included the prophecies, Brighton is denied this irony. In Shakespeare's Part 2, it was Margaret's refusal to honor the pledge Henry made to banish Somerset that triggered York's attack. More important for this section's theme, York kills Old Clifford in the battle, thus triggering the first of the revenge murders which periodically occur in Part 3—the murder of Rutland, York's youngest son, by Young Clifford:

> Thy father slew my father. Therefore die.
> Plantagenet! I come, Plantagenet!
> And this thy son's blood cleaving to my blade
> Shall rust upon my weapon, till thy blood,
> Congealed with this, do make me wipe off both
> (Brighton, 27, 105; Jensen, 2.362).

Brighton includes this scene, as well as the following one in which Young Clifford participates in the torture of the dying York, but neither she nor Jensen effectively prepares the audience for Young Clifford's fury. Old Clifford never appears in Brighton's adaptation—in the Jack Cade scenes his lines are given to Exeter, while Jensen, by cutting the Jack Cade episode, robs Old Clifford of the heroic stature that might explain his son's reaction. Similarly, Brighton eliminates Salisbury, the father of Warwick, "the kingmaker," whose military might helps put York on the throne and who later briefly restores Henry. However, Salisbury was the Duke of York's brother-in-law, explaining in part the partisanship of his son.

In both adaptations Young Clifford underlines the reversal of values in Henry's kingdom when he speaks to the king prior to a battle: "I would your Highness would depart the field. / The Queen hath best success when you are gone" (Brighton, 29, 114; Jensen, 2.6.68). Brighton extends that judgment in the same scene by retaining Edward's condemnation of Margaret:

> No man was ever managed by false woman as this king by thee
> . . . Hadst thou been meek, our title still had slept,
> And we, in pity of the gentle king,
> Had slipped our claim until another age"
> (Brighton, 29, 115–116).

However, the audience has already seen that meekness is not Margaret's nature. After her men capture the mortally wounded York at the Battle of Wakefield, she has him seated on a molehill and places a paper crown upon his head, and in a series of images recalling Christ's Passion, gives him a napkin she has dipped in young Rutland's blood and invites him to wipe his tears and make his prayers:[8]

> She-wolf of France,
> Whose tongue more poisons than the adder's tooth!
> How ill-beseeming is it in thy sex

To triumph like an Amazonian whore.
O tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide!
How couldst thou drain the lifeblood of the child
To bid the father wipe his eyes withal,
And yet be seen to bear a woman's face?"
(Brighton, 27, 108; Jensen, 2.4.64)

Margaret and Young Clifford kill York, but after the Lancaster forces are defeated and Margaret is forced to flee to France, the surviving sons of York re-enact the grisly pageant of the death of their father with a wounded Young Clifford. Similarly, after being captured in the Battle of Tewksbury, the unarmed Prince Edward, the son of Henry and Margaret, will be stabbed in succession by Edward, Richard, and their brother, George.

In France Margaret seeks military help from King Lewis. In order to counter her, a newly crowned Edward of York sends Warwick to France with a peace offering to include a marriage between himself and the Lady Bona, the sister-in-law of Lewis. Meanwhile, however, Edward shows his own sexual weakness, becoming enamored of Lady Elizabeth, a widow whose husband died in battle. Against the advice of Richard and George, he marries her, insulting Lewis and—in a scene shown by Jensen, but only referred to by Brighton—driving a proud Warwick into alliance with Margaret. Her son, the Lancaster Prince Edward, marries Warwick's daughter, Anne, and a disgusted George deserts Edward of York to marry Isabel, Warwick's other daughter. Richard of Gloucester, seeing his chance to move one step closer to the throne, stays with Edward. George will eventually save his brother and bring about his father-in-law's downfall by changing sides yet again, but by then Shakespeare's story will have moved past family revenge to Ulysses' "universal wolf" of appetite, which must at "last eat up himself"—a suitable metaphor for the rise of the future Richard III.

In *Henry VI, Part Three,* Shakespeare (and his adapters) moves past the slaughter of cousins to the betrayal of children, parents, and siblings. The first to do so, ironically, is the saintly Henry, who, under threat from Warwick's army, saves his crown by naming York his successor, thus disinheriting Prince Edward. That Margaret refuses to accept this pledge, re-igniting the civil war which ends in Edward's death, only extends the irony.

As in Part 2, Shakespeare again shows how the poisoned head-waters of a society spread through the land. At the battle where Young Clifford dies and Margaret is driven to France, Henry is a reluctant observer, seating himself by the magic of the theatre on the same stage molehill where York was earlier mocked and martyred. Here on this dirt throne, God's anointed representative on earth will experience the pain of two common soldiers who enter bearing bodies on opposite sides of the stage: a son who has killed his father, and a father who has killed his son:

Son: O, god! it is my father's face. / Whom in this conflict I,
unaware, have killed. / From London by the King was I
pressed forth; / My father, being the Earl of Warwick's

man, / Came on the part of York, pressed by his
master; / and I, who at his hands received my life, /
Have by my hands of life bereaved him . . .
Father: These arms of mine shall be thy winding sheet; / My
heart, sweet boy, shall be thy sepulcher. / I'll bear
thee hence; and let them fight that will, / For I have
murdered where I should not kill (Jensen, 2.7.71–72).

In this scene, perhaps pressed for time, Brighton eliminates the father who has killed his son, weakening the point and losing the physical symmetry of the scene.

The Elizabethans believed that a person (and a society) was shaped by its own actions. A Macbeth, troubled by his sins, kills his conscience by murdering his friends: "Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill" (*Macbeth,* 3.3.1197). Henry is soon imprisoned in the Tower of London, but the unintended family homicide he witnesses will soon be codified by Richard of Gloucester:

And yet, between my soul's desire and me —
The lustful Edward's title buried —
Is Clarence, Henry, and his son young Edward,
And all the unlooked-for-issue of their bodies,
To take their rooms, ere I can place myself
(Brighton, 32, 133; Jensen, 2.9.79).

At this point Brighton uses stage time to record some of the more confusing exchanges of power in *Henry VI*: e.g. the capture of Edward and the freeing of Henry from the Tower by Warwick and the subsequent rescue of Edward by Richard, etc. In truncating this period, Jensen creates his own problem—showing George of Clarence (who lived with Isabel long enough to father two children) deserting his brother in 2.11, and returning to his side in 2.12 with only the briefest of explanations for his change of heart.

After the Battle of Tewsbury, his knife still damp with young Edward's blood, Richard races away—as George correctly supposes—"[t]o London, all in haste; and, as I guess, / To make a bloody supper in the Tower." (Brighton, 40, 162; Jensen, 2.14.93) After Henry is murdered, Brighton ends her adaptation with a speech from that most evolved product of the War of Roses:

I have no brother, I am like no brother;
And this word "love," which graybeards call divine,
Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me, I am myself alone.
. . . King Henry and the prince his son are gone.
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest;
Counting myself but bad till I be best"
(Brighton, 41, 165; Jensen, 2.14.94).

It is a powerful, well-chosen moment, and yet it is a violation of the structure of Shakespeare's trilogy, which begins and ends with a royal ritual which symbolizes temporal power and whose troubling undertones are the manifestation of the Original Sin of Ambition which will destroy that temporal power. The

over-weening pride of the quarrelsome cousins at Henry V's funeral will grow into the premeditated murder that is Richard III's political methodology. The hopeful coronation of Edward IV, presented in the last scene of *Henry VI* and preserved by Jensen, contains within it "a vice of kings," whose Cain-like envy of his brother's success runs counter to Heaven itself. Richard knows this full well, and as he swears fealty, whispers to the child he will one day have murdered in the Tower where he killed Henry: "To say the truth, so Judas kissed his master, / And cried, 'All hail' whenas he meant all harm" (Jensen, 2.15.95)

To study *Henry VI* closely is to gain respect for the neophyte Shakespeare's ability to sustain a dramatic metaphor over a three-play epic. Any attempt to replicate that epic in a single play requires major critical deconstruction. The finished script of Howard Jensen reveals an understanding of the *Henry VI* structure and the Ordered Universe philosophy which underscores its themes. Particularly to be appreciated is his handling of the events of Part 1, in which the conflict between the masculine rationality of Talbot and the feminine sexuality of Joan sets a standard by which the later actions are judged. Without this conflict, the disputes are national; with it, they are cosmic. Jensen's editing actually improves a modern audience's acceptance of Talbot, taking the grandiose self-descriptions out of his own mouth. Altering an audience's perception of Joan of Arc is more difficult, but including the parallel Part 2 ambition and conjuring of Duchess Eleanor provides a useful reinforcement. Having deleted France as a field of action, Brighton focuses on the deteriorating social structure which culminates in the Jack Cade uprising in Part 2. Even here, however, her editing follows a narrow line of action without retaining the humor and context that makes Cade interesting and relates him to the rest of Shakespeare's worldview. Finally, by ending with the coronation of Edward IV, Jensen completes the arc of the trilogy, a warning in Shakespeare's time of the danger that concupiscence and abandoned responsibility could plunge post-Elizabethan England back into chaos and civil war, and in ours that surface ceremony is no assurance of underlying morality.

Notes

1. All quotations from the original plays are from William Shakespeare, *The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare,* ed. William Allan Neilson and Charles Jarvis Hill (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942).

2. David Bevington, "The Henry VI Plays in Performance," in William Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Part One, Two, and Three,* ed. David Bevington (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), xxiii–xxiv.

3. Bevington, xxvii.

4. The purpose of this paper is to compare the two adaptations with the original. Therefore, the citation given to any quote will be from the adaptation (or adaptations), unless it is found in the original Shakespeare text only.

5. Jane Edmonds, Letter to Richard Scharine, October 3, 2000.

6. Bevington, 10.

7. Spirits summoned for Eleanor prophecy Suffolk will die by water. The ship

on which he flees to France is boarded by pirates, and Suffolk is killed by "Walter" Whitmore (Jensen, I-21, 52).

8. The death of York fulfills the final Spirit prophecy: "The Duke yet lives that Henry shall depose, / But him outlive, and die a violent death" (Jensen, I-16, 37).

Richard G. Scharine, a professor of theatre and adjunct professor of ethnic studies at the University of Utah, is the author of The Plays of Edward Bond, from Class to Caste, *and numerous articles on African-American and American political theatre. He recently received the College of Fine Arts Faculty Excellence Award and was named a University Professor for 2002–2003.*