Shakespeare's History Plays as Propaganda

By Kathryn Janes (edited by RF)

Propaganda is defined as "the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person" or as "ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause." (http://merriamwebster.com)

Shakespeare's history plays have served as tools for political propaganda and have also reflected the attitudes of Englishmen at the time of any given production of these plays. **What is especially interesting is how easily these plays – classic examples of the hero king and the ultimate villain - can be adapted to fit the propaganda needs of any given era**. Olivier's World War II era version of *Henry V* was staged in such a way as to emphasize patriotic ideals during a time of crisis, while a fairly recent production of *Richard III* sets the play in Nazi Germany. ***Richard III*, of course, has been a propaganda tool from the beginning in its expression of the Tudor obsession with vilifying the king from whom Henry VII, the first Tudor, seized the throne**.

*(NOTE: since this essay was written a brilliant feature film has been made on this subject called THE LOST KING. Highly recommended!)*

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No accusation was too bizarre for Shakespeare and his Tudor sources as long as it could promote the idea of Richard the Monster. I think the one that I like best is the allegation that he gestated for two years and was finally born with teeth and a full head of hair! While *Henry V* does not present such a blatant example of political bias, we should remember that Henry V and Henry VII were both members of the Lancastrian branch of the Plantagenets. It was both safe and politically expedient for Shakespeare to glamorize Henry.

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Eight of Shakespeare's history plays – *Richard II, Henry IV Parts 1 and 2, Henry V, Henry VI Parts 1,2 and 3*, and *Richard III* – cover the period in English history stretching from 1396 to 1485. Some of the major events of this period are the deposition of Richard II by his cousin Henry IV, the resumption of the Hundred Years War by Henry V, the influence of Joan of Arc on the French monarchy, the Wars of the Roses, and the beginning of the short-lived but extremely influential Tudor dynasty in England. Trying to keep track of the players in this saga between 1396 and 1485 is worse than trying to keep track of characters in a soap opera, to which this story actually bears a strong resemblance. The historical background which follows is based on over two decades of reading about the Plantagenets, going all the way back to when I was in high school. I have become so familiar with this clan over the years that I couldn't begin to give citations for the various bits of information, but I have listed several books (including a brandnew one about John of Gaunt) and web sites in the bibliography for anyone who wants to look up the specifics. I would also recommend printing out a copy of the Plantagenet family tree found on the History of the Monarchy web site, which is listed in the bibliography. It's hard to keep track of the players without a dynastic scorecard.

## The Lancastrian Kings

The chain of events actually began with the death of John of Gaunt in 1399. As the Duke of Lancaster, Gaunt was an enormously wealthy and powerful landowner, as well as the loyal and supportive uncle of Richard II, the reigning king. Richard was still a boy when he succeeded his grandfather, Edward III, in 1377. Although he earned a great deal of respect when he faced down a mob during the peasants' revolt, his adult behavior gradually eroded his popularity. His father and grandfather had both been successful soldiers, winning major victories over the French in the Hundred Years War. Richard, on the other hand, was not a fighter and had a marked tendency to show blatant favoritism to a few members of his court. This led to disputes with several members of the nobility and ultimately to the banishment of Gaunt's heir, Henry of Bolingbroke, for a period of ten years. At the time Bolingbroke was banished, Richard assured him (and Gaunt) that Bolingbroke's inheritance would be safe if Gaunt died during that ten year period. When Gaunt died a short time later,

Richard went back on his word and confiscated the vast Lancastrian holdings. This was a serious mistake, since every major landowner in England would be afraid that the same thing might befall him if he happened to cross Richard in some way.

Bolingbroke quickly returned to England, claiming that he was coming only to have his estates duly restored to him. Once on English soil, however, several members of the nobility joined with him in forcing Richard to abdicate in Henry's favor. Bolingbroke had been a successful soldier, making him generally popular during this violent era. What nobody seemed to think about, however, was that he was not next in line to the throne since Gaunt was Edward III's third son. The Earl of March had a better claim since he was descended from Edward's second son, Lionel, through Lionel's daughter. For some reason everyone ignored this fact and Bolingbroke became Henry IV, the first Lancastrian king.

Apparently there really is no honor among thieves, for Henry IV's reign was marked by uprisings led by his erstwhile supporters. His eldest son, Shakespeare's Prince Hal, became a soldier at a young age, spending his summers fighting the Welsh as well helping to fight his father's other enemies. The roistering prince of Henry IV, Part 1 seems to have a basis in fact; certainly father and son were often at odds with each other. The story that Hal abandoned his wilder tendencies when he became king also appears to be historicaly correct.

Not long after succeeding to the throne in 1413, Henry V decided to renew Edward III's claim to the throne of France which was based on Edward's mother having been a French princess. Keeping his nobles occupied in France was probably a good idea. In 1415 there was a plot to kill Henry V and his brothers and put the current Earl of March on the throne as Richard's rightful heir. It failed because March himself warned Henry. (This is the basis for the scene with the traitors at Southampton early in Henry V.) Henry spent most of his reign fighting in France with great success, most notably at Agincourt in 1415. By 1420 he had negotiated a treaty giving him the French king's daughter in marriage and ensuring that he would become king of France when his father-in-law died. Alas, all those years of military campaigns caught up with Henry and he died in August 1422. When the French king died the

following month Henry's nine- month-old son, King Henry VI of England, was declared king of France as well.

During Henry VI's long minority his father's brothers were responsible for running things in England and trying to hold on to the French conquests. Henry VI was a devoutly religious young man, totally lacking in any militaristic tendencies. As he grew to adulthood, it became increasingly clear that he had inherited his French grandfather's tendency to experience periods of incapacity, or madness as it was called then. During this same time period, Joan of Arc was busily driving the English out of France and putting the Dauphin on the throne. All of a sudden the Lancasters didn't look like such a good deal after all, and men began to remember that Henry IV was not just a usurper; he was a usurper with an inferior claim to the throne.

The Yorkist Kings

By this time, the man with the best claim to the throne was Richard, Duke of York. He was descended from Edward III's second son, Lionel, through his father and from the fourth son, Edmund, through his mother. Unfortunately for him, when he decided to stake his claim on the throne he was not just facing the saintly Henry VI. Despite the tendency to weak-mindedness, Henry had been married to Margaret, the daughter of the Duke of Anjou, and they had produced a son. While it is unlikely that Margaret cared much one way or the other about poor Henry, she was fiercely protective of her son, Edward. When Richard of York lost his fight with Margaret, he also lost his head. Margaret's fight was not over, however, for York had several sons. Edward, the eldest, had no intention of falling back into the shadows when Margaret ordered the death of York and of one of his younger sons. Where Richard of York had failed, Edward of York succeeded, forcing Henry VI off the throne and taking the crown as Edward IV.

An interesting fact is that Edward IV outdid his father dynastically as well as militarily. Richard's wife was Cecily Neville, a descendant of John of Gaunt by Gaunt's mistress and eventual third wife, meaning that Edward and his siblings were descended from three of Edward III's five sons.

Edward IV was very popular; he was also very self-indulgent, especially with women. Even after he had married a Lancastrian widow in secret, he allowed his powerful cousin, the Earl of Warwick, to continue negotiations for a political marriage. When the secret got out, Warwick was so furious about this humiliation that he made an alliance with Margaret of Anjou to restore Henry to the throne. Edward IV's brother, George, joined Warwick in this enterprise. George had recently married Warwick's daughter and expected to benefit by abandoning his older brother. Edward was caught by surprise and escaped to the Continent with his youngest brother, Richard, and a few other supporters. It wasn't long before Edward was back in England, however, and this time he put an end to the direct Lancastrian line. Prince Edward of Lancaster

died at the Battle of Tewkesbury and Henry VI died while being held in the Tower of London, presumably on the orders of Edward IV. Richard had lured George back to the Yorkist cause, but they were soon at outs because Richard wanted to marry George's sister-in-law, Anne Neville. Warwick, also dead by this time, had no sons, so his daughters were considerable heiresses and George didn't want to share. Ric hard and Anne had known each other as children in Yorkshire and Richard eventually gave in to several of George's demands, married Anne, and moved to Yorkshire to govern the North for his brother, Edward.

Things seemed to be going along swimmingly for several years. Edward had things well in hand in London and the southern areas of England, and had complete faith in Richard's ability to handle things in the northern hinterlands. Richard and Anne were apparently happy together, and Richard was becoming increasingly popular in Yorkshire. Edward's queen, Elizabeth Woodville, produced two sons and several daughters. She also pushed her numerous brothers and sisters into marriage with the old, established nobility. This certainly influenced a lot of people, but it did not win her or her family any friends. At the same time, George was skulking around and usually feeling put upon or abused in some way. Suddenly George and Edward had a falling out – the exact cause has never been discovered – and George found himself in the Tower, where he was eventually executed for treason, over Richard's strong objections. Then, to everyone's shock, Edward dropped dead at the age of forty in April 1483, presumably burned out by a life of indulgence and dissipation.

He left two young sons as his heirs and named the trusted Richard to be Protector until the older boy, now King Edward V, was old enough to rule on his own.

When Richard received the news in Yorkshire, he arranged a mass to pray for Edward's soul and called the men of the North together to swear an oath of loyalty to the new king. Farther south, however, Elizabeth Woodville and her clan had been busy. Richard and the Woodvilles shared a mutual antipathy and the queen's family acted quickly to get control of the new king and cut Richard out as Protector. Their gambit failed and Richard proceeded to London with Edward V to begin making plans for the coronation.

Then the bombshell exploded. The Bishop of Bath and Wells came forward and announced that neither of Edward's sons had a valid claim to the throne because his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was invalid. According to the bishop Edward had entered into a binding (and also secret) agreement to marry another woman before his marriage to Elizabeth. While he never actually married the first woman, the plight-troth barred him from marriage to anyone else. Whether the bishop's claim was true is obviously open to conjecture. The matter was formally considered by Parliament, and in an act called Titulus Regius (the title of the king) the members
of parliament stated that Edward's children were illegitimate and that George's son was barred by his father's treason, making Richard the rightful king. Were the members of Parliament influenced by their dread of yet another boy king, who was also a Woodville king? Possibly, but we can never know for sure. There is at least a chance that the bishop's claim appeared to be valid; Richard was popular in Yorkshire, but had no base of support in London that would have helped him pull off such a coup. Is it possible that Richard was willing to accept the bishop's story because he feared for the safety of himself and his son under a Woodville regime? That is another question to which we will never know the answer. Can we argue that Richard usurped the throne from his nephew? Absolutely, and Richard's accession pushed the Woodvilles into an uneasy alliance with the remaining adherents of the Lancastrian cause. Although the direct Lancastrian line ended with Henry VI and his son, another descendant of John of Gaunt and his third wife was still around. This was

Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond, and he had a very ambitious and very protective mother, Margaret Beaufort.

Shortly after becoming king, Richard left on a tour of his kingdom. While he was gone, a rebellion broke out, involving an alliance of Woodvilles, Lancastrians and Richard's former supporter, the Duke of Buckingham. The rebellion was put down, but Richard had very little peace during the two years of his reign. His only son died and then his wife died a lingering death. The threat of another rebellion, or an invasion by Henry Tudor, was ever-present. The invasion finally came in the summer of 1485. Richard died fighting Henry Tudor's forces at the Battle of Bosworth Field. Henry's victory was assured when Margaret Beaufort's husband, Lord Stanley, and his brother refused to ride to Richard's aid even though they were supposed to be on Richard's side. Henry Tudor was proclaimed king and the Plantagenet dynasty finally came to an end. Henry repealed Titulus Regius and ordered all copies be destroyed. Fortunately for historians, at least one survived. He then married Edward IV's oldest daughter, who was once again legitimate after the repeal of Titulus Regius, and they went on to become the parents of Henry VIII and the grandparents of Elizabeth I.

Richard was king for only two years. His one parliament dealt with such issues as guaranteeing the right to bail and exempting books from import restrictions. He also sent his two nephews to reside in the Tower of London, which was a residence as well as a prison at that time. If anyone other than Tower officials ever saw them again, no record of it has survived. For over five hundred years, Richard has been accused of their deaths. As time passed, more and more deaths were laid at his door – Edward of Lancaster, Henry VI, even his brother George. While these three are ludicrous – contemporary records indicate Richard's innocence – the same cannot be said about his nephews. As horrific as it is for Richard's admirers to contemplate, it was a violent age and death was the common fate of deposed kings. It is the fact that these were two children, and the sons of his beloved brother, that makes the possibility of Richard's guilt so appalling. In Richard's defense, it seems unlikely that he would order the murder of his own nephews who had been formally illegitimated by Parliament, while taking no action against other potential rivals, several of whom survived him only to be eliminated by the Tudors.

I would like to conclude this historical background of the Plantagenets by quoting Charles Ross about the aftermath of the Battle of Bosworth:

The king's dead body was stripped, carried naked across a horse to the house of the Franciscans in Leicester, exposed to public view for two days to prove that he was indeed dead, and then buried without stone or epitaph. Some years later, Henry VII provided the miserly sum of £10 1s to provide a coffin of sorts for the dead king's remains. When, during Henry VIII's reign, the Franciscan convent was dissolved, the bones were thrown out and the coffin became a horse-trough outside the White Horse inn. . . . It is an indication of the continuing hostility of the Tudors towards Richard, as well as of their

bad manners, that no move was ever made to give him fitting burial. Whether for reasons of policy or piety, previous 'second-generation' usurpers had done public penance. Henry V had had Richard II's remains transferred from King's Langley to a stately tomb in Westminster Abbey beside his first wife, Anne of Bohemia. Richard III himself had caused the corpse of Henry VI to be moved from Chertsey Abbey to lie across the choir of the Garter Chapel in Windsor from the sepulcher of his old rival, Edward IV. No such generous move came from an uncaring Henry VIII. With the problematic exception of Edward V, Richard III is the only English king since 1066 whose remains are not now enshrined in a suitably splendid and accredited royal tomb. (225-226)

The Richard III Society

Richard III's body was shown a complete lack of respect after the Battle of Bosworth; his reputation has been savaged by chroniclers writing under the Tudor regime as well as by subsequent historians who believed the Tudor version of events. While it might be inaccurate to accuse the Tudors of an overt policy of Richard-bashing, one can see a progression of increasingly scurrilous accusations against the last Plantagenet king. According to Ross:

Richard III has been the most persistently vilified of all English kings. ... Henry VII and Henry VIII meted out a brutal fate to each potential claimant to the Yorkist throne, even the aged and innocent Margaret countess of Salisbury. This was sufficient deterrent to any prudent person . . . to keep silent about the king the Tudors most loved to hate, which meant that the Tudor tradition was

built, perforce but not wholly, on the opinions and reminiscences of Richard's enemies. (227)

He has not been without his defenders, however. Within a very short time of the death of Elizabeth I, the last Tudor, revisionist versions of Richard's life began to appear (Ross xlviii-liii). During the twentieth century, Richard became a hot topic for novelists (mostly female, as Ross points out) writing in both the form of romantic historical fiction and as a detective story (Ross li). None of these defenses, historical or fictional, has been able to dispel the image of the villain king, thanks largely to Shakespeare's play. Nonetheless, Richard's supporters continue to fight the good fight. They even have an organization (with English and American branches) dedicated to clearing his name. In recent years both branches have created websites about their favorite king. While the whole idea of worrying about the reputation of a man who has been dead for five hundred years may seem a little wacky, the members of these societies tend to be intelligent and thoughtful individuals with a strong interest in one particular period of English history. Certainly their websites contain a wealth of information about this period and about Shakespeare's play. They also have resources for teachers and students, including lesson plans and primary source documents.

## SHAKESPEARE'S VERSION OF HISTORY

The basic issue running through the history plays from Richard II through Richard III is the concept of the divine right of kings. Is there any situation in which an anointed king may be rightfully deposed, or in which divine retribution will not eventually be visited upon the usurper or his descendants? These questions have important implications for the characters of Henry V and Richard III in Shakespeare's plays.

The concept of divine right, although an anachronism to the modern mind, was a widespread and essentially popular theory that satisfied a practical need of society in its own time. (Figgis 2- 3) Religion was the controlling factor in the Middle Ages; all political systems were justified in some way along religious lines. Many popes tried to assert their supremacy over temporal and political, as well as spiritual, matters. Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire countered with a denial of papal sovereignty on the grounds that secular government was

ordained by God and that secular power devolved upon the king directly from God. (Figgis 64-65) The Reformation brought a final and complete break with papal authority in some European countries and further elevated civil authority. The belief in God as the focus of all obligation received new emphasis. Both Luther and Calvin advocated passive obedience. Another reason for Elizabethan attitudes toward kingship may be traced to the Wars of the Roses. The chaos occasioned by the continual rebellions, depositions, restorations and political murders of the 1400's made the divinely appointed absolute monarchy with its stabilizing effect (and despite the possibilities for despotism also inherent in it) more appealing than it had previously been. Finally, this theory filled the need of the Tudor dynasty to stress absolute obedience to royal authority in order to implement their policy. (Mroz 88-89) Thus, out of a combination of Protestant religious doctrine, the history of the preceding century, and the Tudors' political pragmatism came the theory of the divine right of kingship as follows:

1. Monarchy is a divinely ordained institution.

2. Hereditary right is indefeasible. The succession to monarchy is regulated by law of primogeniture. The right acquired by birth cannot be forfeited through any acts of usurpation, of however long continuance, by any incapacity in the heir, or by any act of deposition. So long as the heir lives, he is king by hereditary right, even though the usurping dynasty has reigned for a thousand years.

3. Kings are accountable to God alone. Monarchy is pure, the sovereignty being entirely vested in the king, whose power is incapable of legal limitation. He cannot limit or divide or alienate the sovereignty, so as in any way to prejudice the right of his successor to its complete exercise.

4. Non-resistance and passive obedience are enjoined by God. Under any circumstances resistance to a king is sin, and ensures damnation. Whenever the kind issues a command directly contrary to God's law,

> God is to be obeyed rather than man, but the example of the primitive Christians is to be followed and all penalties attached to the breach of law are to be patiently endured. (Figgis 5-6)

The condemnation of a usurper was not due solely to the belief that kings were accountable only to God and resistance to them was sin. Another important aspect of the sixteenth century attitude toward usurpation is based on the oath of fealty that all subjects make to a new ruler. Subsequent opposition to royal authority constitutes a breaking of that oath which binds a vassal to his sovereign. In the eyes of Elizabethans, "the traitor incurred divine vengeance for despising the sacredness of his oath and for disregarding sanctioned authority" (Mroz 17).

Taken together, these plays can also be seen as a type of morality play beginning with Henry IV's usurpation of his cousin's throne which disrupts the social order and which is ultimately set right by the victory of Henry Tudor over another usurper, Richard III.

Henry V

This play assumes a knowledge of the historical events set out above which appear in *Richard II* and in the *Henry IV* plays. Henry V knows that his father was a usurper and that several other Plantagenets have a stronger claim to the throne than he has himself. Does Henry fear that divine vengeance for the usurpation will fall on him? The idea that the sins of the father may be visited upon his descendants through several generations was firmly entrenched in the Elizabethan mind (Mroz 21). On the night before Agincourt, Shakespeare's Henry entreats God not to punish his soldiers because of him: "Not today, O Lord,/O, not today, think not on the fault/My father made in compassing the crown" (Henry V, IV.i.292-294).

Does he revive his grandfather's claim to the French throne in a Machiavellian attempt to distract his subjects (and, more importantly, his nobles) from the fact of his father's usurpation? According to Machiavelli, writing in the early 1500's, "a prince must have no other objective, no other thought, nor take up any profession but that of war, its methods and its discipline, for that is the only

art expected of a ruler" (Machiavelli 53). Or does Henry invade France to convince himself that he is entitled to be king of England? If he can prove the validity of his claim to the French crown then he must be entitled to sit on the English throne as well. Either interpretation can be supported by the text of the play. The historical reality is that Henry IV's usurpation did set in train a period of turmoil in England that lasted almost one hundred years. Henry IV had to deal with uprisings by the Welsh and by his own nobles. Henry V's French wars drained the treasury and killed off many young Englishmen. His death at age thirty-five, leaving a nine- month old son to succeed him, set the stage for all sorts of infighting and intrigues by his Plantagenet relatives. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that Henry VI was subject to periods of mental incapacity as an adult, making it even more tempting for other branches of the family to start thinking about restoring the legitimate (and mentally sound) royal line. Once this temptation turns into action, we end up with the Wars of the Roses, the period covered by the three Henry VI plays and by Richard III.

Henry V contains some of the most rousingly patriotic speeches to be found in any play, especially Henry's words of encouragement at the siege of Harfleur and the "band of brothers"

speech before Agincourt. These speeches helped make Olivier's film version a very effective morale booster during the dark days of World War II. The film was also a reminder that England had succeeded against overwhelming odds in the past and could do so again in the 1940s.

On the other hand, the play also contains several scenes that can be used to convey an anti- war message about the carnage of battle, especially in a war being waged for dubious motives. The scenes where the cloaked and unrecognized Henry talks to his soldiers the night before Agincourt raises profound questions about the responsibilities of leaders, not only for their soldiers' lives but for their very souls.

*Richard III*

This play is the culmination of the story that had continued through the Henry VI plays. While some events in the Henry V tetralogy are inaccurate, such as the suggestion that Hotspur and Hal are the same age, the basic story is

historically accurate. Such is not the case when we get to the second tetralogy. Shakespeare was writing in a Tudor England where the accepted view of Richard was that he was deformed in both body and soul. Many Ricardians believe that it was the official policy of both Henry VII and Henry VIII to demonize Richard as thoroughly as possible. Many historians, such as Charles Ross, disagree with this idea, but Ross does acknowledge that "in the years immediately following Bosworth, the slandering of Richard's name lay in crudely partisan hands" (Ross xxi). Since the Tudors had systematically eradicated the remaining Yorkist claimants to the throne, it seems logical to assume that the various chroniclers got the message and described the events with an anti-Richard slant. By the time the story got to Shakespeare, Richard's villainy had reached epic proportions. Although our playwright seems amazingly credulous when it comes to some of the tales about Richard, he was only repeating the information that was available to him – which will make for an excellent lesson about the difficulties historians face in trying to tell the full story of an event. Ross provides a comprehensive review of the evolution of the Tudor tradition at the beginning of his book, including a discussion of Shakespeare's sources (Ross xix-liii).

Shakespeare makes Richard responsible for deaths that occurred when he was a small child. He asks us to believe that a hunchback with a withered arm could be a successful medieval soldier when in reality a person with such handicaps would be unlikely to survive even one battle. When more than one version about the facts of a particular death exist in the historical record, Shakespeare always uses the one most hostile to Richard. In short, Shakespeare's portrayal of the last Plantagenet king of England is a truly splendid example of political propaganda, being derived from sources written specifically as propaganda as defined above - the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of injuring a person.

- ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works Cited

Figgis, John Neville. The Divine Right of Kings. London: Cambridge University Press, 1934. This provides general historical background on the theory of the divine right of kings (and queens).

Machiavelli, Nicolo. The Prince and Selected Discourses. Ed. Daniel Donno. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1971. Since Machiavelli's work came out during the 1500's, it seems reasonable to assume that Shakespeare was familiar with it and possibly influenced by it.

Mroz, Sister Mary Bonaventure. Divine Vengeance: A Study in the Philosophical Backgrounds of the Revenge Motif as It Appears in Shakespeare's Chronicle History Plays. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1941.
This connects directly with the recurring themes of divine vengeance and retribution which are so important in the series of plays from Richard II through Richard III.

"Propaganda." Merriam-Webster Online. Merriam-Webster Incorporated, 2005. <http://merriamwebster.com>. Online dictionaries can be very useful.

Ross, Charles. Richard III. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981.
This is considered to be a standard (i.e., reliable) biography of Richard. Ross has a reputation in some quarters of being unsympathetic to Richard, but I found his work to be fair and even-handed. His introduction discussing the fact and fiction of Richard's reputation is especially valuable.

Shakespeare, William. The Complete Signet Classic Shakespeare. Ed. Sylvan Barnet. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972.
This is convenient because all of the plays are together in one volume.

Supplemental Resources

Books

Cantor, Norman F. The Last Knight: The Twilight of the Middle Ages and the Birth of the Modern Era. New York: Free Press, 2004.

This is a fascinating book about John of Gaunt, with a wealth of information about life in the 14th century for the wealthy and powerful, the peasants, and even the women. It also has an excellent family tree for the Plantagenets which looks easy to understand – better than the one on the History of the Monarchy site. It's worth buying a paperback copy of this book just for the family tree.

Earle, Peter. The Life and Times of Henry V. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972.
Part of the Kings and Queens of England book series, this is a very comprehensive story of Henry's life.

Jarman, Rosemary Hawley. Crispin's Day: The Glory of Agincourt. London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1979. Although the point of this book is to tell the story of one battle, it also provides a detailed explanation of the events that led up to the battle, as well as a concise background of the Hundred Years' War. There are also family trees clarifying the basis for Henry's claim to the French throne.

Kendall, Paul Murray. Richard the Third. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1955.
Generally considered to be the definitive biography of Richard III, it is particularly valuable because Kendall tries to maintain an even-handed approach to his discussion of the various charges against Richard.

Labarge, Margaret Wade. Henry V: The Cautious Conqueror. London: Martin Secker & Warburg Limited, 1975. This biography of Henry includes a large number of quotes from 15th century writers that could make it easier to design a lesson using primary source material.

Lamb, V.B. The Betrayal of Richard III. London: The Research Publishing Co., 1959.
A view of the development of the Tudor Richard, this seems to be somewhat slanted in Richard's favor.

Tey, Josephine. The Daughter of Time. New York: Scribner Paperback Fiction, 1951.
This is a very entertaining book set outs the facts about Richard III's life and the controversies surrounding him as would a detective. Although it comes down clearly on the side of Richard's innocence and Henry VII's guilt in the death of the princes, it is an easy introduction to Richard. It is also available as an unabridged audiobook, on cassette and CD. Derek Jacobi does an outstanding job of narrating and acting out the various characters.



Williamson, Audrey. The Mystery of the Princes. Gloucester, U.K.: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1978.
This book offers a fairly even-handed look at the development of the Tudor version of the evil Richard. For the purposes of this curriculum unit, I especially like the prologue that touches on several topics in the first unit in the CLEAR curriculum for 7th grade Texas history – propaganda, point of view, conflicting primary source accounts of a historical event, and incomplete records of historical events.

Films

Henry V. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. MGM/UA, 1989.
This version is gritty, doesn't overly idolize Henry, and has a very realistic battle scene.

Henry V. Dir. Laurence Olivier. Criterion, 1946.
This version is intentionally and intensely patriotic. I like the opening scene that will give the students an idea of what Elizabethan London and an Elizabethan theater looked like. On the other hand, I think the performances are a little over the top for my students' tastes and the contrast between realistic outdoor scenes and stylized indoor scenes might be off-putting.

Henry V. Dir. David Giles. BBC, 1979.
In keeping with the BBC's intent when it began its Shakespeare project, this film is more faithful to Shakespeare's text than either the Branagh or Olivier versions. It is also my personal favorite.

In Search of Shakespeare. Dir. David Wallace. PBS, 2004.
A comprehensive and interesting introduction to Shakespeare and his times.

Richard III. Dir. Laurence Olivier. Criterion, 1956.
The classic film is a brilliant and completely fascinating piece of theater, to the great distress of all Ricardians because from a historical point of view it verges on fantasy.

Richard III. Dir. Jane Howell. BBC, 1982.
A good solid production, but at almost four hours in length, it is impractical for anything but the use of selected scenes to compare with Olivier's film.

Web Sites:

A Brief Note on the Historical Background to Shakespeare's First and Second History Cycles. 1999. Malaspina University-College, Nanaimo, BC.
<http://www.mala.bc.ca/ ~johnstoi/eng366/roses.htm>.
A well-organized synopsis of the Wars of the Roses, correlated with Shakespeare.

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. 2000. The Tech, MIT. <http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/works.html>.
This is a great resource. All of the plays are available online. You have a choice of accessing the entire place in one long page or of going to one page at a time. This site works perfectly for Lesson 3 because I can easily locate and print only the scenes that I need for that lesson.

The Five W's of Cyberspace. 2005. Media Awareness Network. <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special_initiatives/wa_resources/wa_shared/tipsheets / 5Ws_of_cyberspace.cfm>. This is a kid-friendly site that offers excellent tips for using the Internet wisely. It also offers a reminder that in some cases it's still easier to find information the old-fashioned way rather than automatically turning to the Internet.

Guide to Conducting Mock Trials. Nineteenth Judicial Court of Illinois. <http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/bkshelf/resource/mt_conduct.htm>. An excellent introduction to using mock trials as a teaching tool.

History of the Monarchy: The Plantagenets. 2005. The Official Site of the British Monarchy. <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page58.asp >.
There is a link on this page to a family tree of the Plantagenet dynasty from 1216 to 1485 that I plan to use in Lesson 2.

Janes, Kathy. You Be the Detective! The Historical Background of Shakespeare's History Plays. 2005. <http://home.earthlink.net/~historyisfun/detective/detective.htm>.
This is the webquest which I designed to accompany this lesson.

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators – Critical Evaluation Surveys and Resources. 2005. Discovery.com. <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html>.
This is very useful for introducing students to careful evaluation of web sites.

Lawyers & Judges: Tips on Volunteering: Youth Education: Mock Trials. 2005. American Bar Association. <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/volunteer/youthmock.html>.

This ABA site has a link to an online guide to putting on mock trials. The guide is in PDF format and includes forms and sample mock trial.

Richard III Society. 16 June 2005. The Richard III Society. <http://www.richardiii.net/>. The introduction to the English Richard III site is blatantly pro-Richard, but also rather entertaining. Once you get past that you can find some useful historical data as well as the two most commonly seen portraits of Richard.

Richard III Society, American Branch. 2005. The American Branch of the Richard III Society. <http://www.r3.org>. This has a wealth of information, including primary source material, a section devoted to Shakespeare's play, and all sorts of suggested lesson plans and other resources. This site goes way beyond being some sort of Richard fan club. It is a truly valuable resource for research on a wide variety of topics connected with Richard and the fourteenth century. I highly recommend it.