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CHARACTER CONCEPTIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S CRESSIDA
IN MAJOR TWENTIETH-CENTURY PRODUCTIONS

by

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For Pat

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ABSTRACT

For three centuries, Shakespeare's Cressida was universally considered to be a fully culpable "daughter of the game." However, as a result of changing cultural conditions at the beginning of the twentieth century, her motivations within the play began to be re-examined. The threat of war in Europe and the women's struggle for equal rights renewed interest in Troilus and Cressida. From this time forward, the play was in constant production.

Cressida was regarded as a coquette and a courtesan by critics and directors until the 1960s when Joseph Papp (at the New York Shakespeare Festival) portrayed her as a victim of men and war. In the 1970s, feminist critics in particular studied the nuances of one of Shakespeare's most maligned women. Their observations proved an insightful, three-dimensional analysis of a young woman in a war-torn country. Regardless of the perception of Cressida's motivations by modern thinkers, their considerations of her character were ignored in productions of the 1970s and 1980s.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

In the best of all possible theatrical worlds, one assumes that directors are aware of contemporary critical views before they attempt to produce a play. Early in the twentieth century their awareness seemed apparent in productions of Troilus and Cressida, but as we approached the twenty-first millennium, such was no longer the case. In 1898, Shaw stated that "in Troilus and Cressida, Shakespeare is ready and willing to start at the twentieth century if the seventeenth century would only let him" (qtd. in Bowen 32). The play has been considered modern by many critics because the subject matter was sex and war, themes prevalent in our modern war-weary society. Indeed, Troilus and Cressida has been in production continually during the twentieth century, an era that corresponded with women's revolutions and regular outbreaks of war (43).

The character of Cressida in Shakespeare's play is one that has fascinated scholars since her creation. Generally regarding her to be no more than a courtesan situated in a text riddled with difficult language, the play was ignored in production for almost three centuries. Although twentieth-century literary scholars began to empathize with Cressida's predicament, their compassion was not always

evident in production. Early in the century, critics and directors shared the belief that she was a wanton. The Women's Movement of the sixties gained initial support for an apparent feminist perspective of the play in Joseph Papp's 1967 production, in which Troilus and the war environment were blamed for Cressida's actions. However, support for her plight diminished in productions of the seventies and eighties, where the feminist point of view seemed to be ignored in major productions.

Ours is a century that has been plagued with wars, as well as one that has benefited by tremendous cultural, technological and scientific growth. Renaissance England was a time of continual war but also a time of tremendous growth in society and in culture. The parallels that existed between Shakespeare's society and the present have a direct bearing on why modern audiences related to the play. There was a strong woman ruling England--Queen Elizabeth I--during most of Shakespeare's lifetime. Similarly three women have held power in England during the twentieth century, Queen Victoria, Elizabeth II, and Margaret Thatcher, the first British woman prime minister. The emergence of women fighting for equal rights has also been a common motif of the twentieth century.

The combination of a country at war and strong women provided the impetus for producing the play in our era.

However, it is uncertain whether Troilus and Cressida was ever performed for the general Elizabethan audiences. The Arden Shakespeare affirmed that it was staged for the educated audiences at the Inns of Court in 1609, but performance history for the following three centuries is almost negligible (309).

Part of Queen Elizabeth I's success as a ruler was that she did not marry and also that she was very well educated. Camden tells us that Elizabeth I "carefully dissociated herself from the common aspects of womanhood," marriage and motherhood (270). Elizabeth I influenced many noble women to educate themselves and this was unusual: ". . . the emergence of women as people first and females second was rather disturbing to the social attitudes of the time" (270). Women demanding education and the right to choose their husbands was disturbing to the male-dominated Elizabethan society, just as women fighting for equal rights is disturbing to many in the male-dominated world of the twentieth century.

Because Elizabethan women were gaining rights previously denied them, primarily in education, anti-feminist sentiments arose: "The particular faults of women as listed by anti-feminist writers are legion, beginning with the all inclusive one that though men are full of faults, women have only two: everything they say, and everything they do" (Camden 24). However, there were

supporters of women's rights: Sir Thomas More professed that women were the intellectual equals of men. In her book, Shakespeare and the Nature of Women, Juliet Dusinberre stated that:

Aristocratic women in England in the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth enjoyed an emancipation comparable to that of aristocrats . . . in Renaissance Italy. For them the battle for recognized equality with men had been fought and won . . . Shakespeare knew that the tough intellect behind the raillery of the court ladies . . . had plenty of basis in real life . . . But ideas confined to the circle of the court . . . tend[ed] to be a scholar's playground rather than a significant influence in society as a whole.

(2)

Although women at court were accepted as "intellectual" equals, chastity was still upheld as the quality of prime importance to all women. Camden declared that: "chastity was the chief ornament of women; and women should be heedful of this virtue, because there is little difference between being unchaste and being thought unchaste" (33).

Erastophil, a Renaissance philosopher, believed that it was wise for women to practice restraint in matters of love, and philosophized:

Were there no difficulty in the obtaining, there

would be no pleasure in the enjoyment, for it is that which renders the fruition so much the sweeter, so miserable our lot here, that we cannot relish the least contentment, unless it be seasoned with the bitterness and acerbity of misery. (74)

The social and political situation of Elizabethan women influenced Shakespeare's writing. Cressida was portrayed as an intelligent character struggling with her identity in a patriarchal, war-torn society. Attitudes prevalent during the early 1600s suggest that Shakespeare's contemporary audience would perceive Cressida an unfaithful "intellectual equal," as a whore. Whereas chastity was vital to a woman's status, an unchaste and untrue lover could only be viewed negatively.

Shakespeare based his play on Chaucer's 1385 narrative poem of Troilus and Criseyde, which was influenced by the twelfth-century chivalric romance of Benoit de Ste. Maure's Le Roman de Troie, and also on Boccaccio's Il Filostrato of c.1338 (qtd. in Wenner 6). In Benoit's work, Briseida was a slave girl in love with Troilus. Once she was sent to the Greek camp, she fell in love with Diomedes after a long period of time and only after Troilus wounded him in battle. She gave Troilus' sleeve to Diomedes because she pitied him. Briseida suffered great remorse for being unfaithful to Troilus, who was eventually killed by Achilles. Because of

her regret, Benoit did not condemn Briseida for her actions.

In Boccaccio's poem, Il Filostrato, Griseida was a widow. Boccaccio invented the character of Pandarus to act as a go-between for the lovers. In this version, Griseida held off before she surrendered to Troilus. Although she promised to remain faithful and to return to Troilus in ten days, it only took about four days for Griseida to submit to Diomedes. Troilus hated her for the betrayal and was later killed in battle by Achilles. Boccaccio cautioned all young men like Troilus that:

A young woman is fickle and is desirous of many lovers, and she esteems her beauty more than it is in her mirror, and she has much vainglory in her youth, which is all the more pleasing and attractive the more she judges it in her own mind. She has no feeling for virtue or reason, and is ever inconstant as the leaf in the wind. (Wenner 75)

Griseida was remorseful after submitting to Diomedes but tried to make the best of her exchange by staying with the Greek. It was clear in his poem that Griseida had no choice but to remain with Diomedes because she could not return to Troy.

Chaucer made use of both earlier versions in his poem, Troilus and Criseyde. His Criseyde was a widow who was tricked into submitting to Troilus's advances by her cousin,

Pandarus. It was unclear how long it took for Diomedes to win her love, but Chaucer put more blame for the betrayal on Diomedes than on Criseyde. Chaucer sympathized with Criseyde, who cared for Diomedes when he was wounded by Troilus. Criseyde was sorry for being unfaithful to Troilus, who loved her to the end. Troilus did not die in Chaucer's poem, but Criseyde nevertheless remained with Diomedes.

Robert Henryson's Testament of Criseyde was often attached to Chaucer's poem and was believed for a long time to be the ending of Chaucer's poem. In this work, Criseyde was "afflicted with leprosy as a punishment for her unfaithfulness, and [was] given alms, unknowingly, by Troilus" (All quotations are from Arden Shakespeare, 23). Shakespeare "presumably considered the Testament a sixth book to Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, since the former poem was printed [along] with Chaucer's work without commentary (Stearns 14). Henryson's was the only account that has Criseyde punished at the end of the story.

In all three versions, Troilus wounded Diomedes. Only Boccaccio put the blame entirely on Griseida. Chaucer toned down the gravity of Criseyde's unfaithfulness, and had Troilus love her to the end. Chaucer's poem was "more human and more genuine in its passion than the versions of Benoit and Boccaccio" (Wenner 149).

In Shakespeare's play there were two plots, that of the

war between the Trojans and the Greeks and that of the love of Troilus and Cressida. Pandarus was Cressida's uncle, and there was no indication that she was a widow. A significant difference between the play and Shakespeare's sources was that there was no time for Diomedes to court Cressida as he did in the earlier poems. However, the background for the story was the same, the seven-year Trojan War that was fought over a woman. Helen, wife of the Greek general Menelaus, was kidnapped by Paris of Troy out of revenge for the Greek's kidnapping of their Aunt Hesione years earlier. As a result, the Greeks were at war with Troy attempting to recapture Helen. In the ensuing years she became Paris's consort. Paris's and Helen's relationship provided a parallel to that of Troilus and Cressida because both Helen and Cressida were taken to the enemy camp. The difference, however, was that Helen lived in luxury with Paris as his mistress, whereas Cressida's fate was to live in the Greek camp as a courtesan. The fact that the war was fought over a woman was the cause of many bitter debates among the Greeks and among the Trojans.

Although both sides contended that Helen was a whore, the battle raged. When King Priam of Troy asked whether they should return Helen, Hector replied:

Let Helen go.

To guard a thing not ours nor worth to us

(Had it our name) the value of one ten,
 What merit's in that reason which denies
 The yielding of her up? (2.2.17, 22-25)

Even though Hector later stated: "She is not worth what she doth cost the keeping . . . 'Tis mad idolatry / To make the service greater than the god," Troilus insisted on keeping Helen (2.2.52). He countered that "she is a pearl / Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships, / And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants" (2.2.82-4). In a mercantile world at war, the value or "price" of an object was paramount. Women were valued for their appearance, their chastity and to whom they "belonged." Helen was valuable because she was beautiful and belonged to Menelaus. Cressida, also beautiful, lost her value when she was sent to the Greeks because she was no longer a virgin and because she was not married to a powerful Trojan soldier. Later on in the Trojan debate scene, Hector reversed his original stand and decided, like Troilus, that keeping Helen was a matter of honor: "I propend to you / In resolution to keep Helen still / For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence / Upon our joint and several dignities" (2.3.191-4).

The Greek Diomedes stated that both Menelaus and Paris were "each heavier for a whore" (4.1.67) and insisted that:

[Helen is] bitter to her country: Hear me Paris--
 For every false drop in her bawdy veins
 A Grecian's life hath sunk; for every scruple

Of her contaminated carrion weight
 A Trojan hath been slain. Since she could speak,
 She hath not given so many good words breath
 As for her Greeks and Trojans suffer'd death.
 (4.1.69-75)

Women were blamed for all the ills of society in this patriarchal world. The fact that Helen was kidnapped was not considered in the assessment of her character. However, she never spoke of her Greek husband or indicated any sorrow at being a hostage. Both sides believed that Greek and Trojan soldiers died so Helen could stay with Paris. While Helen slept, the warriors went to battle. Cressida declared that "Hector was gone but Helen was not up" (1.2.51). Although the men on both sides concurred that Helen was not worth the battle, they continued to fight a bitter, chaotic and jaded war, one side to keep her, the other to get her back.

Cressida's life differed greatly from Helen. Cressida is onstage for six scenes. The first time we meet her she is with her servant and her Uncle Pandarus gossiping about the soldiers returning from battle. It is evident that she is only remotely interested in the war. Pandarus describes Troilus's attributes to spark her interest, but Cressida will not admit her attraction to Troilus. In this scene, Shakespeare establishes that Cressida is dependent on her uncle for protection. She relies upon her "secrecy to

defend [her] mine honesty; . . . and you [Pandarus], to defend all these" (1.2.268). By the end of the scene, we learn that she loves Troilus and that she has a realistic view about her position as a woman:

But more in Troilus thousand-fold I see
 Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be

 Yet hold I off. Women are angels, wooing:
 Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.

 Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is.

 'Achievement is command; ungain'd beseech.'
 (1.2.289-298)

The next time we see Cressida, in Act 3, scene 2, her uncle has arranged a meeting with Troilus. Pandarus tries to hurry their affair: "So, so; rub on and kiss the mistress" (48). Cressida is embarrassed. Then she boldly invites Troilus to enter her room. Embarrassed again, she hesitates. This behavior suggests her insecurity when alone with the man she loved. Shakespeare portrays a young woman in love. Cressida declares that she has loved Troilus for a long time and has seemed "hard to win" (116). Women cannot disclose their feelings: "But though I lov'd you well, I wood you not" (125). Then Troilus kisses her and Cressida tries to leave. Pandarus remarks: "Leave?--And you take

leave till tomorrow morning--" (139-40). In these lines, Pandarus makes it clear that Troilus will have her for the night. Cressida is confused. She will lose her tactical advantage if she does not hold him off. She says: "I have a kind of self resides with you, / But an unkind self, that itself will leave / To be another's fool. I would be gone . . . (144-146)." She wants to stay but knows she should not. Cressida hopes to remain faithful but is unsure that she can promise to love him forever. However, Troilus swears his fidelity which spurs her to return the declaration. They both try to outdo the other with their vows of love. Cressida's last lines are that if she is untrue, the world should know of it and declare all untruthful people or things: "As false as Cressid" (194).

After they consummate their love, the couple changes: Troilus wants to leave, whereas Cressida wants him to "tarry" (4.2.15). Shakespeare lets us know that Cressida was a virgin the night before: As her uncle enters, Cressida says: "now will he be mocking: / I shall have such a life" (21-2). Pandarus asks her: "How now, how now, how go maidenheads? Here, / You, maid--where's my cousin Cressid?" (23-4) [emphasis added]. Cressida's response tells the story: "You bring me to do--and then you flout me too!" (26).

The crisis in Cressida's life takes place almost immediately. Soldiers come to announce that Cressida will

be exchanged for a Trojan warrior. Troilus's response is simply: "Is it so concluded?" (68). Her guardian has more sympathy with Troilus than with Cressida: "Would thou hadst never been born! I knew thou wouldst be his death" (88-9). When Pandarus tells Cressida of her plight she becomes extremely emotional. She wants to disfigure herself so that she will not be attractive to the Greeks. She asserts twice that she will not leave Troy, but in the end she knows that she is helpless.

In Act 4, scene 4, while preparing to leave, Cressida asks Troilus when they will meet again; he ignores her question and instead asks her to be faithful. Her response is: "I, true? How now, what wicked deem is this?" (58). Now Troilus hesitates because he does not want to upset her but replies: "be thou true, / And I will see thee" (65-6). Cressida is concerned with his safety should he try to follow her to Greek camp, but Troilus is only concerned with her fidelity. They exchange tokens of their affection. Troilus then details the many qualities of the Greeks and how their attributes can make it difficult for her to remain faithful. Her reaction is: "O heavens, you love me not!" (82). In "A Rhetorical Analysis of Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida," Mary Z. Maher states: "Because he is master of her fate and possessor of her body, he conducts the farewell scene. Like a teacher with a high-strung pupil, he delivers a series of speeches to which she adds only the

punctuation" (106). At the end of his speech, Cressida asks if he will be true. "Fear not my truth" is his response (105). When Diomedes arrives to escort her to the Greek camp, Cressida says nothing more.

The next scene is Cressida's introduction to the Greek camp. The generals gather to meet their new hostage and are taken by her beauty. Agamemnon kisses her before Ulysses suggests: "Yet is the kindness but particular: / 'Twere better she were kiss'd in general" (20-1). Five generals kiss her but she keeps Menelaus and Ulysses from doing so with her repartee. Diomedes rescues her by taking her to her father. Ulysses, insulted that she outwitted him, states:

Fie, fie upon her!

There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip--
Nay, her foot speaks; her wanton spirits look out
At every joint and motive of her body.

O these encounterers, so glib of tongue,

. . . set them down

For sluttish spoils of opportunity

And daughters of the game. (54-63)

In this speech, Shakespeare makes it obvious that Cressida's refusal to kiss Ulysses causes him to label her a "daughter of the game."

The last time we see Cressida is in Act 5, scene 2.

When Diomedes goes to her father's house that evening, Calchas sends Cressida to him. In this scene, Troilus and Ulysses espy the encounter between Cressida and her Greek guardian, as Thersites watches both pairs from farther back. She flirts with Diomedes who gets impatient and wants to have a liaison with her immediately. She responds: "Sweet honey Greek, tempt me no more to folly" (18). Cressida tries to use her tactics to keep the upper hand, but Diomedes is intolerant. He starts to leave four times and four times she calls him back again. He asks for a token to assure that she will acquiesce at some later date. Cressida is of two minds again. After she gives him Troilus's sleeve, she hesitates: "He lov'd me--Oh false wench!--Giv't me again!" (70). She grabs the sleeve, but Diomedes snatches it back and refuses to return it to her. Cressida reacts: "Nay, do not snatch it from me: / He that takes that doth take my heart withal" (81-2). Diomedes tries to discover to whom the sleeve belongs. Her response is: "'Twas one's that lov'd me better than you will" (88). Cressida's bantering does not work with Diomedes. She knows that she will have to give in to his demands eventually. When Diomedes asks if he can return, she simply responds: "Ay, come: O Jove, do come: I shall be plagu'd" (104). After his exit, Cressida's insecurity is obvious again:

Troilus farewell! One eye yet looks on thee,
But with my heart the other eye doth see.

Ah, poor our sex! this fault in us I find:
 The error of our eye directs our mind.
 What error leads must err; O, then, conclude,
 Mind's sway'd by eyes are full of turpitude.
 (106-111)

Cressida does not appear again. Her last speech indicates hopelessness in her new situation. In her "mind's eye" she knows that her life has changed drastically. She understands that Diomedes is her only means of survival in the war, as protector and to prevent her from becoming the camp courtesan.

Shakespeare neither condemns nor condones Cressida's actions. Because Troilus does not open her letter at the end of the play, which might explain or express sorrow for her decision, the audience is left wondering whether or not she has any remorse for her actions. Cressida has no opportunity to redeem herself.

There are many interpretations of a play text. Meanings derived from literary criticism are as valid as those derived from a performance. Indeed, the interpretations are often radically different. The elements that transform the text from the page to the stage can significantly alter the playwright's original intent. New meanings can develop once a role is embodied by an actor on a set: how s/he is dressed and how s/he moves across the stage all affect the audience's perception.

In the last twenty years, feminists have contributed a new perspective to literary criticism. They have provided deeper insights into the nuances that shade female characters. In her book Feminism and Theatre, Sue-Ellen Case explained that theatre communicates in ways different from this, in "semiotics":

The basic operatives in the production of meaning are the signifier [elements of a production] . . . and the signified [message derived] . . . semiotics seeks to describe the way in which the set becomes a sign: how it signifies place, time, social milieu and mood. (115)

Case acknowledged that the combination of all elements of a stage production from the text, to the space, to the set pieces, to how the actors used them, shaped the "collective consciousness" of the audience's perception. She added that "Semiotics also identifies and explores those elements of the actor's performance that signify character and objective to the audience" (115). Since the audience absorbing a production determines the message, semiotics identifies several texts within a performance situation (115). In other words, the elements of a production produce a message once they are absorbed by an audience. Whereas literary critics determine meaning after reading the text, audience members determine the meaning after seeing a performance.

Case explained that there are "several texts within a

performance situation," the original written text, the director's, the actor's, the designers', the critics' and ultimately the audience's:

Semiotics proposes that each of these texts is different and discrete, retaining an equal status with the other ones and representing appropriate material for a critical response. The constitution of a performance text, separate but equal to the written one, implies new dimensions in the co-production of the text. (116)

Case asserted that how a female character was portrayed did not necessarily proceed from the text but was rather determined by the culture's image of the female (117). When a woman was cast in a role, her appearance determined how she would be viewed. Case affirmed that "the casting of beautiful women in ingenue roles . . . participates in patriarchal prejudices that control the sign system of the representation of women on stage" (117). When the actor playing Cressida was a young, attractive woman, our culture understood why men were attracted to her, regardless of her character. Case added that "these discoveries help to illuminate how the image of a woman on stage participates directly in the dominant ideology of gender" (117). In essence, the image of a desirable woman conformed to the dominant male culture's ideal: young and attractive. This ideal reinforced the image the woman had of herself as one

which was determined by men. It explained why Cressida, as a woman unsure of her own identity, had to live up to and down to the expectations of the men in her society. She had to elevate herself to suit Troilus's idealized view of her as "a pearl" (1.2.100), knowing full well that "men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is" (1.3.294). Then she had to lower herself to Diomedes's view: "The lustre in your eye, heaven in your cheek, / Pleads your fair usage; and to Diomed / You [Cressida] shall be mistress, and command him wholly" (4.4.116-118).

The signs at play in the various representations of Cressida determined the audience's perception of her character. In hallmark productions during the first half of the twentieth century the character of Cressida, representational of the times, was considered to be that of a trollop. By the 1960s and onwards, because of the conflux of war and the rise of the Women's Movement, the perception of her character underwent several changes: she was considered a victim, a whore, and a masochist.

In this thesis I will examine how literary critics viewed the character of Cressida and what effect, if any, their opinions had on directors. Through the discussion of major English productions and reviews of those performances, I will demonstrate whether critical opinion was considered by the directors. The productions were chosen because they came at crucial times in history. William Poel, Tyrone

Guthrie, John Barton, and Jonathan Miller are well respected for their innovative British Shakespearean productions as was Joseph Papp for his New York Shakespeare Festival. Long known for excellence, the Canadian Stratford Festival was chosen because it presented the most recent major production of Troilus and Cressida. Productions not included were those which had not focused on the love theme nor the character of Cressida and did not add anything new to the tradition of representing Cressida on stage, such as the 1938 British production of Michael MacOwan. John Barton's 1960 and 1968 versions were incorporated into the 1976 version where he also attempted to portray Cressida's plight more fully; therefore, I chose not to include the former and treat the 1976 production more thoroughly. I chose to research the productions of the 1980s because there was a proliferation of feminist literary criticism underway in that decade which should have had some effect on the productions. Howard Davies's 1985 and 1986 productions, which attempted to present a feminist point of view, were not included because their portrayal of Cressida as a victim was similarly illustrated in Williams's 1986 production, where the strategy was to apply violent devices to demonstrate Cressida's victimization.

Early in the century there was a correlation of viewpoints among critics and directors, but late in the century, for a variety of reasons, there seemed to be little

collaboration among contiguous fields of study, i.e.,
between literary interpretations of Shakespeare and
directors who produced the play in the theatre.

CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM POEL AND EARLY CRITICISM

The beginning of the twentieth century heralded the era of the New Woman. In the early 1900s, women were revolting against the stereotypical roles that a male-dominated society imposed on them. Many of these women were suffragettes fighting for the vote and rebelling against the established Victorian ideal where women stayed at home, bore as many children as possible and had few legal rights. Advances in birth control methods increased the opportunities available to women: if women had the option of choosing birth control, then they could pursue work outside the domestic realm. This choice, in turn, could lead to gender equity both in the home and workplace. However, deciding between motherhood and career was difficult for New Women. Some men supported the women's provisos, but most did not. The latter viewed this new independence in women with suspicion and with scorn. The early 1900s were clearly a time of great social and political upheaval in sexual mores.

This Woman's Revolution coincided with the threat of war. These circumstances renewed interest in Troilus and Cressida. Early in the century critics dealt with Cressida unilaterally: she was known as a wanton and a strong, free

thinking woman. Her repartee, which empowered her in many situations, did not save her from her fate. New Women challenging their position in society related to Cressida's lack of autonomy in a patriarchal world. It was only when women started demanding equal rights that critics began to challenge the received wisdom about Cressida's actions.

In 1765, Samuel Johnson stated that Shakespeare's "vicious characters sometimes disgust, but cannot corrupt, for both Troilus and Cressida are detested and condemned" (538). Yet when Cressida said in her soliloquy that "Women are angels wooing; / Things won are done" (1.2.298-9), Johnson emphasized that her words contained:

very just reflections and prudent maxims for the conduct of women, in the dangerous circumstances of love. What she says would become the utterance of the most virtuous matron, though her own character in this piece is unluckily a bad one.
(538)

Johnson condemned Cressida's behavior even though she was dealing with the extremely "dangerous circumstances" of love during wartime. In order for her to remain virtuous in Johnson's mind, she would have had to refuse Pandarus's bidding. Johnson expected a great deal of control from a young girl whose guardian was bent on persuading her to spend the night with the prince.

In 1849, critic Gervinus condemned Cressida's actions.

He was convinced that Shakespeare explored the comical in Cressida's "deceit." He stated that:

[Cressida] betrays almost at once, she "holds off" to attract them more methodically, because she knows that men "prize the thing ungained more than it is" (1.3.301) . . . and with Troilus she maintains reserve in practice as before in theory, confessing, yielding and varying the plan of coquettish allurements, although she is not to appear so much a coquette by profession as by nature . . . she trifles with him . . . she tempts him by an ambiguous expression to kiss her and then declares she had not meant it . . . She swears to be true to him but she does so with ominous and equivocal expressions:

Time, force and death,
Do to this body what extremes you can ;
But the strong base and building of my love
Is the very centre of the earth.
Drawing all things to it . . . (4.2.102-5).
545)

Note that Gervinus has built a case against Cressida by omission of the very important last line of her speech: "I will go in and weep" (4.2.106). If one reads the entire passage, including the last line, one sees that Cressida did not want to leave Troilus. There does not appear to be

comedy or deceit in these lines. Apparently Gervinus thought that the character's repartee was comical but misinterpreted her hesitation.

Cressida was not deceiving Troilus as Gervinus argued. Troilus's shocked expression that she offered a kiss before he asked for one, roused Cressida to declare "she had not meant" to kiss him. She realized that he would not want her if she seemed too easily won, confirming her belief that "things won are done" (1.2.288).

In 1907 E. K. Chambers advanced from the other critics by stating that "though earlier critics condemned her as a professional wanton . . . [Cressida's] love vows were in earnest" (557). Once a reluctant Cressida was sent to the Greek camp, Chambers did not see her betrayal as that of a "professional wanton who deliberately angled for the soul of her lover, but that of a light woman" (557). Chambers's perception of Cressida was that she behaved as a child, the stereotypical woman of his day. If women misbehaved, it was in their "nature." In Chambers's day, women and children had to depend on men for support because they had no real rights and no visible means of support.

William Poel began the English Stage Society in 1894 to recreate Elizabethan staging which he believed would simplify performing Shakespeare's plays. He used the many levels and entrances available on the bare Elizabethan stage to facilitate the flow of action, thus alleviating the

difficulties of alternating scene locations in Shakespeare's plays. A great innovator of staging techniques, Poel's productions attracted large audiences which meant that his productions influenced public opinion.

In 1912, Poel said that he decided to direct Troilus and Cressida because as a child his literature teacher had said:

there were two pieces written by Shakespeare which he hoped I [Poel] should never read because they were not proper ones. One was Measure for Measure and the other was Troilus and Cressida . . . Measure for Measure was the first I did for the Elizabethan Stage Society . . . Troilus and Cressida is going to be the last one that I shall present to a London public on my own responsibility. (qtd. in Speaight 192)

His teacher's opinion was that plays portraying women of questionable behavior were "not proper," and by inference, that women demanding equality with men were "not proper" either. Even though Poel considered Cressida to be a wanton, his culture was advanced enough to be interested in a play about a condemned woman.

Troilus and Cressida was also considered a problem play because scholars had difficulty categorizing its genre. Some critics questioned labelling the play a tragedy because the protagonists live at the end of the play and the

antagonists are not punished. Poel presented the play as a tragi-comedy, because he perceived Troilus as the tragic figure and Cressida as the comic figure. Chambers called the play a comedy because he viewed Cressida as a "light woman." Because Poel acknowledged both comic and tragic elements, he was in agreement with most critics at the time.

Poel was very original in his approach to the play. Reversing Elizabethan practice, he cast women in male roles. The roles of Thersites, Aeneas and Paris were performed by women. The influence of the New Women surely had positive influences on him in this regard. Wishing to adhere to Elizabethan practice in costume, Poel dressed the Greeks "as Elizabethan soldiers, smoking the tobacco which Raleigh had just introduced from Virginia, and the Trojans wore masque costumes of Elizabethan design. Their flamboyance emphasized the sophistication of a court which thought Helen worth a war" (Speaight 196).

Believing that Shakespeare's Cressida was founded on Chaucer's, Poel conceived of her as a widow. In a letter dated December, 1912, Poel surmised that:

one cannot read the part carefully without realizing that Shakespeare also had in his mind a woman who is not a girl but a woman who has had considerable experience of the world, and the fact that Pandarus tells her that Troilus is not yet 23 is a meaningless remark if she is as young as he

is. She is about 28, I take it. (qtd. in
Speaight 196)

There was no evidence to support that Cressida was a widow in Shakespeare's play. However, there are many textual references that prove her night with Troilus was her first sexual encounter. She speaks of "secrecy, to defend mine honor" (1.2.266), which demonstrated Cressida's concern with keeping her reputation by remaining chaste. She later worried about the possibility of becoming pregnant: "If I cannot ward what I should not have hit, I can watch you for telling how I took the blow, unless it swell past hiding, and then it's past watching" (1.2.272-275). This fear and her concern with her reputation supported her virginity and her lack of promiscuity.

Cressida was portrayed as a frivolous coquette by milliner Edith Evans, who was at that time not a professional actress. Speaight asserted that:

the production will always be remembered for its Cressida . . . and we owe it to Mr. William Poel that the greatest English comedienne of the twentieth century finally gave up her hats . . . Mr. Bridges-Adams, who was later to take over the direction of the New Shakespeare Company at Stratford, wrote: "I wish I knew how you contrived to teach an amateur to give such a perfect and such a classic performance; it seemed

to create Cressida once and for all for this generation." (199)

The critical response to the production generally supported the character concept articulated by Poel. The Times review of December 11, 1912, described the production as follows:

It was decadent . . . morally ugly, exhibited with a kind of mischievous glee! The mincing detestable Cressida! The moping "degenerate" Troilus! The cynically false Diomed! Of course we have had much of this love-making in literature since Shakespeare's time--chiefly in certain "scrofulous" novels . . . but to get it from Shakespeare himself is almost like a blow in the face. As to the principal lovers, Paris and Helen, they seem to be presented as merely frivolous idlers, he lolling on the couch, she twanging a guitar and making very poor fun of Pandarus. In short, all the "amoristic" side of the play would cure even Don Juan himself for any fancy of love . . . Nor do we understand why Miss Edith Evans gave Cressida a falsetto and a prancing gait. Perhaps it was to make her more repulsive even than Shakespeare had designed. Let us add, however, in fairness that she was repulsive-attractive; there was something in her

that rendered that fascination of Troilus and Diomed by no means absurd. Perhaps that is the word for the whole thing--repulsive-attractive . . .

(284)

Feminist Sue-Ellen Case would refer to this reviewer's attraction as that of "male desire projected upon the female performer (which) created the image of woman as 'courtesan' (30). In other words, although he found her to be morally repulsive, he found her physically attractive. The fact that the role was portrayed by a beautiful young woman aroused him. Her desirability made it easier for him to view her as a courtesan rather than as a naive virgin.

In The Saturday Review of December 14, 1912, John Palmer disagreed with Poel's pessimistic reading of the play, particularly the portrayal of Cressida:

That she is wanton deepens, not impairs, the appeal of the story. Cressid is not by profession the conscious practicing and affected harlot. She is born--not made a wanton. In the politer phrase of the day, she is "over-sexed." Her vows to Troilus are burning sincerity. She made them to the first man as sincerely as she broke them with the second. She is a profound study of the instinctive coquetry of the scarlet woman--profunder even than Cleopatra. Her artifice is nature. It leaps into her speech and gesture; it

moves in her blood. Shakespeare has stripped her of moral beauty . . . yet he leaves her, as a tragic figure, hauntingly lovely, sounding the appeal of flesh unassisted; so that we rather fall with Troilus than scold with Ulysses. (285)

Palmer is in agreement with both E. K. Chambers and The Times's reviewer. He saw her behavior as that of a "light woman" who had no real knowledge of and could not help what she was doing. Cressida was caught in a losing situation. In essence, Palmer saw her as a child who could not avoid her behavior because it was in her nature to betray Troilus. His view of women as children were precisely those the New Women were fighting. The difference between the beliefs of Palmer and Poel was that the former saw her as a tragic figure because of her nature, while the latter, along with Chambers, viewed her as an essentially comic figure because of her nature--that of a "light woman." These notions were stereotypes.

Palmer described the actor's performance:

Miss Edith Evans . . . suggested the prancing harlot; and her technical method, wrong, I think, in any interpretation of Shakespeare, emphasized her main impression that affectation was Cressida's perpetual cue. She played, statically, the type, rather than, dynamically, the individual. (285)

Poel's interpretation led to this one-dimensional characterization. Poel had neither compassion nor understanding for the dilemma of a young woman in a war-torn country. At the turn of the century gender characteristics attributed to women were just beginning to be challenged so the views of male critics are typical of the era.

In The Contemporary Review, dated February 1913, author Edward Garnett supported Poel's conception of Cressida:

Nothing showed the justice and fineness of Mr. Poel's conception better than his rendering of the scene (4.4.) of the Lady Cressida's leave-taking of her sorrowful lover. She is shown us as pinning on her hat, visibly intent on looks and on her change of fortune, while Troilus is boring her with his repeated "But yet be true!" "Oh heavens! Be true again," retorts the lady in her impatience to get his entreaties done with . . . The exquisite by-play of this "woman of quick sense," and later her sprightly response to the kisses of the Greek lords, was beautifully natural . . . Mr. Poel's conception of Cressida as a fashionable Elizabethan lady, with languid airs and affected graces of a court beauty, had the positive merit of creating, with cunning detail, a real woman.

(202)

Garnett obviously agreed with the portrayal of Cressida as a courtesan who would not be bothered by the fact that she must leave her country, her lover, go to the enemy camp, and then be kissed by the Greek lords. This cold person was a "real woman" in Garnett's mind and Poel's production effectively portrayed that image. Since it was an accepted belief at the turn of the century, the attitudes of the dominant male culture towards Cressida's "instinctive behavior" was clearly reflected in Poel's production and by the critics of the day.

CHAPTER III.

TYRONE GUTHRIE AND JOSEPH PAPP

After their contributions to the war effort, women who returned to their traditional feminine roles in the 1950s began to have feelings of oppression. In her book Sexual Politics, Kate Millett wrote that the "New Woman" of the twenties was as well off, and possibly better provided with sexual freedom, than the woman of the 1950s (63). After World War II, most married women left the workplace and returned to the conventional roles of homemakers and mothers. These women abandoned the independence that salaried positions afforded them to accommodate the soldiers who were returning to the workforce. However, as the post-war economy improved, "the economic conditions underlying women's inferior (or at least dependent) status were changing as women had fewer children and as household appliances freed them from labor-intensive chores formerly associated with housekeeping" (Britannica 735). The increased amount of free time allowed women the opportunity to consider alternate lifestyles that could lead to more fulfillment in their daily lives.

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir wrote The Second Sex in which she explored the secondary role of women in society. She posited that "women were made, not born" contradicting

the popular belief of the dominant male culture that biology dictated the role of women in society. De Beauvoir's book explained aspects of femininity that had never before been thoroughly explored and suggested that "liberation for women was liberation for men too" (qtd. in Britannica 735). Her book, the catalyst of the women's revolution of the sixties, postulated that women were the second sex for social reasons more than for biological reasons because the patriarchy controlled their position in society.

The situation of women in post-war England was similar to that in America, except that women in Britain had experienced the war first-hand, so the adjustment to returning to the role of homemaker was even more traumatic. They had gone from living in bomb shelters and making bombs to performing household duties. Although change was welcome, the transition must have been difficult because these women returned to being dependent on men for money and security--a role they had not assumed for six years.

In 1956, when Guthrie produced Troilus and Cressida at the Old Vic, England was still suffering from the aftermath of the war. The rebuilding of the cities and the economy was in progress. These social conditions led the British director to devise a bitter, comedic production concept of Troilus and Cressida set in pre-World War I Ruritania. The production took place three months before Look Back in Anger, universally regarded as the trumpet heralding the

contemporary era on the English stage (Berry 53). Thus Guthrie's production took place at a major turning point in the history of theatre, the launching of a newer brand of socially conscious and socially critical realism on the British stage. Critic Richard David remarked that it was "a pity to place this play, of which the main subject is war, in a period that emphasized only war's glamour and never its reality . . . it leaves out too much--notably the hero and heroine" (148). It appeared that Guthrie wanted his theatre to provide an escape from life, whereas more modern thinkers began to prefer realism on stage.

Guthrie wanted Troilus and Cressida "to be played for the movement, spectacle and character-interest . . . it is in the setting and characterization that the meaning of Guthrie's production must be primarily sought" (qtd. in Berry, Styles 55). However, he was more concerned with the soldiers than the lovers. He set the play in Ruritania, where his "Trojans [were] glass-smashing cavalry officers" (qtd. in Tynan). Guthrie drew parallels between the Greeks and Trojans and related them to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century wars between the English and Germans. In Changing Styles in Shakespeare, Ralph Berry described Guthrie's production:

The general impression is of Edwardian English in Troy, and this comprehends Pandarus as an "elderly fribble in an Ascot outfit and Cressida in riding

habit." The Greeks are projected, in the main, as Kaiser Wilhelm's Germans . . . Helen is an Edwardian chorus girl married into the peerage. The piano in her and Paris' apartment, together with champagne, ice-bucket and glasses establishes the glamour (and vapidty) of the role. Thersites is a war correspondent, constantly setting up his box camera on a tripod. This brings out the voyeurism, together with the radical discontent of the man. What this period flavour imparts . . . is a sense of the profound historical analogy. English and Germans, locked in their long historic conflict, are the Trojans and Greeks of this century. (55)

Berry felt that Guthrie successfully imparted the sense of the futility of war in his production. By distancing his audience in place and time, in a Brechtian sense, he was able to point out the parallels between modern British/German conflicts and the Trojan/Greek discord. Berry explained his belief further in his book On Directing Shakespeare:

Guthrie caught a sense of two societies in conflict, two nations locked in a war of values and attrition, and this in a period near enough to be poignant but not conveying the fatal dissonances of a contemporary war. Proximity can

numb thought and stifle reactions. The Trojan war may be the poetic archetype of all wars, but in the minds of the audience all wars are not equal: 1914-1918 is not the War of the Spanish Succession, nor is it Vietnam. Guthrie's immense theatrical flair propounded an insidiously suggestive vehicle for the thoughts and emotions of his audience. (22)

Similar to critic Oscar James Campbell, who in 1938, posited that the play was a comical satire, Guthrie sought to portray what happened when "plans formed by reason, and so recognized when the characters are temporarily rational, are totally destroyed because, when they begin to act, these men become the slaves of some passion" (Campbell 575). The characters in the play had high ideals but consistently changed their minds. Hector changed his mind about keeping Helen when he considered that the "honor" of keeping a whore was more important than the lives of his men.

Troilus's passion for Cressida eventually led to her demise because once he was satiated, his passion turned from an interest in Cressida to the war. Campbell sympathized with neither lover. He described Cressida as a "highborn harlot" whose infidelity would be "confidently expected" (577). He asserted that critics: "should [not] be greatly troubled because Cressida is not punished and Troilus is not slain by Achilles on the stage" and affirmed that Troilus as

"a victim of uncontrolled passion for a wanton . . . did not deserve the dignity of a death before the eyes of the spectators. And any similar moment of nobility Cressida deserved still less" (577).

Opinion of Cressida did not improve after Poel's production. Critic Kenneth Muir blamed Cressida for the destruction of order in the world of the play. In a lecture he delivered to the Shakespeare Conference at Stratford-upon-Avon in August 1953, Muir asserted that: "Cressida's unfaithfulness upsets order both in the microcosm and in the macrocosm . . ." because love was generally believed to "preserve the universe from chaos" (91). Muir stated that:

[Shakespeare] was saying that men are foolish enough to engage in war in support of unworthy causes; that they are deluded by passion to fix their affections on unworthy objects; that they sometimes act in defiance of their consciences; and that in the pursuit of self-interest they jeopardize the welfare of the State . . . he certainly was not saying that all women are Cressids, for Troilus himself at the very moment of disillusionment dissociates himself from such a position. (91)

In focusing on the decadence of the war and on Cressida as a coquette, Guthrie was in agreement with Muir's position.

In The Observer, dated April 8, 1956, Kenneth Tynan

remarked that Cressida in Guthrie's production, was "a militant flirt, an interpretation which throws romanticism out of the window and . . . turns Troilus into a besotted half-wit." This portrayal suggested that Guthrie's conception of the character of Cressida was the same as that of previous directors. She was still considered to be no more than a superficial and vain temptress. No effort was made to try to understand the reasons motivating her behavior.

Critic Richard David remarked that the program note for the production pointed out that "the Trojans are shewn to be undermined by frivolity; the Greeks by faction" (149). He countered that:

Even if we accept this as far as it goes (and frivolity is not the right word for the Trojan fault) it leaves out too much--notably the hero and heroine. They were indeed shabbily treated, reduced to a mere subplot of thoughtless undergraduate seduced by bitch. Their first meeting was trifled away, for . . . Pandarus . . . was allowed to distract the audience with foolery. Their parting was a little better, though the violence of Cressida's sobs and Troilus's hasty pinning of her into her dress added a stronger dash of the comic than the moment can rightly stand. (149)

David's description depicted a comic treatment of what should have been a sorrowful parting. Rather than prolonging the parting, Guthrie directed the actor who played Troilus to hurry Cressida by "pinning her into her dress." David observed that:

. . . the lovers were not allowed to claim undivided attention, for the scene was played on a double set, bedroom above, hall below, with the impatient escort [Diomedes] quite as prominent as the protagonists. Another expressionist trick destroyed by the end of the affair. The audience, tittering at the elegant game of blind man's bluff played in full light, by Cressida, her wooer, and the two parties of eavesdroppers, could hardly spare a serious thought for Troilus's passion . . . Though it was an amusing evening, it was also an infuriating one. (149)

Guthrie sought to show that Cressida was unhappy to leave Troy but not necessarily because of her love for Troilus. In turning the farewell into a comical scene, Guthrie undermined the sadness and anguish that Shakespeare wrote into the lovers' parting. Cressida could not stay in Troy in spite of her cries: "I'll go in and weep-- / --Tear my bright hair, and scratch my praised cheeks, / . . . / I will not go from Troy" (4.2.108,112).

In The Wheel of Fire, G. Wilson Knight wrote that

although "Cressida is shallow and indirect in her thinking and behavior . . . we need not suppose her love for Troilus, whilst it lasts, to be insincere" (62). In spite of her "shallowness" Knight clearly understood that Cressida sincerely loved Troilus. Knight labelled "This is, and is not, Cressid" (5.2.145), the lines a disillusioned Troilus spoke when he saw Cressida with Diomedes, "as the moral, or the problem, of the play" (69). Knight stated that there were two Cressidas because once she was traded, she changed: "Cressid, with a butterfly temperament flitting from one faith to another, is consistent. She lives emotionally" (69). In actuality she too was disillusioned. Cressida was a realist and once Troilus let her leave Troy she had to quickly adjust to the world of the Greeks. Guthrie did not take Knight's theory of her disillusionment into account in his interpretation of the character of Cressida. His concept of her character was that of a one-dimensional trollop.

Guthrie directed the actress to interpret the lines: "I will not go from Troy" (4.2.112) as those of a spoiled "bitch," who cried only because she could not get her way. He did not understand that the lines conveyed her frustrations at her lack of control over her own destiny as well as an honest concern for Troilus. She wanted to mutilate herself because she knew that the Greeks would not want an "ugly" woman and then she could stay with her lover.

This director's conception of Cressida as a superficial coquette was not much different from Poel or earlier directors. He did not look for the broader implications of her situation.

Although not all directors consider literary criticism to be paramount to their pre-production research and understanding of the text, it seems inconceivable that a director as prominent as Guthrie would not have been aware of G. Wilson Knight's writings. Knight's criticism provided a more rounded characterization of Cressida than was evident in Guthrie's production. It is possible, however, that the director read the criticism and chose to ignore that interpretation.

Guthrie's portrayal of Cressida was the last time the play was to be staged without giving more consideration to the incentives for Cressida's behavior both in literary criticism and in production. The advent of contemporary theater in Britain, the burgeoning women's movement, and the war in Vietnam generated interpretations which allowed for more nuances in her image.

In 1963, Betty Friedan wrote The Feminine Mystique, a book which marked the onset of the modern women's movement in America. Friedan posited that women needed more fulfillment in their lives than those provided by marriage and motherhood. She demanded equal rights for women and an end to discrimination against them in the workplace. The

dynamic demonstrations in which women demanded equal rights, as well as the anti-Vietnam protests, influenced Joseph Papp to produce a unique version of Troilus and Cressida for his New York Shakespeare Festival in 1965.

Meanwhile, critical opinion of the play had changed during the social upheaval of the sixties. Both Barbara Heliodora de Almeida and Jan Kott examined the "relation between environment and character" in the play:

They argued that the link between the morality of the state and individual conduct is present in all of Shakespeare's work. Unlike most early critics who viewed Cressida as a coquettish deceiver, or like E. K. Chambers who in 1907 saw her as shallow and weak, de Almeida believes that Cressida is the inevitable result of a war started because of the face of Helen, a point made by Jan Kott in 1964.

(Harris 604)

Critics de Almeida and Kott looked beyond the obvious reasons for Cressida's actions and found that the environment she lived in accounted for her behavior. In 1964, de Almeida stated that:

romantic love cannot survive materially, or even be successful morally in a corrupt society; the connection between the disordered state and the moral corruption of the individual is inextricable . . . Troilus and Cressida is not the story of the

beginning or of the causes of corruption: when the play starts, corruption has been, for some time, the dominant environment. An irresponsible war has been ravaging the country and with ever-growing intensity, spreading corruption throughout the population . . . the play represents the microcosm that reflects the macrocosm. (606)

Shakespeare wrote the play at a time when Elizabethans were war-weary; Guthrie and Papp produced it when their respective countrymen were war-weary. Yet it was not until the sixties that the war environment was considered to have affected the character of Cressida. Only after World War II, with the rise of the contemporary women's movement, was the feminist point of view factored into a production.

The effect of the war on the lovers had not previously been considered by critics. De Almeida believed that society put certain limits on men and women and influenced their actions. She asserted that:

In no aspect is the play so modern . . . as in this subjection of the fate of the lovers to that of the society which surrounds them, . . . they are products of their environment. Troilus may be romantic and touching, but as we come to ultimate values he is not much better than his fellow-heroes: at length and romantically he defends the idea of not sending Helen back to Menelaus again

(I,ii) because keeping her had become a "point of honor," and yet makes no effort whatever to keep by his side Cressida, who has no husband to go back to. He never had marriage in mind. The character of Troilus may be somewhat more romantic and less unattractive than that of Cressida, but he is morally ineffective, and lacking in the perspective that might bring significance to his actions. (606)

The war completely controlled the lovers' world and their lives. Troilus was willing to lose soldiers' lives for a point of honor, but did nothing to prevent the woman he professed to love from being exchanged.

Yet de Almeida believed that:

Cressida is no better than Troilus. Though presented as a wanton, she is also a victim of circumstances. She has been trained to please the opposite sex . . . her behavior is immoral . . . but in view of the dominating corruption of her world it was also, and pitifully, logical.

Cressida's behavior may have been in conflict with the code of honor these people claimed to live by, but it certainly did not conflict with the way they actually lived. Troilus and Cressida shows the inevitable fate of all love and honor in a corrupt society governed by men who are oblivious

of their duty to their nation and its people.

(606)

De Almeida failed to acknowledge that Cressida had no choice. Troilus's inaction was the basis of her betrayal.

In the sixties critics began to sympathize with Cressida's plight and to recognize that she was a pawn of men at war. Surviving in her society required that she learn the rules of war quickly and abide by them. Living in a country at war she was powerless to change her fate; her only possibility for survival was to please the men who could protect her.

Jan Kott examined the effect the environment had on the lovers and said that in this play the characters analyzed themselves and the world "violently and passionately" (69). As did De Almeida, Kott believed that "if war is just butchery, the world in which war exists is absurd" (69). In war people did what was necessary to survive. Even love took a backseat to survival. Kott posited that:

War has been ridiculed. Love will be ridiculed too. Helen's a tart and Cressida will be sent to the Greek camp and will become a tart. The transfer of Cressida to the Greek camp is not only part of the action of the play; it is also a great metaphor. Cressida is one of the most amazing of Shakespeare's characters. (71)

In 1964, Cressida was no longer viewed solely as a one-

dimensional whore. Kott perceived Cressida to be a young girl of seventeen when the play opened. This meant that she was about ten when the war began, which explained why war seemed "normal" to her and why she did not seem to notice or talk about it. Kott believed that:

Cressida has not yet been touched, but she knows all about love, and about sleeping with men; or at any rate she thinks she knows. She is inwardly free, conscious and daring. She belongs to the Renaissance . . . and she is a teen-age girl of the twentieth century. She is cynical, or rather would be cynical. She has seen too much. She is bitter and ironic. She is passionate, afraid of her passion and ashamed to admit it. She is even more afraid of feelings. She distrusts herself. She is our contemporary because of this self-distrust, reserve, and a need of self-analysis.

(71)

Kott failed to mention that Cressida's position was also insecure because her father had defected to the Greeks. The daughter of a traitor had little value except what her beauty and chastity provided. Her insecurity about losing her virginity, her "value," was a genuine and realistic fear. Kott continued his analysis:

In Shakespeare a character never exists without a situation. Cressida is seventeen. Her own uncle

procured her for Troilus and brings a lover to her bed. Cynical Cressida wants to be more cynical than her uncle; bitter Cressida scoffs at confidences; passionate Cressida is the first to provoke a kiss. And it is at this point that she loses all her self-confidence, becomes affectionate, blushing and shy; she is now her age again. " . . . I would be gone / Where is my wit? I know not what I speak" (3.2.). This is one of Shakespeare's most profound love scenes. The balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet, set all in one key, is just a bird's love song. Here we have everything. There is conscious cruelty in this meeting of Troilus and Cressida. They have been brought together by a procurer. His chuckle accompanies them on the first night of their love. There is no place for love in this world. Love is poisoned from the outset. These wartime lovers have been given just one night. And even that night has been spoilt. It has been deprived of all its poetry. It has been defiled. Cressida had not noticed the war. The war reached her at the break of dawn, after her first night with Troilus. (73)

Kott proved how love was ridiculed in the world of the play. Cressida lost all her "value" in one hasty night and

realized that if she had "held off" Troilus "would have tarried" and might have disallowed her exchange (4.2.17-8). Kott explained the effect of the war on the lovers:

Pandarus has procured Cressida like some goods. Now, like goods, she will be exchanged . . . for a Trojan general. She has to leave at once, the very morning after her first night . . . An experience like this is enough. She will go to the Greeks. But it will be a different Cressida. Until now she has known love only in imagination. Now she has come to know it in reality. During one night. She is violently awakened . . . Diomedes makes brutal advances towards her. Then she is kissed in turn by the generals and princes, old, great and famous men. She realizes that beauty arouses desire. She can still mock. But she already knows that she will become a tart. Only before that happens, she has to destroy everything, so that not even the memory remains. She is consistent. (73)

Kott explained that Cressida was now bitter. She realized that she could only cope with her life in Greece if she eradicated all memory of the past. In giving away Troilus's sleeve, which signified her fidelity, she "killed everything in herself" (73).

During the 1960s, one could not ignore the profusion of

anti-war demonstrations nor those which supported the women's movement. As women demanded more rights, sexual freedom naturally became an issue. More confined biologically than men, it was only natural that women became concerned with issues of birth control and sexual freedom. Men were rarely called "wantons" or "whores" if they were promiscuous, but women with liberal sexual mores were always referred to in deprecating terms.

Women in the sixties deplored this double standard which they fought to abolish. Even though G. Wilson Knight stated that: "Cressida passes from Troy and [Troilus's] love over to the loose wantonness of Diomed," Knight did not label him a wanton or a whore: it was only his actions that were labelled (62). However, Troilus's wanton desires were what led to Cressida's ruin.

The social revolution inspired Joseph Papp's production. Although he placed greater emphasis on the Trojan war than on the love of Troilus and Cressida, Papp's production was a landmark because Cressida was portrayed a victim of Troilus's immaturity rather than as a loose woman.

Papp felt that Troilus was the "greatest offender against decency. [Troilus] was a cad and Cressida his victim" (423). Along with Kott, Papp believed that Troilus failed miserably in Act 4 when he had the chance to prove that he was a man because he took no active part in preventing Cressida's trade. Papp asserted that in 4.4.,

Troilus was: "confronted with a decision, the outcome of which . . . shows what kind of man he is and paves the way for Cressida's 'unfaithfulness'" (423). He blamed Troilus for Cressida's infidelity--a novel production approach. He believed that the war was remote to Cressida because:

It has little meaning for her except that men are involved in the fighting. Pandarus has been pressing her hard to yield to a tryst with Troilus. Though she is not opposed to the idea, evidently she has deep reservations . . . It is too simple an analysis to interpret Cressida's preoccupation with sexual allusions as definite proof of sluttishness. Her banter and flirtatiousness appears to be defensive in nature rather than an overt manifestation of raging sexual desire. In our times we know that there are many who speak freely about sex and yet do not match their actions to their words, and conversely, there are those who say little and do much. Therefore we cannot assume that Cressida's ready tongue expresses her past behavior. Clearly, Pandarus has been endeavoring to overcome a reluctance in her. (424)

Papp saw Cressida as an inexperienced young woman who feared the consequences of a sexual encounter with Troilus. She was immature but wise: "Women are angels, wooing: / Things

won are done / . . . Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is" (1.3.291-94). Cressida used this statement as a strategy. It could have been an attempt to procure a commitment from Troilus as well as a way of holding him off. She knew that once she submitted to him, the mystery of "the prize" would vanish and he would lose interest in pursuing her. If she succeeded in holding him off, she would not have to submit to him and thus would not suffer the possible consequences. Cressida wisely feared pregnancy. Papp postulated that it was necessary to:

separate what people said from what they did. And in fact, what Cressida said was contradictory. Her words are strongly indicative of her chastity . . . of her fear that "things won are done" (1.2.287). She admits her great love for Troilus but "Yet hold I off" (1.2.286). This is not the expression of a tease but of a woman with realistic recognition that men are in hot pursuit and cool when they attain the prize . . . In the final analysis her fears are unfortunately corroborated. Ironically, this mixture of fear and wanting and reservation encourages the very result that she would avoid. (424)

Cressida knew that what little power her beauty and virginity afforded her would be gone through one indiscretion. Marriage was the only real way to avoid

becoming a courtesan in her world. Because women needed men for protection, her line, "Achievement is command; ungained beseech," indicated her awareness that chastity was power (1.2.293). Once she lost her virginity, men would control her life completely because she would have to comply with their wishes in return for their protection.

The women's movement had an obvious affect on Papp. Cressida's statement about power taught him that women did not want to be "dominated" by men because it meant loss of control over one's body. By submitting to the commands of Pandarus and to the desires of Troilus, Cressida ended up with the result she most wanted to avoid: she was no longer "prized" and no longer in "command."

Papp posited an innovative approach to Troilus's character as well. He considered him to be incapable of love because of a "defect in his character." To Papp, Troilus had "a distorted view of the relationship of man and woman . . . [He] is impulsive, rash, and a prisoner of uncontrollable feelings" (425). The director explained that this character flaw was evident from the start in the first meeting of Troilus and Cressida in 3.2:

Entwined with the lovers is the master of the grand design, Pandarus, the pimp, urging his charge and his fair haired boy to "rub on."

"Words pay no debts," he admonishes Troilus, "give her deeds" (3.2.55). He presses them together.

They kiss. A long kiss. When they come up for air, he presses them together again with "Nay, you shall fight your hearts out ere I part you"

(3.2.51-2). (426)

In his blocking of the play on stage, Papp had Pandarus "press them together" so there was no doubt for the audience that this was not Cressida's idea. Her uncle decided when, where, and with whom she would lose her virginity. Papp knew the women's movement would alter any comedic perception of the scene for a modern audience. However, when some members of the audience laughed, Papp chastised his sixties' audience:

The modern audience seems not to recognize the "immorality" of the situation. It finds the situation funny. Undoubtedly there is a kind of humor in it, but if this were a contemporary play about a parentless young girl, with a neurotic fear of sex, being pushed into bed by her neurotic guardian with a nice, wealthy, neurotic young man, the reaction might be somewhat different. The audience might still find the circumstances amusing but only if the whole play were an obvious comedy. But in Troilus and Cressida the overtones prevent a lighthearted reaction. The laughs, when they come, are dark and dirty. (426)

Papp suggested that his audience did not understand

Cressida's pitiable position. However, it was still early in the play, before the audience learned of her exchange. When Pandarus left "to make ready the bedroom," Cressida invited Troilus to enter her room: "Will you walk in my lord?" (3.2.60). Papp was overwhelmed by her invitation:

She . . . the girl who told us that she will hold off, makes the first approach. And Troilus, he who is so hot, whom we would expect to lift her into his arms and carry her straight to bed, ignores the invitation and instead says: "O Cressid, how often I have wished me thus!"

(3.2.61). An evasive answer to a direct question.
(426)

Troilus's hesitation put the burden of the initiative on Cressida and embarrassed her. Once Cressida reverted to stereotypical behavior, Troilus acted like a man. Papp insisted that "Her instinct tells her that Troilus prefers her in the romanticized version. As soon as she acts the helpless female, Troilus springs to life. She has given him the means of playing the lover" (426). Cressida was ambivalent but so was Troilus. Papp tried to explain Troilus's hesitation:

He is ready to heap high-sounding phrases on her head, but the fact that the situation itself, an assignation arranged by a third and dubious party, is lacking in pure romance, to say the least,

makes him uncomfortable. He wishes Cressida to be one hundred percent pure. But this is already impossible because of the nature of the arrangement. (426)

Papp's concept of the character of Cressida was that of a young, innocent virgin whose downfall was given impetus by Troilus's inability to love completely. Papp defended Cressida against Troilus's chauvinism, "Troilus feels that he has gotten Cressida too easily and so he distrusts her from the start . . . He wants her to give herself to him, but if she does, she will become a whore. There is no equivalent designation for the male in the situation" (427). In other words, there was no word for a male whore because in a male dominated society, men are free to do as they wish whereas women are labelled for similar behavior. Cressida explained that the reason she was so "hard to win" (3.2.116) was because "But though I lov'd you well, I woo'd you not; / And yet, good faith, I wish'd myself a man, / Or that we women had men's privilege / Of speaking first . . . " (3.2.125-133). These lines proved that a woman could not be forward and speak first, which reinforced Papp's position that Troilus would think her a whore if she were too easily won.

Later in the scene Cressida told Troilus: "But you are wise, / Or else you love not; for to be wise and love / Exceed's man might: that dwells with gods above" (3.2.153-

155). In these lines Cressida challenged Troilus's rhetoric which led him to speak of ideal love, something which Troilus was very adept at doing. Papp blamed Troilus for beginning what he referred to as the "fidelity game":

He talks of constancy, integrity, winnowed purity, and 'truth' reiterated four times. Cressida launches into a great vow of fidelity (which might have been avoided if Troilus had not been so reluctant). Whereas Troilus's key word throughout has been 'truth,' Shakespeare . . . gives Cressida the word "false" to play with." (428)

Troilus said that he would be true and Cressida said that she would not be false. Papp placed his intermission at this point which left the audience with the image of the lovers going off to consummate their love with words of truth and falsehood in their minds.

After their night together, Papp posited that Troilus was anxious to leave because "the man has had his fill, a normal biological reaction" (429). Rather than being tender with Cressida, Papp felt that Troilus lost his temper because he could not get his way. Cressida tried to get him to "tarry." This point of view differed from previous productions, no critic or director before Papp ever asserted that Troilus behaved selfishly. Papp surmised that:

We might conceivably construe his first words to Cressida as a manifestation of concern for her

health. "Dear, trouble not yourself; the morn is cold" (4.2.1). She clings to him, winding her arms about his neck, and he gently removes them and begins to lead her back to the bedroom with this gentle admonishment: "To bed, to bed. Sleep kill those pretty eyes, / And give as soft attachment to thy senses / As infants' empty of all thought!" (4.2.4-6). Here again his choice of images gives us insight into his feelings: "kill those pretty eyes," "infants' empty of all thought." Troilus still speaks in the poetic vein, but his heart doesn't seem to be in his words. We are somewhat disappointed in the lover who, the night before, pledged his love to the death with such great eloquence. (429)

In his empathy with the feminine point of view, Papp built a strong case against Troilus's immaturity and painted a picture of the prince that was radically different from that of earlier productions. Papp philosophized:

We like to believe that love does not disappear after the sexual act, but that instead it deepens and grows richer. And here we see the girl Cressida, the one who uttered all those cynical comments about love, acting very much the smitten one. Her voice is soft and pleading. She senses his rejection of her and turns away from him with

"Good morrow then" (4.2.6). All this makes Troilus terribly uncomfortable and somewhat irritable. He speaks more insistently, "I prithee now, to bed" (4.2.7). She turns back to him and asks plaintively, "Are you aweary of me?" (4.2.8). Troilus protests too much . . . His response tells us that he is "aweary" of her. And Cressida knows this too. (429)

Papp thought that Troilus was completely egotistical. Once he was sexually satisfied, he wanted to leave. Basing his argument on the text, Papp made a strong case against Troilus. His blocking of the scene supported his perception. In Papp's production, Cressida tearfully pleaded with Troilus to stay, thus making it clear to the audience that she was not bored with him, as in the Poel production, but the opposite. Guthrie had Troilus pin Cressida into her dress to hasten her departure. Troilus impatiently stayed with her in Papp's production because Cressida kept pleading with him. After Troilus insisted on leaving, Cressida knew she should have held off "and then [he] would have tarried" (4.2.18).

As Papp described her, Cressida was not wanton, but a young woman who loved someone who did not share her feelings. Cressida cared for him and had hoped for a commitment from him. When Troilus acted so anxious to leave, she realized that she had made a terrible mistake.

She had fallen in love with him and he had fallen out of his enchantment for her. "Things won" were absolutely done with Papp's Troilus. When the Trojan soldiers arrived at the door to announce that she was to be traded, Papp described Cressida's concern for Troilus:

The scene is interrupted by a loud knock at the door. Cressida's immediate concern is for Troilus's reputation, and she frantically tries to get him out of sight: "My lord, come you again into my chamber?" (4.2.36) Troilus's response to this sincere effort is a cynical "Ha, ha!" The frantic Cressida, hurt at the intimation, says: "You smile and mock me as if I meant naughtily . . . / Pray you, come in. / I would not for half of Troy have you seen here." (4.2.37, 40-41). She means this with all her heart. Troilus permits her to pull him offstage as he mocks her effort. Troilus . . . learns the news that Cressida is to be exchanged for Antenor. His reaction is most interesting and completely predictable. "Is it so concluded?" (4.2.66) is all he says. Not a word of protest! (429)

Papp built a strong case against Troilus. Although Troilus cared for Cressida, Papp believed that he was actually relieved that she was being removed from Troy. Because of Troilus's earlier insistence on keeping Helen, Papp found

him despicable:

Helen is "a theme of honor and renown, / A spur to magnanimous deeds" (2.2.199-200). Helen the whore is a proper symbol to justify the deaths of so many men. What of Cressida, whose great fault was that she gave herself to a man who vowed eternal faith, a man she loves? Is she not worth fighting for? But all we get from Troilus is the immediate acceptance of defeat. He displays little concern for Cressida's plight. He says: "How my achievements mock me!" (4.2.69). What achievements? A few moments before he was doing all he could to extricate himself from Cressida's arms. But now, when separation is forced upon him, he feels sorry for himself. He thrives on frustration and is stimulated by misfortunes in "love." (429)

The operative phrase here was "feels sorry for himself."

All Troilus ever thought of was self-gratification.

When Cressida shrieked that she would not go, Papp said that it was coming "from a woman deeply in love and ready to bear any consequences" (430). Papp felt that "adversity brings out the best in Cressida" who was now gaining strength.

When Troilus told Paris that bringing Cressida to Diomedes was like bringing a lamb to the slaughter, Papp

posited that even Paris thought his brother was "selling out" (430). Paris was in a precarious position because there was always talk of returning Helen to Troy. Surely Troilus should have thought of a way of rescuing Cressida back from the Greeks. Kidnapping was not unheard of in their society. Cressida could not believe that Troilus would allow her to be sent away. Papp described Act 4, scene 4:

Cressida looks to [Troilus] for support, some manifestation of love. She cannot believe that he who made such great promises with such fervor would let her go "Is it true that I must go from Troy?" Troilus answers, "A hateful truth" (4.4.30). She tries again, "What, and from Troilus too?" she asks. "And suddenly" answers Troilus. Cressida's world is collapsing. (Later she asks again:) "I must, then, to the Grecians?" . . . "No remedy," says Troilus . . . She still believes in his love when she asks him with tears rolling down her cheeks, "When shall we see again?" (4.4.57). (430)

This scene clearly depicted that Troilus did not think of her. He thought only of himself. Even though he never tried to prevent her exchange, Troilus became obsessed with Cressida's fidelity. Troilus's words "be thou but true of heart--" (4.4.57) enraged Cressida. "I true? How now! What

wicked deem is this?" (4.4.58). According to Papp: "She has turned. This little docile creature . . . has turned on Troilus." (430) Yet childish Troilus, who can never take no for an answer, asked her again "But yet be true" (4.4.72) At this point she was jaded. Papp said that "Cressida's reaction is violent and she pulls away from him with, "O heavens! Be true again!" (4.4.73) (430).

Troilus's response to her anger seemed ridiculous. He told her of the charms of the Grecian soldiers yet expected her to be true. Cressida now realized that Troilus did not love her: "O heavens, you love me not!" (4.4.82). Just as they were to part she asked: "My lord, will thou be true?" (4.4.101). As Papp asserted, this statement affirmed that this was now an "older and wiser and more cynical" Cressida (433).

True to the women's movement, Papp considered this "a woman's question in a man's world" not because she thought Troilus would be unfaithful but because "it show[ed] a mark of maturity" in Cressida (431). Cressida matured tremendously in twenty-four hours. She realized that she should not have gone against her better judgement in submitting to Troilus. Once her trade was inevitable, she grew up and felt that she had every right to ask of him what he asked of her. According to Papp,

it was a challenge of the double standard. In this period Shakespeare was exploring the relationships of

men and women within a society organized according to a male code of behavior. Cressida had to make all the sacrifices. (432)

In the sixties with women challenging the double standard, Cressida's helpless position in the world of the play certainly pointed to the history of the oppression of women in a male-dominated world, particularly one at war.

Once Cressida was sent to the Greek camp, she was a changed woman. Papp described the meeting of the Greek generals this way:

All eyes are turned on Cressida . . . She is more beautiful than they expected, and for men engaged in war for more than five years, her arrival is an unexpected treat. The atmosphere is charged with male lust. After all, the issue in the war is a whore. All want her. What ensues is a kind of rape scene. Cressida is tossed about from man to man, and she offers no resistance. She cynically accepts the role of harlot conferred upon her by Troilus. Not only does she accept the part, she plays it to the hilt. Here is the Cressida of the first scene with this addition: the allusions to men and sex, earlier in the play only in her fantasy, now exist in an equally fantastic reality. She is learning the game, the Helen game. (434)

Cressida's bitterness after her affair with Troilus was evident in her banter with the Greek generals. She flirted with them but held them off: something she was unable to do before she lost her innocence with Troilus. To emphasize the short moment of power that Cressida had during in the scene with the generals, Papp had Cressida cross and walk out with Diomedes as Ulysses, whom she refused to kiss, defiled her with his words: "Fie, fie upon her / There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip; / Nay, her foot speaks. Her wanton spirits look out / At every joint and motive of her body" (4.5.54-7) (435).

As with Kott, Papp considered Diomedes's possession of the sleeve to symbolize the loss of Cressida's girlhood innocence. When she said "Ah poor our sex" (5.2.109), Papp pointed out that,

Cressida is a victim of men, their wars, their desires and their double standard. Thersites remark that follows her exit is the male point of view, and was undoubtedly applauded by an Elizabethan audience. "A proof of strength she could not publish more, / Unless she said, 'My mind is now turned whore'" (5.2.113-4). The Central Park audience responded in like manner. The women in the audience were quiet during the scene. Many of the men guffawed. (436)

Lewis Funke's review in the New York Times, August 13,

1965, called the production "an exposure worth experiencing." Funke called the play a "dark comedy, a bitter, ironic and often savagely cynical comment in which Shakespeare no longer is exalting love or heroic chivalry. The focus is, to be sure, on the benighted love of Troilus for Cressida and the events leading to the climactic and mortal engagement between Achilles and Hector." Judging from Funke's remarks, it appeared that Papp gave great importance to the love theme which marked a forward leap in the portrayal of the plight of a woman in a war-torn country. Papp's sympathetic view of Cressida was a turning point in how her character was to be portrayed in the future.

With the emergence of the feminist movement and the unpopular war in Vietnam, we see the arbiters of taste, critics and directors, taking a completely different approach to the character of Cressida. She was now considered a victim of male activity--war. As chattel she had to go where she was traded and either succumb to the demands of her protector in the Greek camp or face the inevitable alternate choice, becoming the camp whore.

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN BARTON, JONATHAN MILLER AND DAVID WILLIAMS

The women's movement was well underway in the early 1970s when a body of feminist literary criticism began to emerge. In her book, Feminist Theories for Dramatic Criticism, Gayle Austin described the era of feminist criticism that applied to Shakespeare as examining "the images of women" (17). In 1989, Janelle Reinelt depicted the seventies as the time in which the emphasis of feminist theatre was placed on getting female characters and their experiences seen on stage and the eighties as the time "concerned with the 'subject-as-agent' in which 'the production of meaning' must occur in spite of, or perhaps in the face of gender" (qtd. in Austin 16). In other words, feminist theatre in the eighties was interested in portraying female characters who were in control despite a dominating male culture. With the proliferation of women's rights advocates and the demanding of equality at home and in the workplace, one would suspect that feminist writings would be acknowledged by theatre professionals. However, this was not always the case. Initially, there was some interest in what women had to say but by the eighties there was a general ennui with the women's cause from members of the patriarchy. This became evident when men set about to

direct plays such as Troilus and Cressida in which the heroine's image was at best ambiguous.

In 1974, feminist critic Camille Slights stated that:

in the world of Troilus and Cressida men are motivated by selfish appetites for sex and power, yet pride themselves on the beauty of their emotions and the subtlety of their wisdom. The play presents a pageant of lust and pride against a background of devouring time. Both Greeks and Trojans guide themselves by their appetites instead of their reason and in the process destroy the value of their own lives. (46)

Helen came to be in Troy because Paris could not control his passion. In the same way, Cressida's life was ruined in the process of fulfilling Troilus's uncontrollable desires. The selfish fulfillment of his passion is what led to her demise. Slights believed that:

Cressida is not the stoic comic figure of a slut, but an understandable if limited woman, dominated by fear. She is not coyly seeking declarations of love from Troilus when she says in (3.2.70-72):

Blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds
safer footing than blind reason stumbling
without fear. To fear the worst oft cures
the worse. (46)

Cressida's caution arose because her uncle taught her about

men, and she wisely realized that her value would decrease once she lost her virginity. Slights further asserted that:

[Cressida] is explaining clearly the psychology of a timid, prudent person. Her tragedy is that she seeks security in love but fears the vulnerability which love necessarily involves. With real self-awareness she explains to Troilus her paradoxical desire for and fear of love: "I have a kind of self resides with you. / But an unkind self that itself will leave / To be another's fool"

(3.2.147-49). The divided self which will make her incapable of constancy under stress certainly is not heroic, but neither does it make her a monster of promiscuity and fickleness [emphasis added]. The self-perpetuating insecurity which tortures her is too real and too prevalent a human problem for easy mockery. (47)

Cressida knew that once she submitted to Troilus she would be vulnerable to his affections. She also knew that if he subsequently rejected her, she would become a courtesan, or "another's fool." This fear of vulnerability in love is not unusual. The fear of commitment prevalent in our society is actually a component of the fear of vulnerability.

Slights argued that: "If Shakespeare's Paris and Helen are primarily travesties of romantic tradition, his dotting Troilus and unfaithful Cressida are presented with greater

complexity and sympathy" (48). Helen, as the icon for womanhood in the play, established an unfaithful wife as the only woman with whom Cressida could identify. Perhaps little else could become of a young woman who had an adulterous wife for her only role model. Shakespeare presented Cressida with more "sympathy and complexity" than Helen because he understood her predicament as chattel in a war-torn country.

Although she recognized that Shakespeare sympathized with Cressida, Slights said: "Cressida's union with Diomedes, punctuated by Thersites's obscene observations is a horrible parody of her union with Troilus presided over by Pandarus. Cressida's "falseness" is clear to everyone including herself" (47). "Falseness" was Cressida's judgement by Slights. Slights's assessment of her character was unfair since Cressida was not in a position to refuse Diomedes's advances. The double standard was at play here because a man in wartime in Cressida's situation would never be thought false. Slights condemned Cressida's falseness as did earlier critics and shunned fear and shrewdness as reasonable excuses for her behavior. In fact, fear was an extremely valid reason for Cressida's behavior. Slights further posited that:

Troilus and Cressida become lovers, but their vows of fidelity remind us of the fragility of Troilus's values created out of his own will.

Theirs is a love based on desperation and delusion not on faith and wisdom . . . Cressida who plays the game of love so shrewdly, is helpless in the game of war. Her hysterical outbursts are not admirable, but her physical helplessness arouses pity. (48)

Slights implied that both Troilus and Cressida were deluded and desperate. Cressida was the only one who had reason to be deluded. Had Troilus prevented her exchange into the enemy camp, their love could have been based on "faith and wisdom." As it was, Cressida's greatest fear of being "once won . . . done" became a reality hours after the consummation of their passion. Troilus was a soldier and a prince and had witnessed what had happened to others in the context of war, yet he made no plan to retrieve Cressida, took no heroic action to save her, nor did he mention marriage.

Slights believed that:

Troilus receives the news of the impact of the war on his personal life with mature, restrained dignity, and his speech on parting from Cressida in contrast to his vapid love poetry in (4.4.42-48), is genuinely moving: "Injurious Time now with a robber's haste / . . . as many farewells as be stars in heaven / . . . Distasted with the salt of broken tears." (48)

Slights forgot that all Troilus wanted was to bed Cressida. In doing nothing to prevent her trade, Troilus was immature and weak. Slights concluded that "the love story of Troilus and Cressida ends with Cressida's alliance with a lover even more cynical than she and with Troilus's disillusionment and bitterness" (48).

Slights did not defend Cressida's behavior as Kott did. She insisted that Cressida's, rather than Troilus's weakness, led to her ultimate destiny. Slights was too forgiving of Troilus's behavior and too censoring of Cressida's actions. She thought his speech was mature when, in fact, his eloquence simply masked his true motives: once sexually satisfied, Troilus wanted to return his "mature" masculine concern, the war.

Although the war theme was the one that most directors emphasized in production, the focus of John Barton's 1976 Royal Shakespeare Company Production centered on the lust theme. On the cover of the program in red appeared: "All the argument is a cuckold and a whore" (Berry, Styles 60). In Changing Styles in Shakespeare, Ralph Berry described Barton's concept:

the production stood solidly behind Thersites . . .
 . it follows that she [Cressida] is presented
 unsparingly and unsentimentally . . . played on
 two notes. One is the assured sexual specialist
 whom Ulysses instantly recognizes. The other is

gravely reflective and still, demonstrating from the start that she knows herself well enough to realize that she is not to be trusted. (61)

Berry argued that Barton perceived that Cressida's divided natures were that of a prostitute and that of a discreet woman. This perception indicated that the director failed to realize that Cressida knew that men were not to be trusted either.

Barton had co-directed two earlier productions of Troilus and Cressida for the Royal Shakespeare Company with Peter Hall, but chose to direct the 1976 production with Barry Kyle. He believed in looking for the "modernity and relevance" in a work while maintaining a great respect for the full text (56).

Using many elements from his earlier productions for the 1976 version of Troilus and Cressida, Barton emphasized the "sensuality and lechery, typified by nearly-naked warriors in combat with 'barricades of buttocks'" (Greenwald 77). The Greek soldiers were "older, gray-bearded, paunchy"; the Trojans were "more attractive, . . . solemn, lean, young, athletic and sensual: 'dashing delinquents working at a war that has long ceased to have more than a casual interest in Paris and Helen'" (78-9). In Gender in the Theatre of War, feminist Barbara Bowen remarked that:

What Barton responded to in '76, surely something made visible by feminism, was the play's portrayal

of women in a world based on male desire: semi-nude Trojans, effeminate Achilles, suppurating Thersites. But what was new was centered on the female characters and suggested that Barton wanted to complicate his vision of homoeroticism as the basis of the Trojan conflict. (53)

For the first time a director had found a way to depict the objectification of women in the play. Barton's production dramatized Cressida as a woman who was trying to maintain some control over her life in a world dominated by men at war. In Directions by Indirections, Greenwald described how Barton illustrated women:

A number of life-sized dolls representing Cressida and Helen were used to show that women were chattel in this world. Diomedes carried a doll replica of Cressida before the betrayal, the Greek generals had used the same doll for their amusement as a prelude to the kissing scene [in 4.5] and Thersites toyed with such a doll during the epilogue . . . Though the war plot was played more satirically--even farcically--Barton's handling of the lovers was more realistic. In 1972 Barton told Shakespeare Survey that "what happens, by the end, to Troilus and Cressida . . . is not black comedy . . . I feel a great compassion for what becomes of Troilus and

Cressida. (77-9)

Barton's homoerotic theme was used in his two previous productions. The use of the dolls as icons added the dimension of women as amusements or toys. At least Barton demonstrated an awareness of the image of women and their issues. Although some audience members were confused, the life-sized dolls made an impression. Bowen elaborated on his ideas:

Helen appeared bound to Paris by a golden chain, with which she was led about the stage; Cressida in the betrayal scene was given a courtesan's mask to wear on the back of her head, revealing it only as she turned to exit with Diomedes; and in the strangest gesture, Pandarus donned a death mask for his final scene and descended into a grave-like vault which revealed, when closed, Thersites clutching a life-sized female doll. Although many in the audience found those moments incoherent and distracting, it seems clear that Barton was suggesting that Cressida's self-division--"I have a kind of self resides in thee"--is inevitable in a world that turns women into icons. Barton's final image then, of Thersites holding a doll becomes a bitter parody of Paris and Helen, Troilus and Cressida, Cressida and Diomedes; in fact, of the whole Trojan conflict over sexuality

as possession. (53)

Berry remarked that having Thersites carry a life-sized doll forced the audience (in a Brechtian sense) to "revalue the whole idea of 'exploitation,' the more so as Cressida was not played for obvious sympathy" (Styles 61). The audience would have to notice that the women in the play were not treated as real human beings and emphasized how little control the female characters possessed in the play.

Having Cressida wear a courtesan's headdress as she turned to leave confirmed that it was Cressida's status as a hostage that precipitated her infidelity. But Greenwald wrote that: "Cressida's motivations are troublesome . . . for she . . . makes a seemingly about-face: once in the Greek camp, she violates her vow of eternal love for Troilus" (75). On the contrary, Barton defended Cressida's motivations by saying that she was honest: "She is almost always open about how she feels at a given moment . . . Basically, she reacts according to how she's treated. She became Troilus's Cressida and then Diomedes's in response to the image each has of her" (75). If she had followed her own stated opinions, she would not have submitted to a night with Troilus and thus would have never been unfaithful. She knew her position as a woman in the world of Troy was that of an item of exchange, commerce. In order to maintain her value and to survive, she acted according to the male expectation of her.

The reviews of Barton's 1976 production were mostly negative, stating that Barton had "merely vulgarized what he did before without apparently adding new insights" (Greenwald 77). John Elsom declared that Barton "reduced Troilus and Cressida to a bitchy, fatalistic work, neither comedy nor tragedy, just opinionated gloom" (qtd. in Berry, Styles 61). In a reading against the text, Cressida aggressively pursued Troilus in this production and "throughout was more reflective, more aware of her own complexity" (Greenwald 79). According to Guardian critic, Michael Billington:

[Cressida] captures better than anyone Barton's delight in human contradictoriness. Even in her first passionate declaration of love for Troilus, she breaks off in a sudden fit of physical self-hatred. Her bawdier nature was played down . . . to make her less lascivious. (qtd. in Greenwald 79)

Robert Speaight stated that "Cressida had a 'hard edge' but not the compliant sensuality which might excuse her actions" (qtd. in Babula 338). David Mairowitz wrote: "Francesca Annis disturbed neither by being bandied from Greek to Greek in the kissing scene nor by her betrayal of Troilus, makes no allowance for the Cressida of the early scenes" (qtd. in Babula 339). When Cressida turned to leave Troy, she left her innocence behind and became cold and calculating.

Although Barton took a more human and less stereotypical approach to the character, the abrupt change in her from Trojan to Greek camp did not appear realistic. She struggled with her two natures because she knew her own limitations. She wanted to remain faithful but at the same time realized she might not have been able to in a social environment made unstable through war.

The feminist movement seems to have influenced Barton. He regarded her not as merely lewd (as he had depicted her in his 1968 production) but more as a confused woman experiencing unrequited love. Her uncertainty in the 1976 production added a dimension of empathy with her character, indeed with the fate of all women in times of war.

By the 1980s, the feminist movement was well under way. Austin stated that: "In 1980-81 there was a rush of work done on Shakespeare that continued . . . through the 1980s" (17). Feminist Gayle Greene believed that though there is more misogyny than is usual with Shakespeare in Troilus and Cressida, that:

he provides a context that exonerates Cressida. Shown in relation to men who value her little, yet insist that she be as 'she is valued' (2.2.52) she is portrayed in a relation to her society that demonstrates the principle feminists have come to understand, that (in Simone de Beauvoir terms) "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman . . .

it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature." (133)

Greene placed the blame for Cressida's behavior on the men who surround her and "value her little." In agreement with de Beauvoir, Greene affirmed that because one "becomes" a woman, it is society and the patriarchy that pattern how one evolves into a woman. Uncertain of her own identity, and because she lacked role models other than Helen, Cressida was unsure of herself. Thus she submitted to the desires of the men who could help her the most, Prince Troilus and later Diomedes: "Critics have been content generally to accept the worst of terms as adequate to her character; taking their cues from the men in the play, their responses to Cressida have been overwhelmingly negative" (135). Because she was condemned by all the other characters in the play--all of whom are male--the overwhelming view of critics was to damn her.

Psychologically, women tend to "define [themselves] in 'relational' capacities, to derive self-esteem from the esteem of others," so Cressida "objectified" herself (136). That is, in de Beauvoir's terms, "woman sees herself and makes her choices not in accordance with her natural instincts, but as man defines her" (136). Greene explained that:

The "self" that Cressida fashions is an "object" for the "present eye's praise" (III iii 180). She

herself senses the consequences of this,
 expressing fear of accepting love in terms that
 indicate awareness of her potential:

I have a kind of self resides with you;
 But an unkind self, that itself will leave
 To be another's fool. (3.2.148-50)

Defined in relation to "you" or "another," she is left with two alternatives: at worst, with an "unkind self"--unkind in the sense of cruel and "unnatural"; but at best, with a "kind of self"--one that is partial, unreliable, and not her own. Her fate is the working out of a character that lacks integrity or autonomy, and her terms prefigure the "turning" that will split her so insanelly and irrevocably for Troilus, and for herself. (136)

Beyond Kott and De Heliadora's theory that Cressida was a victim of her environment, Greene saw more at play in the development of the character of Cressida. She was also a victim of the patriarchy which determined a woman's worth and assigned and assessed her "value."

Cressida was an insecure adolescent raised in a culture where a woman's worth was defined by men's opinions of her and where her only role model was that of an unfaithful wife. In effect Cressida had few options--except suicide--but to become an unfaithful woman with little "value." That

explained why in Barton's words she became "Troilus's Cressida" and later "Diomedes's Cressida" (Greenwald 77).

Cressida had to "create her own 'value,' an appearance to the beholding eye, in what was essentially a selling of the self" (Greene 137). She had to please those who would give her worth in a world that was based on their notion of value. The focus on value was what Greene believed linked the world of Troilus and Cressida to contemporary audiences: "This society prompts a powerful indictment of the mercantilism of the age, and Cressida reminds us of the effect of capitalism on women" (137).

Greene perceived that this mercantilism led to a failure in Troilus:

[to] see Cressida whole--his view of woman as no more than the qualities and attributes he projects onto her finds philosophical sanction in the idea of value he states here--"what's aught but as 'tis valued?" (2.2.52). He prefers Cressida as a distanced love object, he is content with a mistress. (138)

Although Troilus never acknowledged it, Cressida was correct when she said that "once won," she would be "done." However, Cressida never forgot that she was merely an object to the men in her world. "Paradoxically, Cressida is in a better position than the men to understand the principles that motivate her world, although she is helpless to act in

what she knows" (139). Greene asserted that Cressida imagined disfiguring herself literally as she felt herself to have been despoiled figuratively (142):

I'll go in and weep--

--Tear my bright hair, and scratch my praised
cheeks,

Crack my clear voice with sobs, and break my
heart

With sounding 'Troilus.' (4.2.108-112)

Seen by the Greeks as "daughter of the game" (4.5.63) and "sluttish spoil of opportunity" (62), Cressida is quick to live down to their view of her, allowing herself to be "kiss'd in general" (21). From here, it is but a short distance to complying with the opinion of Diomedes, who values her so little that he wastes few words on her, prizing her, simply, "to her own worth" (4.4.131) . . . Cressida is not worth his "spending" . . . In the dialogue of their first meeting, Cressida's vacillation is, as with Troilus, partly sincere partly "fooling"; but whereas Troilus praised her for "speak(ing) so wisely" (3.3.152), Diomedes does "not like this fooling" (5.2.101), and she is unable to "hold off" because he is willing, simply, to let her go. Deprived of her customary

way of creating her value, Cressida knows that her price has fallen. (144)

She yielded to Diomedes in fear because she felt herself to be "in a position of danger" (4.2.97-98). She needed a guardian. Greene considered the encounter between Diomedes and Cressida to be "perhaps the most loveless encounter between lovers in Shakespeare" (144).

Greene concluded that:

By showing Cressida in relation to the men and society who make her what she is, [Shakespeare] provides a context that qualifies the apparently misogynist elements of her characterization, and far from presenting a simple character type or even a complex of types, the stereotypical in her character occurs in a context that constitutes a critique of stereotyping. Basing her identity on male desires and definitions, Cressida is the sum total of "opinions" of men whose opinions are in themselves societally determined and she is thus only representative of her world. (145)

Essentially, Greene added a great deal to the definition of a character treated so statically in the past. She determined that society, as well as the men in it, was responsible for Cressida's fate. "Wars and lechery" were the primary concerns of the men who controlled Cressida's world.

In 1981, feminist Marilyn French stated in Shakespeare's Division of Experience that whereas men were seen as autonomous humans, women in Shakespeare were types who did not have the potential for change: "Types, whether archetypes or stereotypes, represent moral positions not amenable to change" (26). The women in Shakespeare were powerless on their own and were controlled by men, if not initially, then certainly by the end of the plays. Such was Cressida's situation. She succumbed to Diomedes because she really had no other choice. He had definite power over her once she lost her value. French firmly believed that the responsibility for female infidelity in Troilus and Cressida rested with the males (159):

In Troilus and Cressida, some women uphold chaste constancy and others do not; it is the men, who control the world and use women for their own purposes, . . . who value the inconstant women. [The play] focus[es] on war and on status; . . . power is not the greatest, but the only good. The importance of status--called honor here--is . . . great. A much lesser value is sensation, which is different from pleasure in that it is strictly bodily: the inconstant women function to provide this. Because of this, women are central although they are only pawns. Helen, the ultimate cause, is shown merely as silly and flirtatious.

Cressida, however, is intelligent. She is aware of the nature of the world she moves in, and tries to maintain herself within it. She is a piece of merchandise, a pearl, an object to be purchased and possessed which will be prized according to the price extracted for her. The more she costs in emotional turmoil, the more she will be valued, although she will inevitably lose value once she has been "had." She is correct about this. (160)

French's views were similar to those of Greene. As a piece of property, Cressida lost value once she was used. Valued only for sensational pleasure, the women in this world were discarded as quickly as they were wooed. Helen retained her value but only because she had once belonged to a powerful foe.

In spite of this kind of revealing and insightful commentary emanating from feminist critics, there were very few enlightened perceptions of Cressida in productions of the 1980s.

Although he professed to regard the play with a modern approach, Jonathan Miller's 1981 BBC production did not reflect an understanding of modern feminist approaches to the character. Miller's concept was similar to those at the turn of the twentieth century. He believed that Cressida was a promiscuous coquette.

Miller's version of the play was significant because it

formed part of the prestigious British Broadcasting Corporation's "The Shakespeare Plays" television series which attracted large audiences. It was also widely used in educational settings as well as for general viewing.

Miller's primary concern in the video-recording of the play was not with the lovers but with the war. His production was set in the Renaissance and portrayed the contrast between the camps of the warring Trojans and Greeks. The Trojans's set was streamlined and rather sterile. In The BBC Shakespeare Plays, Susan Willis recounted that Miller wanted the set "to give a sense of urban decadence, the clear, almost abstract lines of the set reproducing one of Jan de Vries's Renaissance architectural exercises in perspective" (230). In contrast, the Greek quarters consisted of a run-down camp that was encircled by corruption. Willis stated that "as Miller described it, the Greek camp was to be a cluttered, squalid city, after seven years infested with rats and dysentery, ennui and bickering, and built, Miller envisioned, on the ruins of an earlier Troy" (230). The actors were dressed in Elizabethan costumes, with the soldiers in "khaki-colored Renaissance garb" (230). Miller considered the character of Cressida as incidental to the story and regarded her as little more than a simpering, immature courtesan:

As the lovers' meeting developed in Troy, Miller pointed out that Cressida half-teases Troilus,

feeling in control, but breaks as Troilus's force releases her emotions and she is caught up . . . (yet) Cressida is innocent, Miller asserted, continuing that he thought a sluttish portrayal of Cressida is all wrong. She tries to convince herself that she can and will be true, as if realizing she may not be. After all, he said, the play is a tragedy: innocence is eradicated. Both Troilus and Cressida are young, Miller reiterated, and are not given time to get to know each other; Pandarus hurries them off to bed before the relationship has a chance to grow . . . Troilus is left with a religious fanaticism about his love; once that is shattered he becomes a fanatic about the war. (241)

Although Miller said that "a sluttish portrayal was all wrong" in the interview, he did little to understand her plight or to exonerate her actions. He asserted her innocence while directing the actress to behave promiscuously and spoiled:

Cressida . . . is self-concerned and flawed, yet with the sort of flaw many never discover in themselves, Miller added, like a house that can stand 120 years cracked from eave to floor. Moreover she likes attention, especially the attention of older men; the Greek camp will seem

very glamorous to her . . . For Cressida, he said, leaving Troy for the Greek camp will be like leaving a girls' school and seeing a steel works—all those men stripped to the waist. (235)

Miller's opinion was severely hampered by his limited vision. It is very difficult to conceive of a young woman being sexually titillated at the thought of being sent to an enemy war camp with men twenty to thirty years older than she. It is doubtful that Miller would apply these sentiments to a young man in a similar situation. Miller's concept of a young woman in a war situation was warped and unrealistic.

In the leave-taking scene, Miller determined that "Troilus here shows his first sign of maturity. The sight of Cressida's hysteria calls forth his need to be a man in the situation" (235). Rather than taking the point of view that Troilus had done nothing to avert Cressida's trade, Miller sanctioned Troilus's lack of sensitivity as "maturity." Willis described how Miller favored Troilus in the leave-taking scene:

The camera angles much of the time favor Troilus, thus indicating that the speeches and scene are to a large extent his, unlike many stage productions in which the scene becomes Cressida's amid the weeping; here the duality of shock and grief is apparent. (255)

Although Cressida had only eleven lines compared with Troilus's forty-three, this scene usually centered on her in stage productions. Note that not much would change in Troilus's life because he was not about to be traded to the enemy. As a prince he would have no trouble finding another mistress. If he had loved Cressida truly, then Troilus would have kept her with him as Paris with Helen.

Conversely, Cressida was about to undergo a traumatic change in her life. She feared her exchange to the Greeks where she knew her fate was to become a courtesan: she had witnessed that from Helen's circumstances. Miller did not take Cressida's despair into account when he blocked the scene. Like the military leaders in the war, Miller perceived her as chattel. He privileged Troilus by focussing the camera on him and showed Cressida crying hysterically in such a way that she appeared to behave as a spoiled child. If he wanted to demonstrate "the duality of shock" then the scene should have been at least equally shared.

However, Miller was consistent. He visualized the betrayal scene as being "very sexy," as if a near rape can be thought of as "sexy." In this scene Cressida brought Troilus's sleeve to Diomedes within Troilus's view (240). Cressida then sat on the bed as Diomedes knelt over her. Miller said he was attempting to create: "more of a rape position . . . like the painting of Tarquin ravishing

Lucrece" (240). The director added stage business to the scene to intensify its sensuality:

Miller also felt their exchange needed some physical contact at the end, a kiss, or preferably a bite on the ear; the scene must be violent and lusty, very sexy, he told them. He also discussed Troilus's pressure-cooker response as the tension builds, blowing only once in anger at Diomedes and once in tears at Cressida, his only breakdown; afterward he is grim, cold, hard . . . (240)

Miller did not really understand a woman's perspective in his directorial assessment of Cressida's character. Although Greene captured an image clearly in her 1980 article, Miller was clearly not acquainted with the work. If he had been able to view the situation from the eyes of a young, innocent girl, he would have realized her helplessness.

The irrationality of his view of Cressida was evident in the scene where Cressida entered the Greek camp. According to Willis:

One of the significant interpretive changes between rehearsal and studio occurred with Cressida's entrance to the Greek camp. As rehearsed, her entrance with Diomedes was a flirtatious dialogue, [a directorial choice Shakespeare had not prescribed in the text], a

half embrace with her laughing into his shoulder as they moved between the tents. In the studio however, the two had to pass through a crowd of leering, taunting, grabbing, soldiers—no laughing matter. Their entrance turned into a small-scale battle for self-preservation, Cressida clinging to her guide more out of fear and Diomedes shoving their way through the jeering men. In fact the entire section of the scene altered; meeting the officers became much less her teasing them than their responding to her with only slightly more courtly physicality than had the soldiers. That development gave a new edge of veiled nastiness to the whole scene . . . Thirty leers and grabs at a woman's clothing, thirty boos and hisses at the Trojan nobility as they enter, and an atmosphere is instantly created. (254)

This scene should have demonstrated the vulnerability of a young woman in an enemy camp, but such meaning was not evident in the production. During the taping, Cressida had to walk among a group of actors behaving as though they had not seen a woman for years. This added a new dimension. The extras who played the "leering, grabbing" soldiers created a frightening atmosphere that should have shown Miller the gravity of the situation. Although he asserted that Cressida was innocent, Miller had difficulty portraying

that image on the screen. In the final cut she did cling to Diomedes but was still flirtatious as she shoved back some of the grabbing soldiers. She was still a coquette in Miller's camera's eye, and unfortunately this was what the audience saw.

In an attempt to acknowledge Marilyn French's feminist perception of Troilus and Cressida in the 1987 Stratford, Ontario, Shakespeare Festival Production, David Williams failed miserably. Williams's concept, stated in his program notes, was to show a world where the "feminine principle has been obliterated" by a brutal masculine realm (Conlogue, 4). This comment suggested his empathy with the female characters, particularly with the character of Cressida; however, this was not evident in the production.

Williams's production was set in the 1920s. The Greek camp was squalid, resembling a locker room with cots and toilets in the background while the atmosphere in the Trojan camp was luxurious. Helen was introduced rolling onto the stage in a glittery golden egg while the crowd in the palace danced to the bunny hop and waltzes. Helen spoke and danced slowly and seductively. It was a scene filled with laughter and music, with couples lying on the floor. The Trojans clearly enjoyed themselves even though they had been at war for years.

When Cressida met Troilus for the first time, she ran into his arms and almost immediately allowed him to lay in

her lap. Through this representation, Williams suggested a Cressida who was a rather forward, loose woman. It also made her appear to be exactly like Helen, a comparison Shakespeare does not really allow. Furthermore, this portrayal was inconsistent with her reaction the next morning when she appeared heartbroken by the news that she had to leave her lover. A loose woman would be able to adjust and go on to another man.

Although Troilus professed his love, he had procured Cressida from Pandarus. Cressida had to spend the night with the prince. On the other hand, Cressida told Troilus that she "lov'd [him] well" (3.2.125). Sex did not necessitate love in the world of Troilus and Cressida. By having Cressida throw herself in his arms one day and weep hysterically at their parting the next, Williams confused his audience.

During the scene where the Greek generals kissed Cressida, the soldiers in the camp surrounded her and pulled at her clothing. She seemed oblivious to their actions and was coquettish. She continued her repartee and laughed when Ulysses begged for a kiss: "Why then, for Venus' sake, give me a kiss / When Helen is a maid again, and his." (4.5.49-50). This bawdy and flirtatious behavior depicted an experienced courtesan rather than an innocent virgin.

The most outrageous scene and one which clearly illustrated a confused message by Williams was that of

Cressida's betrayal. If there were an opportunity for a director to exonerate Cressida's actions, this was the scene which provided the most opportunity. Here Cressida could appear reluctant and insecure in submitting to Diomedes. Instead, when Cressida asked Diomedes to return Troilus's sleeve to her, Williams had Diomedes choke her with it. In a rage, Diomedes then slapped her twice and threw her to the ground. Cressida got up immediately and threw herself at him, kissed him, crawled downstage towards him and grabbed his waist as if asking for forgiveness for refusing to turn over the gift of one she loved. None of this stage business was in Shakespeare's text. In the play text, when Cressida changed her mind and told Diomedes to return to her later, he hesitatingly said: "What, shall I come? the hour?" (5.2.102). These comments indicated that Diomedes was not about to force her into submission. It is therefore inconceivable that he would have beaten her.

In Williams's production, it was hard to believe that Troilus could find Cressida deceitful when he had witnessed her near rape in this violent scene. Troilus knew Diomedes was Cressida's guard. It is illogical that Troilus could watch the one he loved be brutally assaulted and still be angry with her.

If Williams was implying that Diomedes was displaying cruel male behavior then he was correct, but he was wrong if this staging was intended to present a feminist viewpoint.

His directing of the scene undermined Cressida and the text. It meant that Troilus had no sympathy for her, only for himself. At the end of the production, he stubbornly threw down a letter she wrote without reading it. His reaction pointed more strongly to utter self-regard.

The production was inundated with negative press because in the program notes Williams referred to Marilyn French's view, something the production failed to present:

In western culture, aggressiveness has never been as severely condemned as sexuality. It has been condemned circumstantially, but exalted as well . . . Humans kill essentially . . . for control . . . sex, on the other hand, requires the giving up of control. (qtd. in Conlogue 4)

Through beating Cressida, Williams hoped to present a scenario where brutality evident in Diomedes was more condemned than sexuality evident in Cressida and Helen. The effect might have been achieved but his production failed because he grossly distorted the text in trying to achieve his goal.

The Toronto Globe & Mail critic, Roy Conlogue's headline for June 6, 1987, read "Director Obscures Play's Intention." Conlogue argued:

[Williams] wants to incorporate the critic Marilyn French's idea that the play presents an all male world in which the feminine principle has been

obliterated, resulting in a locker room atmosphere shot through with homosexuality . . . never has a director been more slavishly inspired by a critic, with more ghastly results . . . Cressida instead of playing the reluctant maiden, hurls herself lasciviously into his arms the moment they meet. Later on, in the crucial scene where Diomedes woos her while Troilus watches without being able to overhear, Diomedes actually beats her and flings her to the floor in order to force her acquiescence. This may accord with Williams far forced theme of male brutality, but it makes nonsense of Troilus's subsequent anguished speeches and Cressida's wantonness. Wanton? When he's just seen her beaten to a pulp and all but raped? . . . Peggy Coffey was forced . . . to play a Cressida who is something akin to a camp-following whore rather than the more complex woman who is taken hostage . . . Jerry Etienne, who plays Troilus plays an obvious kind of blubbering young hero who has lost his girl and that's about all.

In an article for The Toronto Sun, June 8, 1978, Bob Pennington stated:

Troy may have been under siege for seven years but they are still having a ball. With Diomedes,

Cressida is revealed as a nymphomaniac with masochistic tendencies . . . Stratford's 1987 theme is anti-war . . . what we have here is anti-heroism gone mad to become anti-Shakespeare.

Cressida said "once won, done," and recognized that the loss of virginity equalled the loss of control for women.

Diomedes was in control—Cressida needed him as a guardian so she would be forced into sexual behavior. She had to comply to Diomedes or to the whole camp. Cressida did not want sex with Diomedes: "I shall be plagu'd" (5.2.103), but she knew it was better than the alternative.

The farther we remove ourselves from the initial passion of the women's movement of the sixties, the farther we get from an empathetic view of a young woman in a war context. Even though some feminist critics made a strong case for a young woman who was in circumstances she understood but could not control, we did not see this reading realized in production.

All three directors, all internationally known and very influential, missed an opportunity. Rather than forging new and interesting interpretations, they reinforced antiquated stereotypes in their portrayals of Cressida. With all the political and cultural insights about women's roles and the relations between the sexes being written by literary critics and sociologists, it is sad for our society that those with the means to make a statement did not.

CHAPTER V.

AFTERWORD

A director's first concern is the text. In his lecture, "Directing a Play," Tyrone Guthrie asserted that several readings of a play are required before one can understand a play and the playwright's intentions. Guthrie stated that reading critics' interpretations was wise, even though they might be "ineffably dreary" (89). With a character as ambiguous as Cressida, who had a "divided self" and consequently no sense of her own identity, referring to informed sources would greatly assist in an analysis of her persona. Literary criticism should be considered an essential source for directors, actors, and other theatre artists in their pre-production research.

Social conditions affect our perception and theatrical productions reflect our time. Productions relevant to society enlighten audiences who can relate to the inherent messages. Troilus and Cressida was relevant to Elizabethans because of a renewed interest in the Trojan War and because of the socio-political situation in England. In the twentieth century, women's demands for equality and a society continually at war made the play pertinent. In a society in which we are exposed to conflicting images of women in print and in the media, it is understandable that the perception of an obscure character such as Cressida

would be continually evolving.

For the first half of the twentieth century, English-speaking people of North America and Britain shared values and mores. In 1912, William Poel and the critics of his day determined that Cressida was a trollop. Tyrone Guthrie's 1956 Old Vic production portrayed her the same way: the accepted literary view of Cressida was as a loose woman. Society concurred with this: an unfaithful woman was equal to a prostitute. With major cultural changes during the 1960s, her image began to change. The women's revolution, the subsequent sexual revolution and the Vietnam War transformed Cressida from whore to victim. In 1967, Joseph Papp sympathized so much with the character of Cressida that he intensely disliked the character of Troilus. His direction dramatized Troilus as a weak individual, which was not a full reading of the play text. His interest in the woman's view resulted in a skewed characterization of Troilus.

John Barton's 1976 Royal Shakespeare Company production portrayed Cressida as a hardened courtesan in the Greek camp. In the eighties, because of cultural conditioning, her representation was affected by a reactionary stance of the patriarchy. Even though he professed to believe in her innocence, Jonathan Miller's beautifully filmed BBC television production reverted back to the image of Poel's decade. Although David Williams attempted to approach her

character from a feminist perspective, he dramatized Cressida as having a masochistic relationship with Diomedes.

In the last twenty years, sociologists have begun to explore the effects of culture on gender. Feminist Claire M. Tylee stated that Troilus and Cressida proved how "conditioned both men and women are by the dominant values and conceptions of their culture" (73). Cultural conditioning caused men and women to behave, and to perceive others, in certain ways. Cressida acted as was expected of her, just as the male characters behaved in ways expected of them.

As we approach the twenty-first century, our society becomes more fragmented. With mass immigration and population growth, many diverse groups make up our multicultural society, resulting in fewer and fewer common sets of values. The consequence of such diversity is that agreement on what meaning certain images produce is rare. Added to that is the gender conflict which divides us even more. With a character as complex as Cressida, it becomes difficult to arrive at an interpretation that will be agreed upon by all.

Although Barton, Miller and Williams acknowledged that Cressida was not completely culpable in her situation, they were unable to portray that to the audience. The signs at play in their productions portrayed her as a trollop.

No woman has directed the play. It would be

interesting to see what dimension the female perspective would add to the character of Cressida. Perhaps then, the inner turmoil of a young innocent girl would lead to a deeper understanding of her motivations.

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