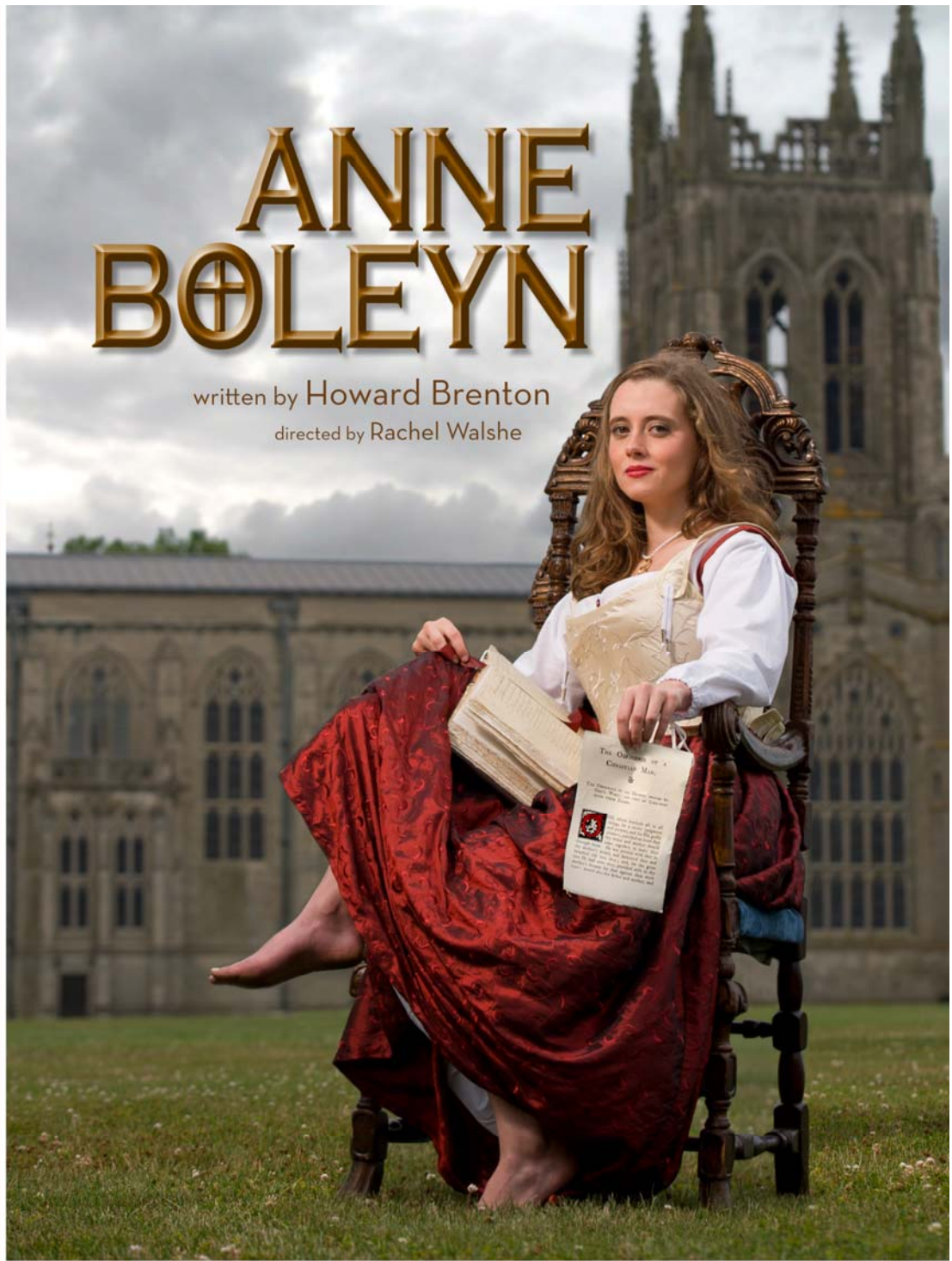


EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

ANNE BOLEYN

written by Howard Brenton
directed by Rachel Walshe



sandra feinstein-

GAM
GAM

theatre

STUDY GUIDE

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How to learn more through The Gamm

*This study guide was prepared by
Tracy Morreo, Susie Schutt, Danya Martin, and Steve Kidd*

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Prologue

Dear Educator,

The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre is pleased to offer you this study guide to share with your students designed to prepare them for our production of *Anne Boleyn* by Howard Brenton.

This Study Guide is broken into five acts. In the first act, you will find a few more reminders for you and your students about the nature of performance and what is expected of all audience members attending the theatre. In the second act, you will find a biography of Howard Brenton, the history of the play, a breakdown of the characters, and information about Anne Boleyn, on whom the play is based. In act three, Director Rachel Walshe articulates her vision and ideas behind our production. Act four examines the dominant themes in *Anne Boleyn* and includes ways to integrate the production into your curriculum. Finally, we will close our Study Guide with act five, which offers activities for the classroom. At the end of our study guide, you will be able to find information on how to learn more about The Gamm's Educational offerings.

As part of our Core Prep program, I would like to offer a workshop with your classroom/school before your visit and help prepare your students for the play. In these workshops, I will not only discuss the play and our production concept(s), but we will also get students out of their seats and up on their feet engaging in the themes, motifs and the language of the play. This type of kinesthetic engagement with language and literature ensures students deep comprehension and the sort of text-to-self connection that encourages students to invest in reading and literacy-learning.

Much of this work was discovered, developed and inspired by the ArtsLiteracy Project at Brown University. I had the good fortune to work with "ArtsLit" and the strategies and models for learning developed by the organization continue to serve as a foundational pedagogical tool for all Gamm Education programming.

Some benefits of ArtsLiteracy learning include:

- **Community Building in Your Classroom** (Applied Learning New Standards: A1; A2; A5)

- **Inspiration and Background on the Artist** (English Language Arts New Standards: E1; E2; E3; E5; E6; Applied Learning New Standards: A2; A3; A5)
- **Entering and Comprehending Text** (English Language Arts Standards: E1; E2; E3; E5)
- **Creating Text for Performance** (English Language Arts Standards: E1; E2; E3; E5)
- **Performing in Your Class** (Applied Learning Standards: A1; A2; A3; A4; A5)
- **Reflecting on Your Performance** (E2; E3; A1; A2; A5)

Moreover, the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) has developed GSE's (Grade Span Expectations) and GLE's (Grade Level Expectations) to help "capture the "big ideas" of reading that can be assessed."

We believe that all of our Literacy through Performance work helps to develop the following literacy skills.

WRITING

- W-2: Writing in Response to Literary Text (showing understanding of ideas in a text). A "text" covers not only books and plays, but film and other kinds of media.
- W-3: Making Analytical judgments about text (how good was it? What stuck out?)
- W-4: Creating a Storyline
- W-5: Applying Narrative Strategies (how did they tell the story?)
- W-14: Reflective Essay

ORAL COMMUNICATION

- OC-1: Interactive Listening (how well students listen; how much information they pick up hearing something once – asking a student to write a comprehensive account of a play certainly works)
- OC-2: Making Presentations (each senior in Rhode Island will be asked to put on a senior exhibition, capstone project or portfolio that includes a public demonstration on a particular subject. Learning about public performance is an obvious tie-in).

READING

- R-4: Initial Understanding of Literary Texts (where is the climax in a story? How would you set this play in contemporary society?)
- R-5: Analysis and Interpretation of Literary Text/Citing Evidence

- R-11: Reading Fluency and Accuracy (part of the benefits of reading a script out over and over in rehearsal is an increase in reading fluency and accuracy)

Please see more exercise and strategies for ArtsLiteracy learning at www.artslit.org. We would love to hear from you about your experiences using this study guide. It is a great help to us as we build on our education program from year to year.

Steve Kidd
Resident Actor/Education Director
The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre

ACT I: Theatre Audience Etiquette

What is so exciting about attending the theatre - especially in a smaller space such as the Gamm - is that it is live! Live theatre is different from other forms of entertainment; unlike film and television you are encouraged to pay close attention and actively engage your imagination.

You are mere feet (and sometimes inches!) away from the actors. Thus, you the audience, play an active role in the experience. The actors can see and hear you and any distracting behavior (talking, text messaging, unwrapping candy, the ringing of cell phones, etc) can affect the actor's concentration, disrupt the performance, and ruin the experience for other audience members. So we ask that you refrain from talking or making any noise during a performance. Thank you!

The Nature of Performance

Controversial British playwright Sarah Kane once observed: "There's always going to be a relationship between the material and that audience that you don't really get with a film... People can walk out or change channels or whatever, it doesn't make any difference to the performance... It's a completely reciprocal relationship between the play and the audience."

The performance you see will never be precisely the same, for it will never have the same audience; every performance is unique. Theatre scholar Robert Cohen observed the essential paradox of live performance:

- It is unique to the moment, yet it is repeatable.
- It is spontaneous, yet it is rehearsed.
- It is participatory, yet it is presented.

- It is real, yet it is simulated.
- The actors are themselves, yet they are characters.
- The audience is involved, yet it remains apart.

“Theatre is not just another genre, one among many. It is the only genre in which, today and every day, now and always, living human beings address and speak to other human beings... It is a place for human encounter, a space for authentic human existence...”

-Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic and Playwright

(From Robert Cohen's *Theatre: Brief Version*)

Discuss with your students the particular demands and benefits of attending a live performance. Perhaps have them brainstorm how theatre is different from film, television and sporting events.

ACT II: Howard Brenton and *Anne Boleyn*



About Howard Brenton:

Born in 1942, Portsmouth, Hampshire England, English playwright and screen writer Howard Brenton is known for having a provocative voice post-World War II England political theatre. He has written or co-written more than forty plays as well as poetry, essays, a novel, dramatic adaptations and television scripts.

Brenton was born the son of a Methodist Minister which perhaps led to his fascination with the subject of religion, a reoccurring theme in his writing. He was educated at Chichester High School for Boys and later studied English Literature at Saint Catharine's College, Cambridge. He wrote his first play, *Ladder of Fools*, while at Cambridge in 1965. His one-act play,

It's My Criminal, was performed while he was in Cambridge as well at the Royal Court Theatre. In 1968, Brenton joined the Brighton Combination as a writer and actor. He joined the Portable Theatre in 1969 as an actor and writer, writing many plays including *Christie In Love* and *Fruit*. In 1973, he was commissioned to write a "big" play for Nottingham Playhouse. The result was *Brassneck*. His next major success was the play *Weapons of Happiness* which was staged in 1976 and won the Evening Standard for Best Play.

Brenton gained notoriety for *The Romans in Britain* which was staged at the National Theatre in 1980. His political comedy *Pravda* was co-written and directed by David Hare in 1983 and won them an Evening Standard Award.

About *Anne Boleyn* :

Anne Boleyn, about the life of former Queen Anne Boleyn, premiered at Shakespeare's Globe in 2010. It was presented alongside the Globe's first season of Shakespeare's history plays, including *Henry VIII*, *Henry IV part 1* and *Henry IV part 2*. The production was revived in 2011 as part of the 400th anniversary celebrations of the King James Version. It was awarded Best New Play at the Whats On Stage Theatregoers Choice Awards in 2011. It toured in March- May of 2012 with Shakespeare's Globe's touring company. The Gamm is proud to present the U.S. Premiere.

Characters and Setting:

The play takes place at the Court of King Henry VIII (1527-1536) and the court of King James I (1603-1604), jumping back and forth between the two time periods.

Please see detailed character notes below.

Anne Boleyn
King Henry VIII
Thomas Cromwell
Cardinal Wolsey

Lady Rochford, Anne's woman
Lady Celia, Anne's woman
Lady Jane, Anne's woman

Simpkin, Cromwell's man
Sloop, Wolsey's man; then Cromwell's

William Tyndale

King James I
Robert Cecil
George Villiers
Parrot, Cecil's man

Dean Lancelot Andrews
Doctor John Reynolds
Henry Barrow

Country Women, Tyndale Followers
Country Men, Tyndale Followers

Divines, Courtiers, Servants

ACT III: Our Production

Directors' Notes:

By Rachel Walshe, *Director of Anne Boleyn*

"Her image, her reputation, her life history is nebulous, a drifting cloud, a mist with certain points of colour and definition."

– *Hilary Mantel*, "Anne Boleyn: Witch, bitch, temptress, feminist" (*The Guardian*, May 11, 2012)

I was three when Diana Spencer married Prince Charles in 1981. It is one of my earliest memories: transfixed before our 13-inch color television, I will never forget the endless layers of creamy taffeta erupting from that fairytale coach. My mother whispered: "She is a *real* princess." Fast forward thirty years and you'll see my own daughter, also three, transfixed before our TV watching the demure Kate Middleton take the same walk as Diana before her. And I, in spite of myself, whispered to her my own mother's words: "She is a *real* princess." My daughter's eyes grew wide. An enchanted smile broke across her face. Instantly, I felt pangs of guilt. Why?

Because it's a lie. "Princess" Kate and "Princess" Diana before her and Anne Boleyn long, long before her simply don't exist. They are as fictitious as Cinderella and Snow White. Sure, they were (and are) flesh-and-blood women. But the moment they became "royal" these young women transformed into public symbols – global and timeless sensations. As such, they surrendered their private lives to us. Like Diana and Kate, Anne Boleyn, whether she sought it or not, became not only a public symbol to

her court but an icon, an archetype that generations to come would feed upon. What these women wear and eat, who they love and have sex with, what children they do or not bear, are all offered up to a public with an insatiable appetite for their private, inner lives.

It is this aspect of her story – the ruthless hunt for Anne’s private self – to which I most deeply respond. Not just her private affairs, but her very *body* was up for public scrutiny. It is her *body* the king feverishly pursues – pressing her for glimpses of forbidden anatomy. It is her *body* he desperately needs to impregnate...with a boy. It is her swollen belly she must adorn and display for the court to admire with the promise of a male heir. It is her *body* that delivers her first and only healthy child, an infant girl (the future Queen Elizabeth I) labeled a great disappointment for its failure to have a penis. “Dress me. I want the Court to see me,” she insists after delivering Elizabeth in Howard Brenton’s play. “I want them to see I’m joyful and healthy and me. Me.” Despite the fever and exhaustion of labor, Anne must present her body – good as new and ready to make a boy – to her anxious court.

But Anne’s body did not fulfill its duty to produce a male heir. After Elizabeth there were two documented miscarriages. Court records suggest one was a male fetus. Even the horror of what issued from her body was examined, recorded, tossed into the cesspit. She thus failed to satisfy the one thing her king and country hungered for most: a secure future for England. And so, when Anne’s womb failed to give England a king, her head paid the price. On May 19, 1536 Anne Boleyn was beheaded, her body forever severed.

If this sounds haunting it should. In many ways, Anne Boleyn’s story, certainly as crafted by Howard Brenton, is a ghost story. More than just milky apparitions or bumps in the night, ghosts serve an important purpose: Our ghosts show us *who we are*. So what does Brenton’s Boleyn have to say about us? Well...what fun would there be in watching a ghost story if I gave away the ending! I will say this: Listen closely, for this beautiful “drifting cloud,” this “mist” has more to reveal about her 2012 audience, we “demons of the future,” than the long dead past from which she harkens.

Dramaturgical Notes:

By Jennifer Madden, *Gamm Theatre Resident Scholar*

The “Divorce” That Changed the World: The Ramifications of King Henry VIII’s “Great Matter”

The tumultuous relationship between King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn captures the imagination nearly 500 years after the main events: The agonizingly protracted courtship of a bewitching seductress by a legendary monarch, their brief stormy marriage, and Anne’s beheading. The tremendous political, religious, and social consequences of their marriage contributes to the Tudors’ enduring appeal.

Popular myth casts Henry as either a besotted dupe, separating England from the Vatican due to the influence of an ambitious jezebel; or as tyrant, using Boleyn as a willing pawn to consolidate his power. There are elements of truth in both.

Henry conveniently began doubting the validity of his first marriage to Catherine of Aragon (widow of Henry’s elder brother, Prince Arthur) once she passed her child-bearing years without producing a male heir. His campaign to divorce Catherine began in earnest when he fell in love with Boleyn, convinced she would provide a male successor.

Henry did not divorce Catherine as is commonly believed. Rather, he battled with Pope Clement VII for almost seven years, demanding an annulment. The years-long siege become known as Henry’s “great matter.” Boleyn’s pregnancy and the urgent need for a legitimate heir led to the final break with Rome: no longer recognizing Catholic authority meant, simply, that Henry no longer needed Vatican approval. His first marriage was declared invalid thus (temporarily) removing Mary, his inconveniently female heir, from the line of succession.

The break with Rome also aligned England with the Protestant Reformation, and in 1534 the Act of Supremacy declared the king the Supreme Head of the Church of England. Failure to recognize Henry Tudor as Head of the Church became a treasonable offense punishable by death. Henry became a tyrannical despot, resulting in executions, rebellions protesting the excess of his religious reforms, decades of violent religious conflict, the dissolution of the monasteries and seizing of the Church’s vast wealth and real estate holdings.

Boleyn, though not technically a Protestant, held progressive views on religious reform. Her Catholic enemies loathed her while her Protestant supporters called her a saint, crediting her with the existence of the Church of England. Heretic or saint, Boleyn was her own worst enemy. Her imperiousness and ill temper alienated even her staunchest supporters, and more dangerously, her husband. In Henry's eyes Anne's greatest crime was her failure to provide a male heir, instead giving birth to a girl followed by a series of miscarriages and stillbirths. She was arrested and executed for treason only three years after wedding Henry. Henry quickly disposed of his unpopular second wife, and had the marriage annulled.

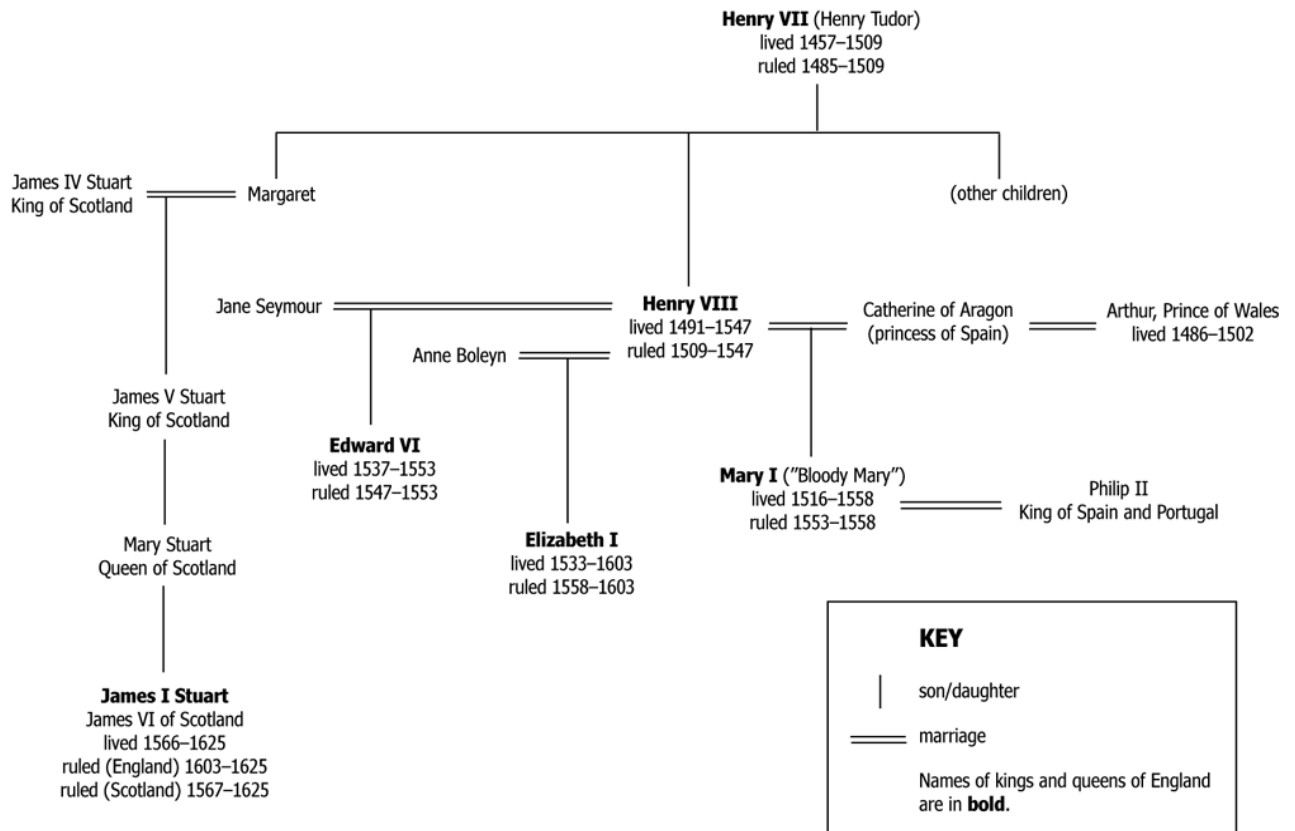
Jane Seymour, his third wife, solved Henry's problem by giving birth to a son, who indeed became his long-awaited (but short-lived) successor Edward VI. During his short reign (1547 to 1553) Edward continued his father's religious reforms, moving England closer toward Protestantism. Staunchly Catholic Mary Tudor ascended the throne in 1553. As a child, Mary was profoundly mistreated by her father and endured Boleyn's repeated urgings to have her and her mother executed as traitors. Arguably Henry and Anne's vicious treatment led Mary to seek solace in a fanatic Catholicism that helped define her reign with its savage persecution of "heretics."

In the end, while Henry's "great matter" alienated much of Europe, and created massive religious and political upheaval, the cause of it all—his marriage to Anne Boleyn—was ironically an abject failure. She was an unfit consort and produced only one living child, and a "mere" female at that. Irony and mistake, however, often fuel the engine of history. That "mere" female, of course, would go on to become one of the greatest monarchs the world has ever known: Elizabeth I, the queen who would preside over the flowering of English civilization into the beginnings of a centuries-spanning empire.

ACT IV: Historical Background, Who's Who & Themes

Historical Background

The Tudor Dynasty of England



Historical Timeline:

*-indicates an event that occurs within the play

1491 Henry VIII is born

1507 Anne Boleyn is born

1509 Henry VIII takes the throne upon the death of his brother

Henry VIII marries his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon

1534 Henry and Anne marry after Henry VIII breaks from the Catholic Church and forms the Church of England*

1533 Anne gives birth to Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth I*

1536 Anne miscarries*

Anne is tried and beheaded for treason*

Henry VIII marries Jane Seymour*

1540 Henry VIII marries Anne of Cleves

1542 Henry VIII marries Catherine Parr

1547 Henry VIII dies

Edward VI takes the throne

1553 Mary I takes the throne

1558 Elizabeth I takes the throne

1566 James is born to Mary, Queen of Scots

1567 James becomes King of Scotland upon the death of his mother

1603 Elizabeth I dies, leaving no heir to the throne

James becomes King of England*

1625 James dies

Anne Boleyn: Who's Who?

House of Tudor (1527-1536)



Anne Boleyn

Anne Boleyn was born in 1507. She spent her teenage years in France as a lady-in-waiting to Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's sister. Henry VIII had his previous marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled in order to marry Anne in 1533. She tried to give Henry a male heir but gave birth to a girl and then had a miscarriage in 1536. The miscarried child was deformed which many believed was a result of witchcraft. Later that same year, she was arrested and sent to the Tower of London where she was tried before a jury of peers and found guilty of charges of treason. She was beheaded on May 19th 1536. Her head and body were buried under a church without a plaque or stone.

Modern historians view the charges against her, including adultery and incest unconvincing. She has been called "the most influential and important queen consort England has ever had" because she not only provided the occasion for Henry to divorce Catherine of Aragon but also to declare his independence from Rome. She has inspired and or been mentioned in numerous artistic and cultural works over the centuries and is venerated as a martyr or heroine of the English Reformation.



King Henry VIII

King of England from 1509-1547. Unable to receive an annulment for his marriage to Catherine of Aragon from the pope, Henry broke ties with the Vatican and created the Anglican Church. Henry VIII is also commonly known for his six marriages, which ended with an annulment, two beheadings, and one natural death.



Cardinal Wolsey

Lord Chancellor under Henry VIII. Unable to persuade the Pope to grant an annulment for Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Wolsey quickly fell from favor. In 1530, Wolsey was charged with asserting papal jurisdiction in England, and died on the way to his trial.



Thomas Cromwell

Henry VIII's chief minister from 1532-40. Cromwell pressured Henry to name himself head of the Anglican Church, and headed the dissolution of the monasteries. A botched marriage alliance left Cromwell in disfavor, and in 1540 he was executed for heresy and treason.



William Tyndale

A Protestant martyr and the grandfather of the King James Bible. Tyndale translated the New Testament into English so that all Christians should have access to the Bible in their own language. He was captured in 1536 while working on a translation of the Old Testament and executed.



Lady Rochford

Sister-in-law as well as Lady-of-the-Bedchamber to Anne Boleyn. Lady Rochford testified against Boleyn at her trial, swearing that she committed incest with her brother, among other charges.



Lady Jane

Jane Seymour, third wife of Henry VIII. Before her marriage, Seymour served as maid of Honor to both Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. Seymour died of puerperal fever after giving birth to a male heir, Edward, in 1537.

House of Stuart (1603-1604)



King James I

King of England from 1603 to his death in 1625. James is best known for commissioning a new translation of the Bible known as the Authorized King James Version.

Robert Cecil

Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth, during which time he secretly corresponded with King James VI of Scotland, telling him how to win Elizabeth's favor. Because of Cecil's advice, James succeeded Elizabeth as King of England, and retained Cecil as Secretary of State.

George Villiers

George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, was a statesman and royal favorite of both James I and Charles I. He was also James' acknowledged lover.

Doctor John Reynolds

Head of the Puritan Church in England, and a professor of Greek at Oxford. Reynolds is remembered for his work on the Authorized King James Version of the Bible.

Lancelot Andrewes

One of the founding fellows of Jesus College, Oxford, and Dean of Westminster. Andrewes is most known for his work on the creation of the King James Version of the Bible, along with Doctor John Reynolds.

Henry Barrow

English Puritan and a Separatist, advocating a split from the Anglican Church. Barrow was convicted of "devising and circulating seditious books" and hanged in 1593.

Themes

Loyalty/Disloyalty

Loyalty, and for that matter disloyalty, run deep throughout *Anne Boleyn*.

In the play, Anne is loyal to her husband, King Henry even after her death. As a ghost talking to James she says "The last three weeks I was alive I couldn't speak to Henry, couldn't send a message. Cromwell cut me off. While he told his lies.... **But Henry was a good husband**" Anne is also loyal to her religious and moral beliefs. She makes Henry wait seven years, while he divorces Catherine, before consummating their relationship.

Despite this extreme loyalty there is also extreme deception and lack of trust. Henry VIII notoriously had six wives, and was never faithful to any of them. He continuously had mistresses and he was seeing Anne while still married to Catharine of Aragon. At the end of his marriage to Anne, he took Lady Jane Seymour as a mistress, which is shown in *Anne Boleyn*.

Thomas Cromwell gains Anne's trust by confiding in her that he too is a Protestant; however, in the end, he orchestrates her demise, showing he is solely loyal to himself and the King. Secret meetings, "eyes everywhere," every conversation is overheard. The stakes are high: if the King doesn't like what he hears, he can have you arrested for treason. Every move the characters in *Anne Boleyn* make are scrutinized by those around them. When alone in the woods Anne says "I am always surrounded by voices, in rooms, in halls, in corridors. Even when I lie down to sleep I hear the whispers of the people behind the spyholes."

Religious Freedom/Persecution

Anne Boleyn was a religious reformer. She had hoped to transform England from a Catholic to a Protestant nation. She was only able to express her Protestant beliefs under the protection of the King. Religion at that time was dictated by the monarch, largely for political reasons, and those who practiced other religions were considered heretics and could be prosecuted or tortured. Henry VIII himself was a religious reformer, separating himself from the Pope, firmly establishing the Church of England, so as to dissolve his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and to marry Anne. The Church of England is still the official state church/religion.

History

Almost all records of Anne's existence were obliterated, save for an A&H carved in panels at Hampton Court, London. History is something we take

as fact, when in reality, records are usually set down by those people in power. As Henry tries to change the laws to secure his divorce from Catherine, he and Cromwell discuss the truth of the history that came before them, saying "Truth is power" or "Power is truth" acknowledging that they are in the position to change history and its implications.

In Howard Brenton's interpretation, while Henry VIII loses some interest in Anne, it is really Cromwell who betrays her to protect himself. History remembers this differently, with Henry VIII getting rid of Anne by having her tried and convicted for treason after she couldn't produce a male heir. The only facts about this time that we have are those that were carried on by the people in power. In *Anne Boleyn*, King James I searches for answers to who Anne was, and while this search may be fictitious, even Kings didn't have access to the entire truth.

ACT V: Activities for the Classroom

Research Projects

- *Have students research one of the characters from the play, a member of the Tudor family, or a big event from the play. In front of the class, students can conduct interviews, introduce themselves as a historical figure or present a news report.*
- *A recent story from NPR discusses the Turkish TV program The Magnificent Century, and that it offends the current Prime Minister because of how it remembers Suleiman the Magnificent who was the longest-reigning sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Have your students read this article and relate it to the story and themes of Anne Boleyn. Use this article as a starting point for a discussion or debate about history in popular culture.*

(<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/03/167981036/prime-minister-finds-soap-operas-turkish-delights-in-bad-taste>)

Questions for Discussion or Personal Writing

- *What is an issue that you feel strongly about? As King or Queen, how would you ensure the protection of this issue?*
- *How do you know you can trust someone?*
- *How do you behave differently when you know you are being watched?*

- *How will you be remembered?*
- *Why was Anne's memory destroyed?*
- *What does "Power is Truth" mean to you?*

Epilogue

Thank you for joining us for *Anne Boleyn* and for working with this Study Guide to ensure the best, most comprehensive theatrical and educational experience. Please be in touch if you would like us to visit your classroom before or after you attend *Anne Boleyn*. We hope you will join us for more student matinees at The Gamm. Our education program also provides classes for students in elementary, junior high and high school and our GSI Pawtucket is the thing to do for summer time theatre fun. To learn more, find us on the web at www.gammtheatre.org or reach Steve Kidd at 401 723 4266 ext. 17.