Did Shakespeare Write Henry VI Part One?
Or:
Gary Taylor and Rhetoric of Attribution:
A Prelude to Statistical Analysis and the
Justification of an "initial pattern."

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Gary Taylor in his now famous and newly revised article of attribution, "Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of <u>Henry the Sixth Part One</u>" states that "it seems safe to conclude barring any strong evidence to the contrary, that <u>Part One</u> was written by Shakespeare, Nashe and two other as-yet-unidentified playwrights, that it was first performed by Strange's Men at the Rose Theatre on 3 March 1592, that at the time of composition, <u>Contention and Duke of York</u> had already been written and performed by some other company, and that <u>Titus</u>and <u>Richard III</u> were written at about the same time…" (Taylor 186). That Taylor's case is powerful and influential there is no doubt, however the nature of its authority and rhetorical structure in relation to the available "facts" has been little analysed considering the preponderant extent to which Taylor's article has been assimilated by other textual editors and critics. It shall be the purpose of this essay to consider some of the ways in which Taylor's article might be deceptively conclusive and to subject his claimed "initial pattern" (Taylor 186) of postulated textual facts about <u>1H6</u> to close analysis.

"Facts" are most obviously manipulated by the manner of their inclusion or exclusion from any given summary of information. Any empirical case will depend upon some stipulated facts and some facts which purport to be derived from argument. It is this proportional relationship between what is stipulated and what is derived which must be crucial to the postulated truth and ultimate persuasiveness of the case. Gary Taylor's article depends upon such a rhetorical

division of labour between accumulated facts from argument and an assortment of unargued and stipulated facts from what is one assumes, a collective critical memory. Taylor's article also depends upon ignoring any inconsistencies or doubts which may arise from his own interpretation of the data, whilst repetitively drawing attention to the apparent inconsistencies in other interpretations of the available resources.

The mainstay of Taylor's argument is statistical and depends upon his analysis of results from a rare word vocabulary test taken from known Shakespearean texts and the texts supposedly closely linked in time with The First Part Of Henry VI, namely The First Part of the Contention and The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of York. Key differences between texts are however elided by Taylor's way of outlining the statistical information. Taylor from the first relies upon the fact that his readers believe (and understand) Peter Alexander's 1929 thesis that the quarto text of The First Part of The Contention and the octavo text of The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of York are "memorial reconstruction[s] of the related text[s] printed in the Folio" (Taylor 149). This assumed, Taylor discusses four separate texts with respect to statistical information relating to two texts, by bracketing the names of the Folio texts next to their supposedly memorial descendent texts and quoting the statistical averages for the memorial texts as if they applied equally to the Folio texts. Taylor does not indicate whether there is any difference between the vocabulary tests on the 1594/5 quarto and octavo texts and the Folio texts, or even whether the different texts were tested distinctly. This conflation of the so-called memorial texts with the Folio texts is doubly confusing (and misleading) given Taylor's previously expressed conviction that the Folio titles are not the "original" titles and are in fact a later invention following the (supposedly) chronologically later text The First Part of Henry VI.

This series of conflations and confusion of different texts is indicative of the way in which throughout his famous article Taylor's apparently scientific analysis of texts is corrupted by his former assumptions and textual revisions. The reader skeptical of Taylor's assuming method must wonder why a later play (on Taylor's argument "Part One") should be named "The First Part of Henry VI" for a series

of plays which is neither called nor colloquially known as "Henry VI" --
presumably because "The First Part of the First Part of the Contention" sounds
ridiculous and has no historical meaning. Taylor's method of referring to "The
First Part Of Henry the Sixt" as "Part One" is further misleading given that it
disguises the above similarity between the titles of the ostensibly earlier memorial
texts with the later (Folio only)1H6. Taylor's method of reference does not even
represent his own reading of the Stationers' Register entry for the seventeen plays
of the First Folio in which he takes "The Thirde Parte of Henry the Sixt" to refer
to the play titled "The First Part of Henry the Sixt" on the assumption that the two
"memorial texts" which were published anonymously in 1594 and 1595
respectively, were "already in print and referred to in the Stationers' Register
as Part One and Part Two" (Wells & Taylor eds 217). Taylor has again assumed a
particular position in relation to the statistical data which he purports to read
objectively. One assumed set of facts is confirmed by an analysis of a further set
of facts which can only be conclusive given that the original set of facts has been
confirmed, or to use Taylor's favourite term, "verified", previously. Furthermore,
the extended title of the octavo play (which Taylor misleadingly abbreviates) is
"The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the good King Henry the
Sixt"-- the latter half of which is remarkably appropriate for a play which might
have been regarded by contemporaries as "The Thirde Parte of Henry the Sixt".
That both characters of the title were already known and thus both worthy of
advertisement seems at least likely.

Several other questions are begged (again before we even turn to the purported
statistical evidence) by Taylor's revision of the Folio's titular (and assumed
chronological) order of the three "Henry" plays:

(1) Given that most critics seem to agree that 1H6 is a poorer play than the
Folio Parts 2 and 3 --the reasons for which are explained either by assigning an
earlier date of composition (Tillyard; Sams ; Honigmann) or attributed to the
uneven nature of collaboration (Taylor) -- it seems odd that Shakespeare (who
even on Taylor's thesis wrote most of The First Part of The Contention and The

True Tragedie) should have collaborated to produce a poorer play shortly after having written two "better" plays and during a period in which he is writing Richard III and Titus Andronicus without any apparent collaboration.

(2) Given Taylor's own argument that it is unlikely any playwright would have undertaken to write a three part drama, it seems strange that the earliest reference we have to any of the Henry VI series is to Talbot in The First Part of Henry the Sixt - a play which was of noteworthy popularity (Steane ed. 113) and which like Tamburlaine I would make possible a Second and even Third part. It makes even less sense if the last play which theatre-goers saw before Richard III --the only play in the canon which starts with a soliloquy by the titular and star character-- was The First Part of Henry the Sixt,which does not feature Richard, and not The Thirde Parte of Henry the Sixt the last scene of which features the already stylised "crookback" Judas role of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, shadowing over his brother Clarence and King Edward, thus directly linking all three identities into the first scene of Richard III.

(3) Lastly there is Jonson's Prologue (c.1605) to the English edition of Every Man in His Humour (Jonson, 559-560) which as Honigmann(93) has pointed out is a critique of contemporary Renaissance drama and explicitly rejects the popular style of drama represented byHenry VI, Jonson's contrast being between the way plays *are* and the way they *should* be. What is pertinent here is the implicit chronological connection which Jonson makes between all three Henry plays, his critique implying that the three plays were acted in the order one would expect: namely from the birth and childhood of Henry to his death -- a life span which further implies that the time and circumstance of Henry's *reign* was equally significant to the audience as the actions of a particular hero, be he Talbot or Henry himself--though Jonson's Prologue does seem to point to the audience's interest in the (unrealistic) portrayal of the king's development from babe to man. Thus both Taylor's argument that The First Part of Henry the Sixt must have been written as a later prequel after the postulated success of The Contention and The True Tragedie and his argument that "Talbot is unmistakably the protagonist, not

Henry" and thus that Henslowe would have been "unlikely to identify [1HenryVI]
by the name of a character played by a boy actor who speaks only 179 lines…"
(Taylor 152) ring hollow:

Though need make many poets, and some such

As art and nature have not better'd much;

Yet ours for want hath not so loved the stage,

As he dare serve the ill customs of the age,

Or purchase your delight at such a rate,

As for it he himself must justly hate:

To make a child now swaddled, to proceed

Man, and then shoot up, in one beard and weed,

Past threescore years; or with three rusty swords,

And help of some few foot words,

Fight over York and Lancaster's long jars

And in the tyring-house bring wounds to scars.

He rather prays you will be pleased to see

One such to-day, as other plays should be;

Taylor also argues that the use of sources in The First Part of The Contention and
in TheTrue Tragedie date The First Part of Henry the Sixtafter The True Tragedie.
Taylor blankly asserts (without any apparent supporting evidence) that:
"Contention makes no discernible use of Holinshed" a supposed fact with which
he contrasts the "demonstrable" reliance on Holinshed of The True
Tragedie and Part One [sic] (Taylor 151). Given Taylor's usually over-eager will
to use spelling and vocabulary tests as a measure of authorship it seems surprising
that he did not seek to find out the spelling of names in Holinshed and Hall and
compare them to those equivalent spellings in The First Part Of The Contention,
where he would have found that Contention's spelling of for instance "Orleance"
is the same as Holinshed and not that of Hall, who spells the name "Orleaunce"

(though also spelling it like Holinshed on occasion) (Bullough, ed 55-57). Contention also seems to follow Holinshed's spelling of "Marquesse" not Hall's "Marques". Source checking is a fine bone business and though the above examples are perhaps mere quibbles, they demonstrate that overemphasising the significance of a particular postulated locus of textual influence may simplify one's understanding of the web-like spread of a Renaissance playwright's reading and writing method. The problem lies in the effectiveness of the critic's method of distinguishing between circumstantial error and intentional error.

   Taylor's simplification of source text influence in 1H6 as it relates to chronology may be criticised in the following ways:-

(1) Hall and Holinshed are very similar in many of their descriptions: as for example in that of the first scene of The Contention featuring The Marquis of Suffolke, more or less the same names, numbers of people and references are used by both chroniclers (though Hall is more solemn and thus closer in tone to 1H6 than Holinshed). Given that by Taylor's own argument it seems Holinshed is used more often (certainly by Shakespeare but perhaps by others) it makes little sense to deny Holinshed where the choice between possible sources seems equivocal --furthermore the over-arching use of Holinshed in The First Part Of Henry The Sixt and the closeness (as Tillyard and Bullough have both pointed out) between Holinshed's moral sense of History and that of the play is only further evidence of the playwright's being generally influenced by Holinshed (who was in turn influenced by Hall).

(2) Even if it were true that Hall and not Holinshed was the true source for The Contention, this would prove little about when the play was written because as Bullough demonstrates, Hall's chronicle forms a considerable part of The First Part Of Henry The Sixt as well as The Contention and The True Tragedie.

(3) Even Bullough, who sees mainly Hall (though with parts of Foxe, Grafton and the author of Jack Straw) in The Contention, includes a passage of Holinshed for his chapter on 2Henry VI -- a chapter which also relates to The Contention.

Critics such as Bullough, Nicoll, and Brockbank have generally seen in the Folio 2Henry VI plenty of evidence for Holinshed and those other chronicle writers (Hall, Foxe, Fabyan, Grafton), which seems to indicate that the use of one source or another tells us little about when the play was written since many books could have been before the eyes of the playwright simultaneously. Moreover, Holinshed's acknowledged following of Hall (and/or Grafton who plagiarised Hall's Union) (Bullough, ed. 13) makes a precise location of textual influence contentious at least.

(4) Taylor discusses neither the possible greater authority (again, given his own acceptance of Alexander's memorial theory) and earlier date of the Folio texts, nor the extent to which The Contention differs from 2Henry VI in its treatment of its sources. Obviously Bullough's quotation of John Ball's famous dictum from Holinshed as related to 2 Henry VI (Bullough, ed. 133) works equally well for Cade's reply to Stafford in Contention (Praetorious, 45). There are also direct parallels between Holinshed's description of Lord Saie's beheading (A & J Nicoll, eds. 118) and those of The Contention. In both, Lord Saie's speech is curtailed by his being lead away to the chopping block. It should be noted however that in 2HenryVI Saie's speech is considerably longer than The Contention.

(5) Taylor's assumption that 2 & 3 Henry VI are not revisions of the possibly earlier Contention and True Tragedie (revision has been argued for by Grant-White and more recently by Eric Sams and Thomas Merriam) or even that The Contention and The True Tragedie are not authorial adaptions for stage of 2 & 3 Henry VI have yet to be "verified" by his own argument. Thomas Merriam contends that there are passages in 2Henry VI (not in The Contention) which demonstrate not only the author's awareness of Greene's Groatsworth of Witte but a deliberate satirising of Greene's own satire of the quarto text known as The True Tragedie (Merriam 145-149). Merriam's chronology, backed up by Donald Foster's Shaxicon analysis, dictates that The First Part Of The Contention and The True Tragedie date from 1592 and that the Folio texts are actually authorial revisions of the older texts. There is no need under his theory to

explain the quarto texts as "memorial". Unfortunately, whether or not Merriam is right, his case cannot be decisive on the wider issue of the authorship of <u>1Henry VI</u>though his dating of the quarto texts would seem to place them in close temporal proximity to <u>1H6,</u> thus supporting Hattaway's argument against Dover-Wilson, that the three plays could have been written and performed in their Folio titular order in 1591/2 before the close of the theatres.

As previously observed, it is necessary to locate the difference between the intentional (i.e. author derived) and circumstantial (source text conflation/confusion) errors of a text before any large scale attribution of authorship can be made. Given Taylor's concern with an author's reading patterns as evidence of his identity --Taylor accepts John Dover-Wilson's case that Nashe's echoing of phrases from <u>1H6</u>Act 1 in his works written circa 1592 correlates Nashe's "linguistic profile" as closer to the author of the first act of <u>1H6</u> than Shakespeare (Taylor 177)-- one would expect that in order to find out which books an unidentified author had read, the similarities or differences in spelling and stylistics between those works thought to have been read by that author and his/her own works would be of crucial importance and that Taylor's own research into the ostensible reading habits of "Shakespeare" would be deeper than the mere repetition of John Dover-Wilson's chronological and speculative arguments. Taylor's theory however appears to dictate his results: as shown above, he pays little attention to the source text his argument depends on, whilst his chronology relires heavily onhis unargued acceptance of Alexander's memorial theory. Gary Taylor's further prelude to his statistical verification is his analysis of the "cardinal's hat" dimemma, from whichbhe claims tonderive further evidence of the multiple authorship of <u>1H6</u> .Taylor, expanding his division of Acts 1 from 3 & 5 states that the agreement of III.i.-III.ii. and IV.vii.33-V.v (Oxford line numbers) in their treatment of Winchester differ from Act 1. All editors though agreeing that the Winchester nomenclature is strange, debate the reason. Here Michael Hattaway's response to Taylor is informative. Hattaway notes that the author of <u>1H6</u> may have:

1) Consulted different sources: initially Fabyan then Hall and Holinshed.

2) "Consulted the *second* [as well as the first] bill of complaint made by Gloucester to the king against Winchester in 1441 [in which] Winchester had already been made Cardinal."

3) "…Been led astray by his perusal of Fabyan who notes *immediately* after his account of the 'Parliament of Bats" that…'Winchester…was created Cardinal'." (Hattaway, ed., 83 & 86)

Taylor, oblivious to any other explanation for the misplaced nomenclature than his own, goes on to correlate the different spellings of Joan of Arc's epithet in Act 1 and Acts 3 & 5 with the same authorial division he had pointed to in regard to the Cardinal's hat dilemma. Again, Taylor does not compare the differences in the play text to those in the source texts. Taylor notes that Joan's honorary epithet (which he spells "pucelle") is spelled in various ways, the key difference being between the spellings "pucel(l)" and "puzel(l)". Taylor's chart shows that the "puc-" prefix appears most often in I.ii -II.i and the "puz-" variant most in III.ii. - V.vi. Taylor argues that the spelling of Joan's name provides evidence of an authorial division between Act 1 and Acts 3 &5 (definitively ruling out both compositorial and scribal intervention because of the consistency of the variant spelling) (Taylor 155). Why then has Taylor not consulted Hall?

The variant spellings of which Taylor makes so much are also variants in the text of Hall's <u>Union of Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke</u>where Joan's name is spelt both "pucelle" and "puzell" (Bullough, ed. 57 & 61). The differing spellings are in different chapters of Hall's work corresponding to the different periods of Joan's career: "pucelle" in chapter CVII when "Jone" first meets the "Dolphin" and "puzell" in CXIII in which the account of her capture and death is given. The siege of Orleans episode in <u>1H6</u> shares Hall's "pucelle" spelling, but qualifying that similarity, in <u>1H6</u> Act 1, where Joan is introduced to the "Dolphin", the spelling is "puzel" not Hall's "pucelle". Despite the failure of any exact correspondence between the source's narrative location and the play's spelling at

the equivalent dramatic situation, it seems important that 1H6 shares the two alternative prefixes with its source --including the full length "puzell" spelling used by Hall. The point is that *one* author using various sources (or the same source variously consulted) could have spelled Joan's name differently in different places by remembering the alternative spellings of his various sources. If an historian such as Hall could use various spellings, why not a dramatist? It is well accepted that many of the historical errors in 1H6 (such as the mistaking of the two Mortimers) are drawn from the play's sources and are not original to the play, so equally it could be accepted that spelling errors or inconsistencies could likewise be attributed to their historical source material.

Taylor also omits to comment on Talbot's explicit punning upon the difference between "pucelle" and "puzzle" in Folio ed. I.iv.119, a scene which seems to demonstrate not only an authorial awareness of the differences in spelling, meaning and pronunciation, but also an explicit reluctance (given this awareness) to use any one particular spelling consistently:

Talb. *puzel* or *Pussel,* Dolphin or Dog-fish/ Your hearts I'll stampe out*.*

The aspects of Taylor's prelude to statistical analysis so far considered have been with regard to:

(i)- the name of the play

(ii)- the time of its writing in relation to The Contention and The True Tragedy and the Folio 2 & 3 Henry VI

(iii)- the relation of the variants in 1H6 to the play's historical source texts:

(iv)- in particular, the spellings of names and the reasons for the variations therein, including the cardinal's hat dilemma

(v)- (i-iv) conceived as evidence for the differing authorship of Act 1 and Acts 3 & 5

Expanding his postulated authorial separation between Act1 and Acts 3 and 5, Taylor regards the inconsistent scene divisions of 1H6 as yet further evidence for his argument. The trouble is that Taylor appears to be using modern Act divisions to support his argument. He states that: "only in acts 3 and 5 does the Folio text mark scene divisions…the presence or absence of scene division thus cannot be due to compositorial interference or to scribal interference- unless we conjecture that a single scribe copied out only acts 3 and 5" (Taylor, 156). In my facsimile edition of the original Folio (Kokeritz, various pp.) however, the scenes and acts are divided thus:

- Actus Primus: Scoena Prima.

- Actus Secundus: Scoena Prima.

- Actus Tertius: Scena Prima, Scoena Secunda, Scoena Tertia, Scoena Quarta

- Actus Quartus: Scoena Prima, Scena secunda (where modern editions have Act v), Scoena Tertia.

- Actus Quintus. (modern Act v / Scene v) (See also Porter & Clarke eds. 5-101)

Laid out in full it thus easy to see that Taylor appears to have confused his edition's modern conflation of Acts 4 and 5 with the original Folio edition. If the only scene divisions in 1H6 are in the two conjoining acts 3 and 4 , it is quite conceivable that Taylor's own counter conjecture about a "single scribe" is correct and that a particular scribe working on the middle section of the play did decide uniquely to divide up his acts into scenes. This seems further likely given that in neither The Contention and The True Tragedie nor their Folio counter parts is

there any more than an initial "Actus Primus: Scoena Prima": indicating that at this point in the history of the Henry VI plays there was little in the way of authorial concern with Acts or Scenes --that the placement of <u>Actus Quintus</u> is only a hundred odd lines from the end of the play can only add to our doubts. Moreover, the fact that the Folio editions of Shakespeare's plays generally contain more act and preliminary scene divisions than their counterpart quarto texts (Wells & Taylor eds. 229-232 & 476-477) is well known, but the brute fact of which would seem to contribute little to any debate about the authenticity of a text. This does not deter Taylor from arguing that the "parts of <u>1Henry VI</u> that mark and number scene divisions were written by one of Shakespeare's collaborators" ('Taylor 163). That many critics (including Taylor) often date the Folio texts later than the quarto texts is some evidence for <u>1H6</u> being a later text than both <u>The Contention</u> and <u>The True Tragedie</u> but the fact that there is no quarto text with which to compare it, makes any argument about the date or authorship of <u>1H6</u> based upon its Folio scene divisions somewhat arbitrary.

   It would seem then that Gary Taylor's "initial pattern" which divides up act 1 from acts 3 and 5 is not as unified as he had thought. We must further add that Taylor's distorting use of act and scene numbers makes his statistics suit his argument. Thus when he argues that there are 11 examples of "ye" in act 5 he actually means there are 11 cases of "ye" in acts 4 and 5 of the Folio --a statistic no longer so impressive. Certainly, it is hard to critique his assessment of scribal/compositorial intervention for the use of the term "o" and "oh" which appears to demonstrate that compositors A and B were setting runs of both "o" and "oh" consistently in certain parts of the text corresponding to Taylor's division of acts. Inconsistent type setting as Taylor admits, is however not in itself proof of anything other than the suggestion of heterogeneous copy. Neither Taylor's rhetorical questioning as to the likelihood of scribes being the cause of the different spelling pattern, nor his bemused wonder at the possibility that scribal intervention could coincide with "literary divisions in the work of art" are enough to constitute proof. The trouble is that Taylor's statistical analysis seems to depend upon what he has assumed without much argument. Unless we know

enough about scribal and compositorial intervention to query Taylor's stipulated evaluation of likelihood, we must depend upon his mere rhetorical flourish as evidence.

Taylor's assumptive methodology continues as he begins his statistical analysis. For instance, as he analyses the regularity of certain suffixes in 1H6, Taylor is happy to find a higher number of "eth" and "ed" inflexions in 1H6 than the rest of the canon and more in Act 1 than in the rest of 1H6. He is surprised to find that the only plays which parallel the frequency of these inflexions in the canon are not history plays but "Shrew and Titus" (he does not say *which* Shrew).

The assumptions here are multiple:

• That Taylor's act and scene divisions are legitimate and are representative of the postulated author's intentions / identity. Note that this assumption is doubly significant given Taylor's theory of the play's collaborative authorship. He must demonstrate distinct authorial divides between acts - for if one ostensibly collaborative author could write unevenly in one *act*, he could certainly write unevenly in one *play*. For example, the same exclamations "o" and "oh" are spelt differently in single passages of the very text which Taylor uses as evidence for Nashe's distinctive (and presumably non-collaborative) style – namely, Summer's Last Will and Testament (Steane, ed. 150-153).

• That Taylor's reallocation of acts and scenes does not distort the significance of his statistics - let us note for example that if there are 6 "eth"s in Taylor's act 5, in the actual folio there are only 2, thus Taylor's analysis will skew the regularity of this particular word check towards his desired act1 /acts 3&5 division.

• That 1H6's verbal similarities with Titus and Shrew date it earlier rather than later in the canon . Though Taylor dates Titus after both Contention and The True Tragedie, other critics have dated Titus as early as 1589, considering it to be the first Shakespeare play (Sams xii; Honigmann 88) and even Chambers (1930: 312-316) considers the possibility of it being written between 1589 and 1592 before Q1 was first published in 1594. Moreover, dating A Shrew and The Shrew has its

own difficulties: (i) The "Tayminge of a Shrowe" was first published anonymously in 1594, the same year as <u>Titus</u>, <u>The First Part of The Contention</u> and a year before <u>The True Tragedie</u> and (ii) there is the uncertain possibility of <u>A Shrew</u> being either a redaction or a memorial transcription of <u>The Shrew</u>(which was only attributed to Shakespeare in the First Folio, published in 1623). Though Taylor's placement of <u>1H6</u> with <u>Titus</u> and<u>Shrew</u> seeks to place <u>1H6</u> further away from what he considers the older history plays, it could in fact confirm the opposite of his assumption: if <u>Titus</u> and/or <u>The Shrew</u> are early plays, then one who regarded <u>1H6</u> as being written first of the histories, would expect it to share more in common with <u>Titus</u> and <u>Shrew</u> than the later history plays. Taylor's own analysis could then undermine his own dating of <u>1H6</u> as after <u>The First Part of The Contention</u> and <u>The True Tragedie</u>.

• That the anachronistic and "crude" style of <u>1H6</u> (as pointed out by numerous editors from Hart and Dover-Wilson to Taylor himself (Taylor 163)) is not precisely related to its earlier date and status as first of the Henry VI series.

• That <u>2 & 3 Henry</u><u>VI</u> are not revisions of <u>The First Part of The Contention</u> and *T*he True Tragedie. If, as Grant-White has argued,<u>2 & 3 Henry VI</u> have had removed many of the anachronistic forms of <u>The First Part of The Contention</u> and <u>The True Tragedie</u>, then the anachronistic terms of <u>1H6</u> might simply point to its being an unrevised early text.

   Though consultation of the <u>Textual Companion</u> for many of these queries would give us Taylor's closer argument, it is the assumptive rhetoric of the argument in "Shakespeare and Others" with which we are here concerned. That Taylor's article is also referenced in the<u>Textual Companion</u> for the chapters on <u>1H6</u>, <u>The First Part of The Contention</u> and <u>The True Tragedie</u> should give one course for concern. There is a notable circularity involved. For further evidence in Taylor's article he points to his arguments in the <u>Textual Companion</u> which likewise points back to his article. The Cambridge editor Hattaway, while

doubting the conclusiveness of Taylor's case and pointing to the queries in the <u>Textual Companion</u> itself as to the unevenness of vocabulary tests, nevertheless prints in full Taylor's postulated collaborative authorial act divisions. The Norton edition prints in full the Oxford text, wholeheartedly accepting Taylor's case and placing his article in their bibliography along with the <u>Textual Companion</u>. Though it might be agreed that substantial parts of Taylor's case may be sound it is important to the process of critical "verification" to clear up any misleading assumptions before a case can be considered conclusive.

Taylor has not been prepared to do the groundwork to his essay that the seriousness with which it has been received demands. For example, Taylor explicitly ignores the more traditional methods of assigning authorship by means of traced verbal parallels and echoes and instead uses verbal parallels as a means of confirming his chronology. Having already allocated the different act and scene numbers and decided that II. Iv.1 is definitely Shakespeare's work, Taylor checks for verbal parallels in the later canon. Finding some with Rich. III ,<u>Titus</u>, <u>The Contention</u> and <u>The True Tragedie</u>, Taylor thus sees more "verifiable" evidence for the later date of <u>1H6</u>. In order to do this however, he simply ignores any Shakespearean echoes in other parts of the play (or for that matter any of the earlier Spenserian parallels pointed out at length by H.C. Hart) which he has not already attributed to Shakespeare, additionally ignoring the fact that there are verbal parallels in many parts of the text which relate to Shakespearean plays which we know to have been written much later than <u>1H6</u>. For instance: in <u>1H6 </u>act I scene II alone, there are verbal links with <u>Troilus and Cressida</u>, <u>The Tempest</u>, <u>Hamlet</u>, <u>The Taming of The [and "A"] Shrew</u> etc (see chart). Furthermore, even if we accept his findings, we should still be concerned to find that Taylor sees verbal links with<u>Titus</u> as evidence for <u>1H6</u> being later rather than earlier in the canon.

A further problem with verbal links as a method of dating is that an author writing the third part of a trilogy might be concerned to explicitly link his new third text with its oldest predecessor in order for a conclusion to appear unified. He might also simply have re-read an older text, whether or not he had written all

of it, in order to re-aquaint himself with the old text before writing the new. Both these explanations would equally well account for any preponderance of verbal echoes in say, 3H6, but would therefore tell us little about the date of 1H6.

Taylor's brief analysis of C.G Harlow's critique of Dover-Wilson is again indicative of Taylor's assumptive and rhetorical methodology. Taylor affirms Dover-Wilson's attribution of Act1 1H6 to Nashe and appears not to question Dover-Wilson's arguments whilst finding Harlow's "absurd". This is perplexing since Taylor's methodology at one point directly parallels that of Harlow (without however paralleling his modesty). Taylor simply dismisses as speculative Harlow's argument that Shakespeare is more likely to have read about Alexander's coffer in Plutarch than was Nashe. Taylor ignores Harlow's contrast between Nashe and Shakespeare, the former who is never known to have used Plutarch and the latter who is of course famous for his Plutarch derived Roman plays. Taylor additionally mistakes the point of Harlow's distinction between the "rich jewelled coffer" of 1H6 and Nashe and Puttenham's "jewell coffer": 1H6, following North, is unambiguously a rich jewelled object made to carry precious objects whilst Nashe's "jewell coffer" is (ambiguously) a coffer for containing jewels. Taylor goes on to argue that Nashe's reading of Cornelius Agrippa (which Shakespeare is not known to have read) confirms Nashe's presence in 1H6 rather than Shakespeare, here using exactly the same argument as Harlow had used to demonstrate Shakespeare rather than Nashe for a different source text, North as opposed to Taylor's Agrippa.

Taylor is obviously immune to a sense of critical *déjà-vu*. He is also apparently immune to argument. Ignoring Harlow's point (which in fact follows Taylor's favourite scholar McKerrow) that there is no evidence of Nashe having read Henry Howard's Defensative before Dec. 1592 (hence its absence from Pierce Penniless (published Aug 1592), Strange News and Summers Last Will)and the fact that Shakespeare is later known to have used Howard for Macbeth, Antony and possibly Hamlet, Taylor asserts the 'stronger claim' of Nashe--given his obvious use of Howard in The Terrors of the Night--a text the date of which is debatable and which is precisely unique in its use of Howard

around 1592. Taylor also groundlessly goes on to state, as if it was analytic fact, that Shakespeare hadn't read Howard by 1592. He adduces no proof for this statement and makes no attempt to answer Harlow's point that "the dramatist in fact took more from A Defensative than he could have taken second hand from Nashe" (Harlow 276-281). This means that either Nashe wrote the passage in 1H6 or someone else did, but that from the mere similarities between Nashe, Howard and 1H6 there is no unarguable evidence for the authorship of Nashe as Taylor would have us presume.

There is reason to believe, as Eric Sams has argued, that The Terrors of The Night is a text which explicitly opposes itself to the kind of unlearned, plagiaristic and populist text as exemplified by 1H6 (Sams 71-78). Both Taylor and Harlow omit any mention in their articles to the subject matter of Terrors --an omission which oddly constricts the reader's understanding of Nashe's pamphlet in the context of its time. Sams argues that Nashe's mention of the "10,000 spectators, at least", in Pierce Penniless is an obedient response by Nashe to the indictment of "an upstart crowe" in Greene's Groatsworth of Witte which attests (rather as does Jonson's Prologue) to the popularity of a new kind of English historical theatre not written (or acknowledged) by the "University Wits". The Terrors of The Night and The Preface to Menaphon also contain, as Sams observes, a sustained attack on the new breed of undereducated upstarts who have had "some little sprinkling of Grammer learning in their youth" (Sams 74). Though of course there is no direct mention of Shakespeare (or Kyd for that matter though his presence seems implied by other references to law-clerks), Sams' reading of Nashe must compel the critic to at least take a fresh look at the old textual battle grounds and to shift his gaze from the verbal echoes between texts back to the actual meaning and apparent intention of a text. That Nashe also connects the pre-Shakespearean drama The Famous Victories of Henry V with the new drama is perhaps also significant given its acknowledged use by Shakespeare for his more famous reworking of the earlier play.

By part IV of Taylor's article then, the skeptical reader must surely have good reason to doubt the conclusiveness of Taylor's assertion that "The earlier part of

this essay has shown, I hope and believe, that the author of act 1 <u>Part One</u> did not write the rest of the play, and did not write the rest of the Shakespeare canon" (Taylor 177).Given the reasonable doubt present in our critical court as to the coherence of Taylor's "initial pattern", we might also wish to be reminded of Taylor's own admission that "It remains true that the burden of proof rests, as always, upon the disintegrators" (Taylor 153). If so, it would appear that Taylor's case may require greater substantial proof without perhaps the burden of his rhetorical and assuming prose.

[The following charts are intended to show the amount of shared vocabulary between a single (arbitrarily selected) scene in <u>The First part of Henry the Sixt</u> and that of several other Shakespearean and Non-Shakespearean texts. The charts have been compiled from various texts and introductions (particularly that of H.C. Hart's 1909 edition of the <u>Henry VI</u> plays) and are neither entirely original nor complete. The charts hopefully make it evident however that given the common currency of a Renaissance dramatist's words and textual resources, the mere presence of a word or phrase in a particular text is in no obvious way indicative of its author, date or originality. Despite this apparently contingent dramatic vocabulary however, certain plays do share quite distinctive and poetic literary resources which critics before Taylor (and his methodology) had always assumed must add to rather than detract from our knowledge of the language of the early English dramatists]

King Henry VI Part One: Texts /Chronology/ Connections
(1HVI Act I, Scene ii).

Author: -	Text:	Date/ Pub	*Connection:*
G. Peele	Farewell To Generals	1589	**1H6 (I.ii. 139) 'Caesar and his fortune';** **Peele: 'You bear…Caesar and Caesar's fortune in your ships'. (Hart p25)**
G. Peele (?) (worse than Peele ?)	Jack Straw (anon) (Hazlitt's Dodsley, v.393 Hart, p18)	S.R Oct. 23, 1593.	**1H6 (I.ii. 43) - 'they hold out so';***Straw:* **'if the world hold out…'**
G. Peele	An Eclogue Gratulatory (Dyce.Ed. Routledge, 562,b. Hart pxx)	1589	**1H6 (I.ii. 77 &79) - 'sun's parching heat'; Peele: '…summer's parching heat'. Characteristically Peele's. (Hart)** **-Compare: *Lucrece: 1145*.**
	David And Bethsabe (Hart p18,20)		**1H6 (I.ii.54) - 'drive the English forth'; Peele: '… and threw her forth his doors' (474,b). Compare 2H6 (III.ii.89) 'from'.** **1H6 (I.ii. 57) - 'What's past and what's to come'; Peele: ' Behold things present and record things past; /But things to come exceed our human reach.'(484,a)** **1H6 (I.ii.136) - 'the English circle**

Author:	Text:	Date/Pub	*Connection:*
	-See Marlowe: Hart p25)		**ends …'; Peele: '…in this life his circle must be closed.' (480,a)**
	Peele's Pageant "Louely London"; (line: 1585?)		1H6 (I.ii.77)- 'parching'; Peele: 'parching zone'
Peele (?)	Edward I (Dyce. 406, b; Hart p24) (see Marlowe)		**1H6 (I.ii.129)- 'assign'd… to be the English scourge'; Peele: 'proud queen… The scourge of England…'**
Marlowe:	Tamburlaine Part II. Tamburlaine Part I.	1587 (?)	1H6 (I.ii.10-11) - 'dieted like mules… provender tied to their mouths'; Marlowe; 'I'll have you learn to feed on provender / And in a stable lie' (III.v.106) 1H6 (I.ii.129) - 'assign'd to be the English scourge'; Marlowe: 'the scum of men, the hate and scourge of God…' (IV.iii. 1586). -See also Grafton: XXXII/Hart p35.
Author: -	Text:	Date/Pub	*Connection:*

Marlowe	Tamburlaine Part 1	1587 (?)	**1H6 (I.ii.136) - 'the English circle ends'; Marlowe: 'The loathsome circle of my dated life' (II.vi)**
Golding	Metamorphosis		**1H6 (I.ii.48) - 'appaled'/ 'appall'/ 'appale';** **Meta: (ii.190, viii. 671; Hart p19)** **1H6 (I.ii. 84) - 'swart';** **Meta: (xii.463. Hart p21.)** **1H6 (I.ii. 37) - 'hare-brain'd';** **Ovid: 'hairbraind head' & 'hairbrainde blab'; (1567) (Hart p17)**
Shakespeare	Troilus and Cressida	1603/ 1609	**1H6 (I.ii.1-2) - 'Mars his true moving';** **TC: (III.i.240) 'Let Mars divide eternity in twain'; 'drove great Mars to faction' (III.iii.184); 'By great Mars…' (IV.Vii.82); 'red as Mars his heart inflamed with Venus' (V.ii.167); etc** **1H6 (I.ii.57) - 'What's past and what's to come';** **TC: (IV.v.(Oxf.vi.88)166)**
	The Tempest	F. 1623.	**1H6 (I.ii.1-2) - 'Mars his true moving';** **T: (IV.i. 98) -'Mars's hot minion'**
	Hamlet	1602/ 1603	**1H6 (I.ii.1-2) - 'Mars his true moving';** **H: (II.ii.493) 'On Mars his**

		(?)	**armour…'** **1H6 (I.ii. 9) - 'They want their porridge…'; Q1: 'I want my porridge…' (1238-1248)**
	Taming of [sic]Shrew	1594/ F.1623 (?)	**1H6 (I.ii. 52) - 'mad-brain'd';** **TS: (III.ii.165)** **1H6 (I.ii. 71) - 'takes upon her'; T[T]S: (III.ii.216; & IV.ii.108) & T[A]S: Hart p21)**
	Timon of Athens	F.1623	**1H6 (I.ii. 52) - 'mad-brain'd';** **TA: (V.i.177)**
	Richard III	1597	**1H6 (I.ii. 25]) - 'homicide' (only in 1H6 RIII & corruptly in 1H4).**
Author: -	Text:	Date/Pub	*Connection:*
Shakespeare	1Henry VI	1592(?)	**1H6 (I.ii. 35) - 'rascals';** **1H4: (II.iv.383) / AYLI: (III.iii.58) /** **Coriolanus: (I.i.163).** **1H6 [I.ii.37] - 'hare-brain'd'; - Hall's*Chronicle Henry V* spelling. Also in Golding, Chaucer (Hart p17)** **1H4: (V.ii.19)**
	2Henry VI	1623/	**1H6 (I.ii. 54) - 'forth'; 2H6**

	and/or The First Part of The Contention	1594	**(III.ii.89)** **1H6 (I.ii. 126) - 'recreant';** **2H6 (IV.vii.28)**
	2Henry VI and/or The First Part of The Contention	1623/ 1594	**1H6 (I.ii.138) - 'proud insulting ship'; (passage but not words from Plutarch)** **2H6 'proud insulting queen…'/ '…boy' (II.i.168) & (II.ii.84) -*See also:-*** **-1H6 (IV.vii.19) 'insulting tyranny'** **-1H6 [IV. Vii. 88] 'proud commanding'**
	3Henry VI and/or The True Tragedie	1623/ 1595	**1H6 (I.ii. 38) - 'eager'; -3H6 (I.iv.3)** **1H6 (I.ii.43) - 'hold out'; 3H6 (II.vi.24)** **1H6 (I.ii.104) - 'Amazon';** **3H6 (IV.i.106) & (I.iv.114)** **1H6 (I.ii.138) - 'proud insulting;** **3H6 (V.v.17): 'proud ambitious'** **1H6 (I.ii. 145) - 'reverently';** **3H6 (II.ii. 109)**
	Rape Of Lucrece	1593	**1H6 (I.ii.77) - 'parching heat';** **Lucrece: 1145.**
	Comedy Of	F.1623	**1H6 (I.ii.84) - 'swart';**

	Errors		**CE: (III, ii, 104);**
	King John	F.1623/ 1591(?)	**1H6 (1.ii.84) - 'swart';** **KJ: (III, I, 46)**
<u>Author:</u>	<u>Text:</u>	<u>Date/Pub</u>	*<u>Connection:</u>*
Spenser	The Faerie Queene Hart (pxxvi-xxvii)	1580-1590	**1H6 (I.ii.16) - 'in fretting spend his gall';** **FQ: 'wast his inward gall with deep despight' (I.ii.6)** **FQ: 'did consume his gall with anguish sore' (III.x.18)** **1H6 (I.ii.35) - 'lean raw-boned rascals';** **FQ: 'rawbone armes' / 'rawbone cheekes'** **(I.viii.41 / I.ix.35)** **1H6 (I.ii.148) - 'and be immortalized';**

			FQ: 'Whose living hands immortalizd his name' (II. Viii.13). 1H6 (I.ii. 95) - 'buckle with'; FQ: 'buckle to fight/ buckle to field'; (I.vi.41, I.viii.7)

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First Response

Marcus Dahl raises a number of probing questions about assumptions underlying the current orthodoxy on the Henry VI plays. It's not the place here to mount a defence of Taylor's position, but it is clear that when such a defence is mounted, "plausibility" will be one of the major battlefields. To take just one example,

could a sixteenth/seventeenth-century playwright have followed an accomplished solo play --3H6--with a technically clumsy collaborative one--1H6 (granting for the moment all the attached premises about artistic skill being an objectively observable phenomenon)? Dahl describes this idea as implausible, but any academic who has engaged in extensive collaborative work may disagree.

One thing that Dahl puts beyond question is that the names attached to these plays need to be considered with great care--just look at the assumptions of order and organization embedded in the names given to two of them in my previous paragraph. Therefore, one might consider the following, not completely frivolous idea: all the texts involved should be given entirely arbitrary names. Thus, the First Part of the Contention is "the red text"; the Folio the Second Part of King Henry the Sixth is "the yellow text". The conflation of the two used by Taylor could be usefully described as "the orange text". And so on and so forth through the other texts involved, both "real"--preserved in a period document--and "reconstructed".

This incongruous-seeming method is not intuitive, but since the intuitive assumptions built into the choice of names form part of the problem, that's actually a good thing. In the case of e-journal articles, it would even be possible to colour-code all the quotations used in the article. It would serve to remind all concerned that textual assumptions about these plays are founded, ultimately, on extrapolations from a small number of surviving products of the Renaissance printing press.