

Student Work

9-1-2001

Eleanor of Aquitaine: The woman behind the character in James Goldman's The Lion in Winter

Charleen J. B. Willoughby

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>

Recommended Citation

Willoughby, Charleen J. B., "Eleanor of Aquitaine: The woman behind the character in James Goldman's The Lion in Winter" (2001). *Student Work*. 3094.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/3094>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.



**ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE:
THE WOMAN BEHIND THE CHARACTER
IN JAMES GOLDMAN'S
*THE LION IN WINTER***

A Thesis-Equivalent Project

Presented to the

Department of Theatre

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Dramatic Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Charleen J. B. Willoughby

September 2001

UMI Number: EP74492

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP74492

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

THESIS-EQUIVALENT PROJECT
ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in Theatre,
University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

James J. Lamb

Douglas Peterson

Chairperson *Cindy Melby Phares*

Date *11-15-01*

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE: THE WOMAN BEHIND
THE CHARACTER IN JAMES GOLDMAN'S
THE LION IN WINTER

Charleen J. B. Willoughby, MA

University of Nebraska, 2001

Advisor: Dr. Cindy Melby Phaneuf

This paper explores the development of the character Eleanor of Aquitaine in James Goldman's *The Lion in Winter*. The first chapter provides a brief survey of the major changes and trends of the twelfth century which might have had an impact on the life of the historical Eleanor. A brief sketch of the major events in her life which are referenced in Goldman's script follow, including: her family history, her marriage to Louis VI of France, the Second Crusade, scandal, divorce, her second marriage to Henry II of England, the fruitfulness of their union, Henry's infidelity with Rosamund Clifford, Eleanor's revenge through insurrection, her subsequent imprisonment, the rebellion of Henry and Eleanor's sons, the death of Henry's heir, the subsequent contention for the throne,

more rebellion and insurrection, Henry's attempt at peace, and Eleanor's eventual freedom.

The second chapter analyzes Eleanor's relationships with the other characters according to Goldman's script. The previous chapter on the historical Eleanor helps to inform the textual analysis by referencing their relationships in history.

The third chapter contains an in-depth, scene by scene analysis of her character, motivations, and actions using the archetypes Queen, Warrior, Magician, and Lover. Tracking the rapid changes in dominant archetypal traits provides for deeper understanding of her motivation and through-line.

The final chapter contains analysis and reflections of the rehearsal process and performance. Personal observations comment on the internal work of creating the character, as well as the external manifestations (ie. the physical characterization and vocal choices).

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: ELEANOR IN HISTORY

The Twelfth Century

Eleanor's Early Life

Cultural influences

Family history

Queen of France

Paris

The Crusade

Annulment

Queen of England

The Courts of Love

Wife and mother

Rosamund

Insurrection

Confinement

Freedom

CHAPTER 2: ELEANOR'S ACTION IN GOLDMAN'S SCRIPT

Thematic Look at the Play

Eleanor's Relationships with the Other
Characters

Eleanor's Motivations and Through-line

CHAPTER 3: THE ARCHETYPAL ELEANOR

Scene by Scene Analysis of Eleanor's Actions
Using the Archetypes Queen, Magician,
Warrior, and Lover

CHAPTER 4: REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Observations on the Character of Eleanor

Observations on the Rehearsal Process

Self Critique of Process and Performance

CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The character of Eleanor of Aquitaine in James Goldman's *The Lion in Winter* reveals a mature, manipulative and strong-willed woman living in a man's world run by men's rules. Of the many roles I have portrayed at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, two in particular have similar characteristics to those of Eleanor: Nurse Ratched in Wasserman's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and Clytemnestra in Sophocles' *Electra*. Both women had to learn how to survive in societies dominated by male values. They not only survived, but also thrived in environments for which they reinterpreted societal norms to suit themselves; Eleanor did as well.

The character of Eleanor offers the opportunity to examine the role of a mature, intelligent, manipulative, witty, strong, sensitive, and vulnerable woman who is able to persevere through an extremely dangerous point in her life. What appeals most about this character is her vulnerability and appearance of defeat which she manages to turn to her own advantage. These moments of weakness offer an opportunity to find Eleanor's inner strength that allows her to pull out of despair to fight for what she wants one

more time. This exploration of transforming despair into determination, weakness into strength, and vulnerability into perseverance is a valuable opportunity for an actor to challenge and improve her acting abilities.

My other area of interest is history, particularly the history of England. Having studied the era of English history in which Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine played such important parts, I have become fascinated by the story of Eleanor's life. She managed to directly influence three English kings and one French king during her long and industrious life in an age when women were placed on pedestals and were bought and sold with marriage contracts. By further exploring Eleanor's role as wife, as mother, as queen, and as politician, I hope to determine whether family loyalties dictated political decisions or whether political aspirations took precedence over familial relationships.

Information acquired through historical research can aid in character analysis. The more one can learn and understand about the time in which these historic figures lived, the better one will be able to flesh out the character of Eleanor in this play. The events which occurred during her lifetime--the music, religious climate, political philosophy, and social customs--will all have a bearing on character development. By understanding the time

in which she lived, an actor's portrayal can be greatly enriched.

In the twelfth century, Eleanor, even though she was a woman, wielded tremendous influence. Born into an age ruled by men and for men, she held her own among the most powerful. She must have had a very dynamic personality, a vast intelligence, and an incredible fortitude to achieve the place which she holds in history. Yet one cannot help but wonder how her sense of identity as a woman, a wife, a queen, and a mother suffered and altered through the emotional and psychological trials she endured. Of course, the extent of Eleanor's need for power and control and the degree to which she chafed under male domination can only be subject to speculation. For a woman to be so successful in this time, she must have been both cunning and circumspect, as well as forceful and imposing. An actor may be able to use historical facts to surmise her emotional, psychological, and spiritual states of being at a given time. The ability to marry these traits into a character while also showing her feminine side was the ultimate challenge for me as an actor. One must convincingly incorporate the force of Eleanor's presence into the portrayal, as well as the sensitivity and vulnerability of her position as a woman, a mother, and a wife.

First and foremost Eleanor was a woman. In fact, Goldman describes her in his play as "a genuinely feminine woman thoroughly capable of holding her own in a man's world" (11). She was also twice a Queen and the Duchess of the largest, most productive (and most rebellious) duchy in what is present-day France. She held the respect and admiration of her subjects and the adoration of poets and troubadours. Her ceaseless endeavors to live her life to the fullest brought her the condemnations of clergy and contemporary chroniclers; despite such prejudice, however, Eleanor remains one of the most interesting, influential, and admirable women history has to offer.

This paper is written from my perspective as an actor. Throughout the journey of creating my interpretation of the role of Eleanor of Aquitaine, I followed a logical progression which is the basis for this paper. Beginning with historical research of her life and the era in which she lived, I developed a basic understanding of who she was as an individual. While Goldman may have referenced history in his play, the play itself is not an historical drama. The individuals did exist in the twelfth century, but the characters and their interactions in the play are fictional; therefore, an analysis of the text and exploration of the character is vital to the creation of the role.

The first chapter begins with a brief historical survey of important trends and changes which occurred during the twelfth century. This survey is not intended to detail the twelfth-century Renaissance, but is only intended to provide a broad introduction to the time in which Eleanor lived. The rest of the chapter provides a compressed biography outlining the important events in Eleanor's life which James Godman used in his script. I include the historical examination as an auxiliary tool for character analysis.

Chapter Two examines Eleanor's action in the script through textual references. Her interactions with the other characters, her motivations, and her through-line are explored through the Samuel French acting edition of *The Lion in Winter*.

Chapter Three provides a scene by scene analysis of Eleanor's actions using the archetypes King/Queen, Warrior, Magician, and Lover. These archetypes were explored in the advanced acting studio Ensemble: Myth and Ritual. Each archetype encompasses certain traits which may be found in many characters and many plays. The King/Queen embodies leadership and decision-making; Warrior owns competition and endurance; Magician houses self-awareness and spirituality; and Lover embraces passion and vulnerability. The chapter provides a fuller exploration of the archetypes

and their possible influence on Eleanor's motivations.

The last chapter is a reflection and analysis of my progress through the rehearsal process and the production. Since a play is produced through a collaborative effort, my acting choices, both internal and external, are discussed and examined through my interactions with the director and the other actors, as well as through analysis of the script.

CHAPTER 1

Eleanor in History

Eleanor of Aquitaine was a major figure in France and England during the twelfth century. As the most prominent woman of her time, she directly influenced four kings during her long and industrious life in an age where women were bought and sold through politically motivated arranged marriages. During the twelfth century, after the first crusade, a gradual change in the collective world vision occurred, marked by a shift from narrow provincial views of life to wider international ones. As towns and cities grew in size and importance, they became the focus for an expanded cultural awareness of humanity in relation to trade, religious beliefs, nature, and art. The crusaders brought influences from the east back to their homelands. Trade flourished and brought new trends in architecture, art, dress, and literature. Greek philosophers were adapted into church doctrine, and new material goods and scientific ideas were discovered among the Muslims. Soaring buttresses and ribbed vaulting became more elaborate and complex. Minstrels and bards composed fewer songs of heroic deeds

done in battle and began to compose songs inspired by feminine delights, love, and beauty. Troubadours changed the course of Western literature, glorifying life and asserting the individual personality and a cult of the senses. Joy and honor were the supreme ends of life as embodied in the cult of woman and the ideal of courtly love. The code of chivalry blossomed into its fullest fruition and became the standard and ideal in knightly deportment.

The stirrings of religious unrest which began in this century climaxed in a struggle between ecclesiastic and secular rule. It was an age of intellectual rebirth, the turn from Romanesque to the Gothic in art, the rise of urban culture, the birth of great cities, and the beginning of the end of feudalism. Money became the medium of exchange with the rise of a merchant middle class. Nation-states began to emerge along the lines of geography, language, and ethnic heritage with a gradual consolidation of power among the most powerful lords. The rise of vernacular writings, love poetry, and literary fiction were signs of a great European revival, culminating in an age of great historians, philosophers, and humanists. As David Knowles states in *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*, it was the "intellectual and psychological adolescence" of the new races of Europe (83).

It was an age of greatness. In romance, Heloise and Abelard were the Romeo and Juliet of the twelfth century. In statesmanship, Thomas Becket was King Henry II's chancellor and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was murdered, some say, at the king's insistence. In prowess of arms, William Marshall was the most loyal and renowned knight of two kingdoms. In religion, St. Bernard of Clairvaux and Abbot Sugar were polar opposites of the church (fanatical faith and political ambition, respectively). In music and poetry, Ventadour and Bertran de Born were bards of love who helped change the course of literature. It was the age of Philip Augustus of France, and Eleanor's four kings: Louis VII of France, Henry II of England, Richard Coeur-de-Lion, and John Lackland.

Eleanor knew all these individuals, some of them quite well; she knew all the great cities--Paris, Bordeaux, Poitiers, London, Antioch, Rome, Byzantium, and Jerusalem. She was at the heart of the feud between the Capets and the Plantagenets which led to the Hundred Years War that raged long after her death. She was the most beautiful, the richest, the most powerful, the most fascinating, scandalous, and notorious woman of her age.

Eleanor was born c. 1122 in the southern region of France known as the Aquitaine. When her brother died in 1130, Eleanor stood to inherit the Duchy of Aquitaine from

her father, Duke William X, upon his death if he did not beget another son. While feudal law allowed for succession of property and title to devolve on a daughter in lieu of no existing male heirs, this alternative proved problematic. A woman could not properly fulfill the obligations of vassalage with regard to military service (Meade 28). An unprotected woman (no father, no husband) became fair game for abduction and forcible marriage by any robber baron who would, thereby, gain control over her property. Aware of the danger to Eleanor, William X asked the King of France, Louis VI, to make Eleanor the king's ward, find her a suitable husband, and grant his protection over her inheritance--the Aquitaine.

The Aquitaine stretched from the river Loire to the foothills of the Pyrenees and from the heights of Auvergne to the western ocean. Amy Kelly, in her book *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings*, describes the land as

. . . wider and fairer than than that of her overlord, the King of France himself; ampler and more gracious than the counties which the Duke of Normandy held north of the Loire; richer and more genial than the island of Britain. . . . The fief of the duchess [Eleanor] was rich and desirable in itself; but its special importance was that its addition, through the marriage of its heiress

to any other domain in western Europe, would raise that domain to preëminence over all the others (4).

Louis, overjoyed at this golden opportunity to increase his family's holdings with the acquisition of the Aquitaine, proceeded to arrange the marriage of Eleanor to his son and heir, Louis Capet (soon to be Louis VII). When Louis wed Eleanor, her lands doubled the holdings of direct French influence; when they divorced, her lands went with her.

During her fifteen year marriage to Louis, Eleanor bore two daughters, but no sons; no sons meant no heir to the French throne. Some in the French court believed the marriage offended God because of close blood ties between Eleanor and Louis (they were fourth cousins). Others believed that Louis's predilection toward an austere and pious life kept the marriage bed cold and infrequently used. Louis VII had originally been destined for the church, not the throne, until his older brother, the Crown Prince Philip, died. Because his early vocation for religious austerity remained with him throughout his life, one may speculate that he was an indifferent and infrequent lover for Eleanor. In his book, *Eleanor of Aquitaine*, Curtis Howe Walker quotes William of Newburgh's alleged rendering of Eleanor's words: "I thought I had married a

king, . . . but I find I have married a monk" (80). Eleanor was not happy as Queen of France.

In an attempt to find common ground with Louis, Eleanor accompanied him on the Second Crusade, but after several disasters (which chroniclers attributed to Eleanor but offered no proof of her alleged indiscretions) they became estranged. Among the many rumors which surfaced from the fiasco of the Second Crusade, one alleged Eleanor's infidelity with her Uncle Raymond of Antioch, and another alleged an asignation with the Muslim Prince Saladin (who was only twelve years old at the time). Once back in France, more rumors linked the French queen intimately with Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou after he appeared with his son and heir, Henry, before the court to settle a dispute and renew their fealty. This court appearance was the first time Eleanor saw Henry. He was young, eighteen, and robust with a warrior's body and a poet's mind. The author believes that they became enamored at first sight. One may conjecture that an agreement was formed between the two of them almost immediately.

After she met Henry and his father Geoffrey, Eleanor worked to divorce Louis. She cleverly manipulated her enemies at the French court to persuade the religious Louis that their marriage was consanguinous, therefore a sacrilege, and needed to be dissolved. Louis was reluctant

to end the marriage because even through all the fighting and bitterness, the childless years and rumors of infidelity, Louis still loved his wife. Eventually he relented and agreed to the dissolution. Eight weeks after the divorce was final, Eleanor married Henry of Anjou, soon to be Henry II, King of England.

The speed with which this marriage occurred infers prior knowledge and planning between Eleanor and Henry. One may speculate on their mutual choice for spouse. Eleven years his senior, Eleanor was attracted by his youth, vigor, virility, and prospects. Henry was attracted by her beauty, intelligence, dynamic presence, and inheritance. The age difference may not have played a part in his consideration of her for a wife because his mother, the Empress Matilda, was eleven years older than his father, Geoffrey Plantagenet. Perhaps Henry assumed he would be able to control Eleanor as his father controlled his mother. Perhaps Eleanor assumed she could dominate and influence Henry because of his youth. Whatever their assumptions, she proved quite fertile with the virile Henry; she bore him five sons and three daughters. Their union precipitated the feud between the Capets of France and the Plantagenets of England which led to the Hundred Years War, and their progeny eventually ruled in every major kingdom from England to Castille to France to the

Holy Roman Empire.

It seems entirely probable that Eleanor and Henry shared more than a mutual physical attraction; they shared more than a quest for power and prestige: They shared a deep and abiding love for one another. Their love, however, could not withstand their overriding ambition or Henry's overactive libido. Of his many mistresses--both prior to and after becoming King of England--Rosamund Clifford was perhaps the most famous. He began his affair with Rosamund in 1166 while Eleanor was pregnant with John, their last child. Henry flaunted the relationship. After Eleanor's thwarted rebellion in 1173 and subsequent imprisonment, Henry lived openly with Rosamund until her death in 1177. Eleanor appears in several tales recounting Rosamund's mysterious demise, but contrary to popular legend, Eleanor could not, herself, have possibly killed Rosamund; Eleanor was securely in prison at the time of Rosamund's death (Kelly 152). Some historians speculate that Rosamund was, perhaps, the one true and abiding love of Henry's life, while Eleanor provided only a means to an end--power.

It is possible that Henry's affair with Rosamund pushed Eleanor toward revenge, or perhaps she was angry and frustrated over the gradual erosion of her power, or a combination of both which led Eleanor toward rebellion. After bearing eight children in thirteen years and enduring

Henry's many infidelities, Eleanor, hurt and vengeful, plotted insurrection. Eleanor had tremendous influence over her three oldest sons: Young Henry (Henry II's heir), Richard (her personal favorite), and Geoffrey. She manipulated their greed and ambition for power to her own advantage and to Henry's detriment.

In 1169 (three years after the start of his affair with Rosamund), at Montmirail, Henry II strove to allay Louis' growing fear of an Angevin empire (referring to the province of Anjou) while at the same time, he strove to provide for the future obedience of his vassals to his sons by assigning certain provinces to his three oldest (Warren 108, 110). Young Henry received the inheritance of England, Normandy, and Anjou. Richard received Eleanor's duchy of Aquitaine, which he held as a direct vassal of the King of France, and betrothed Alais, Louis' daughter from his second marriage. Geoffrey received the duchy of Brittany as a vassal of Young Henry (109). In 1170, following the tradition of the French court, Henry II crowned Young Henry, his appointed heir, king during his own lifetime in an effort to ensure a peaceful transition upon the elder's death. Unfortunately for both Henrys, the elder did not give the younger any real power or means of support which resulted in Young Henry's constant attempts to overthrow his father. Although it appeared that Henry II had divided

his lands equitably between his sons, the youngest son, John, received nothing, and the other three were not granted the right to truly govern their provinces, nor were they granted the means to collect income from them. These circumstances provided Henry's wife and sons an atmosphere ripe for insurrection.

In 1173, Young Henry demanded the right to fully rule over England, Normandy, or Anjou. Henry II suspected that Louis was behind this outrageous demand. His suspicions deepened when he received warning about a plot to depose him which implicated members of his family. "His desire to ensure the peaceful succession of his sons by having them recognized in the lordships they were to inherit was being used against him. King Henry II was in danger of becoming a King Lear" (Warren 118).

Henry II was forced to war with those whom he most loved. After a year of grievous losses to both sides, peace negotiations were concluded, and Henry reconciled with his sons. Henry's magnanimity, however, did not extend to his scheming queen. Henry's forces captured Eleanor while she attempted to flee disguised as a man. Stripped of her freedom and any semblance of power, Eleanor remained Henry's prisoner from 1173 until his death in 1189. Toward the end of his life, Henry allowed Eleanor some freedom of movement (as long as the boys were not actively rebelling).

Although the first, and biggest, rebellion ended with Eleanor's capture and imprisonment, Young Henry did not stop there. During the first ten years of Eleanor's confinement, her sons continued to war with each other and with Henry. This decade of strife culminated with Young Henry's death in June of 1183. After many double-dealings, double-crosses, and betrayals, Young Henry contracted a fever from dysentery and died during his last conflict with his father. Despite Young Henry's repeated betrayals, Henry II was devastated at the news of his son's death. Denied most communication from outside the walls of her prison, Eleanor, having no prior knowledge of her son's death, allegedly had a dream in which she saw the young king laid to rest on his funeral bier (Kelly 222). She had loved her son very much and became distraught upon hearing the news of his death.

Young Henry's passing left a void in the succession, and it is at this point that several historical events converge to constitute the events which occur in *The Lion in Winter*. History points to John as being Henry's favorite son, second only to Young Henry, while Richard was least favored, due in part to Eleanor's influence. The rules of primogeniture, where succession immediately devolves to the next eldest male heir, had yet to be codified, so Richard was not automatically the next in line to the

throne. Although no historical evidence exists to support Goldman's plot for Henry to invest the succession on John, Goldman's assumptions are credible based upon Henry's actions and inactions.

While most of England and France assumed Richard would be the next heir, Henry did not name Richard or anyone else to succeed him. Henry remained quiet in an effort to prevent what had happened with Young Henry from happening again. From these ingredients come the plot of the play--three sons who all want to be king.

In December 1183, King Henry of England and King Philip of France met to discuss the disposition of a piece of land known as the Vexin. The Vexin was a frontier area bordering Normandy and France. Both the Plantagenets and the French kings considered this area as vital to their defenses. Henry II's father lost it to Louis VII; it returned to the Plantagenets as the dowery of Young Henry's wife, Marguerite of France. After Young Henry's death, the elder Henry retained her dowery even though Philip wanted it back. Eventually the Vexin became entangled with the Alais/Richard/Henry II triangle which is explored in the play.

Henry never intended for the wedding between Richard and Alais to take place. He believed that Richard would have too much power with the French king as a brother-in-

law. Instead, Henry connived to wed Alais to John. Amy Kelly observes in *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings*: "When they came to the matter of Alais, Henry promised [Philip] that, if she were not forthwith wedded to [Richard], she should shortly be married to John. . . . Did this mean that John was designated by this alliance as heir of England? . . ." (229). Henry's evasions concerning Alais could be interpreted to mean that Henry planned to get rid of Eleanor through an appeal to the Pope, disinherit all his sons, marry Alais himself, and sire a new generation of sons who would succeed him (192-193). Alais's fate remained in doubt until after Richard's ascension to the throne, at which time she faded into obscurity.

Henry was not fond of Richard, but he respected and admired him. Eleanor held too much influence over Richard for Henry to ever get close. After the young king died, Henry turned his affection toward John, the youngest of his sons. Henry never truly considered Geoffrey for the throne. Besides being the evil conniving schemer that he was, Geoffrey died in 1186, leaving behind a pregnant wife who bore a son, Arthur, who was to give John trouble in the early 1200s.

Henry did, however, appoint Geoffrey to take control of Normandy which suggested that he might install Geoffrey as his heir. Henry then ordered Richard to relinquish the

Aquitaine to John, which Richard refused to do. Richard's adamant refusal prompted Henry, in a fit of rage, to suggest that John and Geoffrey unite against Richard, which they did. Richard retaliated by invading Brittany. Henry, realizing the rashness of his remark, recalled all his sons to Westminster in November of 1184 to redistribute future holdings and bring about a binding and lasting peace between the boys. From Westminster, the court traveled to Windsor to celebrate Christmas. Henry required Eleanor's presence and influence over their sons at this court, so he released her, temporarily, from confinement. Henry demanded that Eleanor persuade Richard to give John the Aquitaine which she refused to do. Henry then tried himself to persuade Richard to part with some pittance of his inheritance so John would have some property of his own. Stalling for time, Richard appeared to think it over, but fled in the dead of night. He rode for his own provinces from whence he sent word to Henry that he would never part with what was rightfully his. Although peace remained elusive, Eleanor seemed to have enjoyed a lessening of confinement until Henry's death in 1189 when Richard ultimately ascended to England's throne and freed her. From 1189 until her death in 1204, Eleanor had tremendous influence and power over the reigns of Richard and John, but the continuation of her tale is not relevant to this

discourse.

Having examined an abbreviated version of Eleanor's life as found in the history books, the discussion turns now to *The Lion in Winter* and Eleanor's action in the script.

CHAPTER 2

Eleanor's Action in Goldman's Script

James Goldman did not intend for *The Lion in Winter* to be an historical play, although he loosely based it on a period in the lives of Henry II of England; his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine; their three sons Richard, Geoffrey, and John; Philip Augustus, King of France; and his sister Alais. These individuals did indeed exist in the twelfth century; they were father and sons, wife and mother, fiancé and mistress, Kings and Queen of England and France; they fought and negotiated, rebelled and reconciled. Yet the details of their relationships, their intimacies and emotions, can only be surmised. While the substance and quality of their interactions are not found in history, the circumstances and outcomes of their relationships are. Goldman also wrote the screenplay of the same title which won Katherine Hepburn an Oscar for her portrayal of Eleanor. In talking about his screenplay, Goldman states:

The film is only apparently historical. It is founded on the few facts we have. . . . The content of these relationships, the people and

their passions, while consistent with the facts, are my own invention. Both the content and the style are entirely contemporary, because the people are so. . . . The conflicts of will between the kings and princes of *The Lion in Winter* are contemporary because they are universal. (*The Lion in Winter: An Avco Embassy Film... n.p.*)

Goldman used historical fact as the underlying support structure on which he built his characters. Once they were established in fact, Goldman used conjecture and imagination to create living, breathing, passionate characters who are accessible to a contemporary audience.

If one were to view this play with the anticipation of seeing a grand historical pageant unfold on the stage, one would probably be disappointed. Goldman's play, while ostensibly about the twelfth-century succession of the English monarchy, contains many themes which speak to the audience of today: the breakdown of family bonds and family love; the polarity between love and ambition/greed; the corruption of power; the generation gap between father and sons; and the destructive power of love through jealousy and pride. Perhaps Anthony Harvey, director of the film version, comes closest to a central theme with his comments on the script found in *The Lion in Winter: An Avco Embassy*

Film: "I found it extraordinary in its penetrating observations of loneliness and the failure of human beings to communicate at the most vital moments of their lives" (n.p.). Failure to communicate, failure to connect, love, ambition, power, pride, jealousy, loneliness--all of these ideas have been archetypal themes of drama from ancient Greece to modern day. All of these themes can be found in *The Lion in Winter*, to wit, one sees that the emphasis of this play must rest, not on the fate of nations, as do most historical plays, but on the interactions and relationships among seven dynamic people whose personal losses and gains far outweigh the losses and gains of a kingdom. The historical survey of the previous chapter serves to outline Eleanor's relationships with the various members of her family. A further analysis of the relationships between the characters of Goldman's play is now in order. All script references originate in the Samuel French acting edition of Goldman's script.

Eleanor has very specific relationships with all the characters with the possible exception of Philip. Eleanor's only interest in Philip is in how he can be used to further her own aims. They share two scenes together, but they have only one brief exchange at his first entrance. She introduces herself with her usual wit, but she does nothing

without a purpose: ". . . I'm Eleanor, who might have been your mother. All the others here you know" (Goldman 13, I. ii). This dig serves to remind Philip of her past "association" with his father, Louis VII of France, for the purpose of throwing him off guard enough to reveal hidden intentions. She watches the following exchange between Henry and Philip like a bird of prey ready to swoop and devour any scrap of information that may be useful. Beyond this scene, Eleanor considers Philip only as a resource for arms and men.

One might assume that as a mother, Eleanor harbors a degree of maternal instinct for her sons, but the script provides scant evidence for such an assumption. Of the three boys, she loves Richard above all, holds John in contempt, and treats Geoffrey with indifference.

Richard, Eleanor's heir and favorite, holds control over the Aquitaine. Unlike her other children, Eleanor kept Richard with her from his early childhood (65, II.i) and raised him amidst the cultural surroundings of her homeland where he learned to love poetry, music, language, and all the other attributes of a chivalrous courtier (29, I.iii). Although she claims to love him more than Henry (28, I.iii), she is more than willing to use and deceive him to gain revenge on Henry.

She wants Richard to succeed Henry on the throne, but

not, perhaps, for his own gratification: she is more interested in thwarting Henry than in securing the throne for Richard. She attempts to use his memories of their past intimacy to push Richard toward returning the Aquitaine to her control, so she can use it as a weapon against Henry. Richard, wary of her intentions, succumbs to her manipulative charms and embraces her almost as a lover when overcome by his emotion for her (29, I.iii).

Eleanor, in her most ruthless act against him, urges Richard to "promise anything" (46, I.v) to Philip to gain his aid against Henry. She does not hesitate to use Richard's homosexuality to her advantage regardless of the pain it causes him; she later calls him an "unnatural animal" when Richard chooses to murder Henry rather than escape imprisonment (78, II.iii). However much love exists between them, her personal ambitions take precedence. She uses Richard as her pawn, and they end up wounding each other out of vengeance and spite.

Eleanor's hostility toward John began during pregnancy when Henry openly flaunted his infidelity with Rosamund Clifford (34, I.iv). She had no influence in his upbringing because they were separated at birth (24, I.iii), and she has been held captive for the majority of his young life. She loathes John's vulgarity, greed, and stupidity and resents the closeness he shares with Henry. On the other

hand, John is her baby, and she regrets their estrangement. She tries three times to forge a connection with John (24, I.iii; 44, I.v; 79, II.iii), but to no avail. Their time for bonding has long since passed.

Geoffrey shares a certain kinship with his mother. Like Eleanor, he is calculating, cunning, and extremely intelligent. He will use anything and anybody to further his own ambition. He is constantly watching, listening, and plotting and can turn with the tide without missing a beat. Geoffrey resents his parents' indifference and continually attempts to attract their notice, while, at the same time, he plays both ends against the middle. Eleanor recognizes much of herself in Geoffrey; therefore, she does not trust him. She knows how his mind works and is well versed in techniques to keep him off balance. In her interactions with Geoffrey, Eleanor treats him with studied indifference (16, I.ii), disdain (25-26, I.iii; 43-44, I.v), contempt (76, II.iii), and grudging respect (26, I.iii; 46, I.v). With the exception of Henry, Eleanor is more wary of Geoffrey than she is of anyone else.

Eleanor's relationship with Alais is complex. Pulled in two different directions, Eleanor both loves her like a daughter and resents her rivalry. For the most part, Eleanor keeps her pain and jealousy hidden, treating Alais with maternal affection and sadness (12-13, I.ii).

Occasionally, however, Eleanor stings her with abrupt reminders of Alais's true place in Henry's plans (17, I.ii; I.iv). Regardless of any warm feelings Eleanor may have for Alais, she does not hesitate to do everything and anything within her power to get Henry back for herself.

Eleanor's relationship with Henry is even more complex than her relationship with Alais. It began when he was eighteen and she was still Queen of France (27, I.iii); he swept her up on a tide of passion which crested and began to ebb around the time of her pregnancy with John. Lusty and virile, Henry, eleven years her junior, had a history of bed-hopping, and through his sexual escapades happened upon one mistress who caught his heart as well as his eye--Rosamund Clifford. His open infatuation with her caused a rift between Eleanor and Henry which never closed (34, I.iv; 59, 65, II.i). To ease her heart's pain, assuage her wounded vanity, and vent her raging jealousy, Eleanor did the one thing for which he could never forgive her: she conspired with her sons against Henry. This action sealed the breach between them; their love for one another became tinged with hate, and their mutual regard and rapprochement turned into suspicious antagonism and opposition. Denied Henry's affection, Eleanor's revenge was to thwart him in the one area he was passionate about--his successor to the throne.

Having examined the relationships between Eleanor and the other characters, the focus now shifts to Eleanor's motivations and through-line. Young Henry's death left a void in the succession. King Henry wants John to succeed him. Eleanor views her reprieve from prison as a chance to thwart Henry's plans and have Richard named as heir. More importantly, she seizes this opportunity to reestablish an intimate connection with Henry. Her overriding goal is to find a way back into Henry's heart and claim him for her own.

Eleanor's relationship with Henry is revealed to the audience before she makes her first entrance. While conversing with his mistress, Alais, in Act I scene 1, Henry refers to Eleanor as "Medusa" and "gorgon." He states:

HENRY. . . . she is not among the things I love.
How many husbands do you know who dungeon up
their wives? I haven't kept the great bitch in
the keep for ten years out of passionate
attachment. (6)

Henry then reveals the major contention between Eleanor and himself:

HENRY. We've no secrets, Eleanor and I. . . . She
knows I want John on the throne and I know she
wants Richard. We are very frank about it. (7)

Henry's cavalier attitude is replaced with something a little more substantial a short while later, however, when he remarks:

HENRY. It's been my luck to fall in love with
landed women. When I married Eleanor, I
thought: 'You lucky man. The richest woman in
the world . . . and beautiful as well.' She
was, you know. (7)

Henry's momentary nostalgia provides the audience with a glimpse of some deeper feeling; a hint of the old passion pushes to the surface for just a moment, then is gone. Does Henry still harbor warm feelings for Eleanor? Does Eleanor have a chance to rekindle the flame of their spent passion? The audience is primed and the stage is set for her first entrance.

In Act I scene 2, Eleanor walks in on her three bickering sons who are apprehensive upon seeing her again. She is genuinely delighted to see them, but after the briefest of personal greetings to each, her focus shifts to Henry. She is almost giddy with anticipation. When Eleanor inquires about Henry's health, John asks if she cares. She replies with a startling moment of complete honesty:

ELEANOR. More deeply, lamb, than you can possibly
imagine. . . . (12)

Eleanor continually covers her true feelings with sarcastic

and acerbic banter, but then, when the audience least suspects it, she reveals her inner truth and shows her vulnerability. Eleanor still cares deeply for Henry.

The script is replete with moments where she hungrily casts about for any information regarding Henry's true feelings for her. He hurts and disappoints her at every turn, but yet, she sees enough of the old spark, the old feeling from time to time to feed her obsession. She covers her own hurt with barbs and darts of poison, thus they continue to wound each other in their macabre dance of position, power, and passion.

In preparation for the role of Eleanor, it is essential for the actor to develop an in-depth analysis of the character. While this chapter provides an overview of her motivations and objectives, much more is needed to fully flesh out the character for the stage. The next chapter provides an innovative and in-depth look at Eleanor in James Goldman's script through the application of universal archetypes in a scene by scene analysis.

CHAPTER 3

The Archetypal Eleanor

The idea for using archetypes as a tool for analysis originated in the advanced acting studio Ensemble: Myth and Ritual created by Dr. Cindy Melby Phaneuf (also director of our production of *The Lion in Winter*). In the class, we examined how the archetypes of King, Warrior, Magician, Lover, and the elements of earth, air, fire, and water could be used to enrich character development. The following are some general attributes of each archetype as explored in the class. The King/Queen archetype embodies qualities of leadership, being in charge, taking responsibility for those who are weaker or dependent, making decisions, as well as, being a king or queen and owning their arrogance, aristocratic hauteur, ambition, and hunger for power and control. The Warrior embodies passion, perseverance, endurance, competitiveness, the willingness to fight--for survival, for love, for honor, etc. The Magician encompasses the spiritual side of man, self-discovery, the supernatural, the intellect, and cultural awareness. The Lover embraces caring, nurturing, empathy,

romance, generosity, vulnerability, sensitivity, and jealousy. Characteristics of each of these archetypes may be found in many plays and many characters. Discovering the dominant archetype within a role and following the changes in dominance from scene to scene can enrich characterization and provide the actor with a valuable tool for analysis and discovery.

The role of Eleanor of Aquitaine in James Goldman's *The Lion in Winter* is especially rich in relationship to these elements and offers diverse opportunities to explore the characteristics of these archetypes. In this play, Eleanor and her family are mercurial in temperament and cunning in their manipulations. They have lightning-fast changes that turn on a dime, and they always seem to be looking for the next chink in the armor through which to punch their darts or daggers. This tendency to quickly change tactics leads the dominant archetypes to change as rapidly, giving the characterizations more zing, dimension, and interest. This chapter maps out the shifts in archetypal dominance as Eleanor's actions are examined scene by scene.

Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine, Queen of England, and former Queen of France, was born to rule. Eleanor became aware at a very early age that she was to inherit her father's title, lands, and overlordship. She was heir to

the richest land on the European continent in the twelfth century. Grounded and rooted in the traditions of the aristocracy, Eleanor expected obedience from her vassals, subjects, and children; she expected respect and shared power from her two husbands, Louis VII of France and Henry II of England. Her character in *The Lion in Winter* embodies the King/Queen archetype. From this archetype comes her sense of identity, her ambition for power and control, her expectations of others, and her dignity and bearing.

With the Queen being the dominant archetype throughout the play, the other three fall into line as follows: Magician/Warrior/Lover. At times, several archetypes exist together as the driving force for her actions and reactions, and at other times, a single archetype may loom over all the others. Although the Queen may recede from time to time, she is never completely submerged.

Eleanor's priorities are to get Henry back and/or to get the throne for Richard. An initial examination of these priorities might suggest Lover or Warrior before Magician, but, upon further analysis, the Magician seems to be the archetype from which Eleanor launches many of her attacks and into which she retreats in times of vulnerability and reflection. Within this context, the Warrior and Lover archetypes constantly vie for the third level, sometimes with Lover as dominant, other times with Warrior as

dominant. The Magician houses her intelligence and education, her powers of manipulation, her cunning, her love of poetry and music, and her inner spirituality. She readily attacks from this archetype as well as defends from it. The Lover reflects Eleanor's nurturing tendencies, her maternal instincts, her passionate love for Henry, her vulnerability and sensitivity, and her raging jealousy. The Warrior encompasses her thirst for revenge, her instinct for survival, her competitive edge, her ability to endure tremendous suffering, her staunch perseverance, and her grudging respect for her opponents.

When she makes her first entrance in Act I scene 2, Eleanor is Queen Mother with Lover foremost until she perceives Geoffrey's feigned adoration, John's petulant indifference, and Richard's cold rebuff. At this point, barely one minute into her action, she switches to Magician/Warrior and attacks with verbal thrusts within parries, using her special knowledge of each son to hit her mark, maneuvering to discover information which she needs to formulate her battle plans. Upon Henry's entrance, her defenses go up and her Warrior vies with Magician in her response to Henry's Magician in the following exchange (italics throughout the paper denote a change in archetype from one line to the next):

ELEANOR. [Magician] Let's deny them all and live

forever.

HENRY. Tusk to tusk through all eternity. . . Did
the channel part for you?

ELEANOR. [Warrior/Magician] *It went flat when I
told it to; I didn't think to ask for more.*

(12)

After this exchange, Eleanor greets her adopted daughter, Alais, who is also her latest rival for Henry's affection. Lover and Warrior struggle briefly, but Warrior wins out as she scores a point against Henry by placing her rival, his lover, next to Richard. When Philip enters, she is Queen to the hilt, but Warrior lurks just beneath the surface as the strategist in her listens to discover how the cards are to be laid on the table by the two kings.

Philip leaves; the boys make their positions known; Eleanor watches and takes note of all. In a calculating moment of intended challenge, she states to Henry:

ELEANOR. I don't much like our children. [to
Alais] Only you--the child I raised but didn't
bear. (17)

The Warrior/Lover is rising to do battle; her jealousy demands it. Eleanor tells the tale of Rosamund, her most potent rival for Henry's love, as a thrust to hurt Alais, who then retreats, after thrusting back, leaving Eleanor and Henry alone.

Alone at last, her Warrior/Queen shifts into high gear as she begins to play the game she loves most--one-upmanship with Henry. She gathers information while divulging nothing of importance during her banter with Henry.

Occasionally, her Lover peeks through on such lines as:

HENRY. There are moments when I miss you.

ELEANOR. Many?

HENRY. Do you doubt it?

ELEANOR. That's my wooly sheep dog (18).

But just as quickly, she turns back to Warrior/Queen with her next breath:

ELEANOR. *So wee Johnny gets the crown?*

Another example a few lines later:

ELEANOR. Still, as long as I get trotted out for Christmas courts and state occasions now and then--[Lover] *for I do like to see you--it's enough.* [Warrior] *Do you still need the Vexin Henry?* (18)

Upon having her questions answered, she is now ready to challenge Henry openly:

ELEANOR. Henry, dear, if Alais doesn't marry Richard, I will see you lose the Vexin. . . . I can do it. . . . My Richard is the next king, not your John. I know you, Henry. I know every twist and bend you've got and I'll be

waiting round each corner for you. (19)

Having openly challenged Henry, she now stings him with little jabs until the end of the scene when he retaliates with a sharp blow to her need, as a woman, to be loved by him:

ELEANOR. [Lover] Henry?

HENRY. Madam?

ELEANOR. Did you ever love me?

HENRY. No.

But, consummate Warrior that she is, she takes the hurt and hurls it back at him with her last line of the scene:

ELEANOR. *Good.* That will make this pleasanter.

(20)

Having done preliminary battle with Henry, she is now ready to regain the love, affection, and favor (and control over the Aquitaine) of (and from) her favorite son, Richard.

At the top of Act I scene 3, Eleanor plays the role of hurt and loving mother with Richard to gain control of the Aquitaine, but when he repeatedly thwarts her efforts, she changes to Warrior:

ELEANOR. [Lover] . . . Can't I say I love a son
and be believed?

RICHARD. If I were you, I'd try another tack.

ELEANOR: [Warrior] *You are a dull boy.* . . . I
gave the Church up out of boredom. I can do as

much for you. (21)

Richard calls on her Magician and she answers with more than he bargains for:

RICHARD. . . . You're so deceitful. . . . We
could tangle spiders in the webs you weave.

ELEANOR. [Magician] *If I'm so devious, why don't
you go?* Don't stand there quivering in limbo.

Love me, little lamb, or leave me. (21)

Her reference to "limbo" connotes a spiritual void, and her reference to "little lamb," a sacrifice made to appease a higher power.

Their tête-à-tête is interrupted by the arrival of all the others, except Philip, but Eleanor remains with Magician as she observes the scene unfolding in front of her. She is so comfortable with her own special knowledge of each of them that she calls Henry on his bluff:

ELEANOR. Did you rehearse all this or are you
improvising?

HENRY. Good God, woman, face the facts.

ELEANOR. Which ones? We've got so many. (23)

After Henry and Alais exit, Eleanor switches to Lover/Magician in an attempt to get to John. She offers her loving arms as comfort and offers information about their estrangement, which he refuses to acknowledge. He rebuffs her loving guise and orders Geoffrey to leave with him.

When Geoffrey refuses, Eleanor goes into Warrior/Magician mode and verbally duels with Geoffrey to manipulate him to her advantage. At the end of their little scene, she has him. The Queen in her speaks to her success and then, suddenly, the Magician is back to manipulating Richard, after which, her Lover pops out at the end of the speech:

ELEANOR. [Queen] Oh, Geoffrey. Well, that's how deals are made. We've got him if we want him.

[Magician] *I should like some wine.* Why did I have to have such clever children? He'll sell us all, you know; but only if he thinks we think he won't. Scenes. I can't touch my sons except in scenes. [Lover] *What's the matter, Richard?* (26)

Alone again with Richard, Eleanor resumes her strategic manipulations to regain control of the Aquitaine. She switches from Magician to Lover at the end of the previous speech, but Richard denies her Lover and calls to her Magician which she readily brings forth:

ELEANOR. [Lover] *What's the matter, Richard?*

RICHARD. Nothing.

ELEANOR. It's a heavy thing, your nothing. When I write or send for you or speak or reach, your nothings come. Like stones.

RICHARD. Don't play a scene with me.

ELEANOR. I wouldn't if I could.

RICHARD. There'd be no profit in it. That's my one advantage over you. [Calling her Magician] *You're wiser, shrewder, more experienced.* I'm colder; I feel less.

ELEANOR. [Magician] *Why you don't know yourself at all.* I've known who I am some years now. . . . [Queen] *Now I've only one desire left: to see you king.*

RICHARD. . . . You don't care who wins as long as Henry loses. . . . You'd do anything.

ELEANOR. [Warrior] That's good to know. (27)

Richard continues to call to her Magician with his next line, but gets her Warrior full force:

RICHARD. You are Medea to the teeth. . . .

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *I could bend you.* I could wear you like a bracelet--[here immediately switches to Lover] *but I'd sooner die.* (27)

But, almost as immediately, she switches back to Magician:

RICHARD. You're old enough to die, in any case.

ELEANOR. *How my captivity has changed you.*(27)

With her next speech, the Magician in Eleanor teases and taunts Richard by conjuring stories of her youth and her love for Henry; however, as Richard continues to resist, she quickly strikes with Lover:

ELEANOR. . . . Look at you. I loved you more than

Henry and it's cost me everything.

RICHARD. What do you want?

ELEANOR. [still in Lover] I want us back the way
we were.

RICHARD. That's not it.

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *All right, then. I want the
Aquitaine. (28)*

With this last line, she brings on the Warrior/Queen,
forcing Richard to keep up with her changes. Confusing him,
keeping him off balance, she switches abruptly to Lover and
adds Magician, so that by the end of the scene, she has him
eating out of her hands:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] . . . What can I do?

RICHARD. . . . You can rot.

ELEANOR. [Lover] *I love you.*

RICHARD. You love nothing. . . .

ELEANOR. [still Lover] Don't leave me. . . .We
were always hand in hand. That's how it felt.

RICHARD. As coarse and hot as that.

ELEANOR. [The Magician bares her arm to offer a
blood sacrifice] *This won't burn. I'll scratch
a will on this. To Richard everything.*

RICHARD. Mother!

ELEANOR. [Lover and Magician with equal force]
Remember how I taught you numbers and the lute

and poetry. . . . See? You do remember. I taught you dancing, too, and languages and all the music that I knew and how to love what's beautiful. The sun was warmer then and we were every day together. (29)

The combination of Lover and Magician is just too strong for Richard to fight. When she slashes her arm and the blood flows, he is compelled to run to her side and fall into her arms as if bewitched. She has won this round--and the Aquitaine--and now sets off, with fresh ammunition, to fight Henry.

When Eleanor enters in Act I scene 4, she is the playful Lover, laughing at Henry's antics, but, just below the surface, the Warrior/Magician bides her time, prepared to spring into action for their inevitable verbal fencing match. That moment comes quickly after Alais's exit. Henry immediately presses her for information regarding the Aquitaine, and she easily parries aside his inquiries with questions of her own. Henry changes tactics on every line, and Eleanor easily meets and deflects each one. The scene escalates when Henry raises the stakes and offers her a blow from which she has difficulty recovering:

HENRY. I want the Aquitaine for John. I want it
and I'll have it.

ELEANOR. [Warrior/Magician] Is that menace you're

conveying? Is it to be torture? Will you boil me or stretch me, which? Or am I to be perforated?

HENRY. I have the documents and you will sign.

ELEANOR. How can you force me to? Threats?

[Queen] *Sign or I refuse to feed you? Tears?*

[Lover] *Oh, sign before my heart goes crack.*

Bribes, offers, deals? [Magician] *I'm like the earth, old man; there isn't any way around me.*

HENRY. I adore you.

ELEANOR. [Lover]. . . *that road is closed.*

HENRY. I've got an offer for you, *ma jolie.*

ELEANOR. [Warrior/Queen] *A deal . . . I give the richest province on the continent to John for what? You tell me, mastermind. For what?*

HENRY. Your freedom.

ELEANOR. [Vulnerable Lover] *Oh. (35)*

Henry has taken Eleanor totally by surprise, and she is stunned. Her Warrior acknowledges his skill, then her Magician takes over as she scrambles for position, but the wounded Lover reveals the depth to which she has been cut:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *You're good.*

HENRY. I thought it might appeal to you. You always fancied traveling.

ELEANOR. Yes, I did. [Magician] *I even made poor*

Louis take me on Crusade. How's that for blasphemy? I . . . rode bare-breasted half way to Damascus. Louis had a seizure and I damn near died of windburn but the troops were dazzled. [Wounded Lover] Henry, I'm against the wall. . . . To be a prisoner, to be bricked in when you've known the world--I'll never know how I've survived. . . . (36)

Her moment of weakness does not last long as her Warrior quickly formulates a plan to turn things to her advantage. She offers to give him what he wants, the Aquitaine for John, but only if Richard and Alais marry immediately. Henry balks, but her Warrior is relentless, and she goads him into a rage from which he agrees to her terms. They call everyone in; her triumphant Warrior makes way for her gracious Queen who reigns until Henry plays his trump and reveals their deal to Richard. Richard is furious and halts the proceedings. Eleanor switches immediately to Lover in order to win him back, but his rebuke is too strong. She watches as the rest of the scene plays out. Her Warrior is looking for an opening, any advantage, but finds none. She acknowledges his victory then retreats into Magician in an attempt at a final, pyrric victory which causes as much harm to herself as it inflicts on Henry:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] I came close, didn't I? . . .

You played it nicely. You were good.

HENRY. I really was. I fooled you, didn't I? God,
but I do love being king.

ELEANOR. Well, Henry, liege and lord, what
happens now?

HENRY. I've no idea. I know I'm winning and I
know I'll win but what the next move is--
You've got your enigmatic face on. What's your
mood, I wonder.

ELEANOR. Pure delight. . . . [Magician] *One
thing. . . .* May I watch you kiss her? . . . I
watch you every night. I conjure it before I
sleep. . . . My curiosity is intellectual: I
want to see how accurate I am.

HENRY. [to Alais] Forget the dragon in the door
way: come. Believe I love you, for I do.
Believe I'm yours forever, for I am. . . . [to
Eleanor] You want more? [back to Alais] I'm an
old man in an empty place. Be with me. (42)

This kiss between Henry and Alais hurts all three of them,
yet none of them are willing, nor are they capable, of
stopping it; so, the wounds are deepened and the need for
revenge is heightened. Eleanor leaves this scene defeated,
in pain, in sorrow, but hiding it all behind the Magician's
mask of dignity.

The top of Act I scene 5 finds Eleanor alone with her jewels--deep in contemplation. Her opening monologue is pure Magician as she sorts through the preceding events and her apparent defeat. She attempts a look in the mirror but cannot bring herself to view her failures. She holds a disjointed dialogue with herself which is interrupted by Geoffrey who is looking for some human connection and affection. She adds Queen to her Magician and denies his need. Eleanor answers his queries with nostalgia. When John enters, the Queen recedes and the Mother/Lover merges with Magician as she looks for something of herself in his face; however, when Richard enters, the Lover disappears and the Warrior joins the Magician. Richard, refusing to accept defeat, is in a rage, and John's taunts penetrate his defenses. Richard pulls a knife in response and lunges at John. At this point, Eleanor has had enough; in her Warrior mode, she disarms Richard and then her Magician sits them down for a lecture. This wonderful monologue is motivated and delivered by the Magician/Queen. She speaks prophetically from a sense of revelation, hidden knowledge in which, if only they would stop bickering long enough, they could all share:

ELEANOR. . . . It is eleven eighty-three and
we're barbarians. How clear we make it. Oh, my
piglets, we are the origins of war. . . . We

are the killers; we breed war. . . . For the love of God, can't we love one another just a little? That's how peace begins. . . . we have such possibilities my children. We could change the world. (45)

Her pleas fall on deaf ears, however, and the Magician finally recedes into the background leaving Queen alone for a few moments. Nothing lasts for long in this play. No sooner does Geoffrey break the spell of her words than John inadvertently reveals to Eleanor his alliance with Philip. The Warrior/Strategist joins the Queen and Eleanor begins, again, to make new plans. She sends Geoffrey to keep an eye on John, and Richard to negotiate with Philip. Alone once again, she drops her Queen and her Warrior gloats:

ELEANOR. I haven't lost, it isn't over. Oh, I've got the old man this time. The damn fool thinks he loves John, he believes it. [Magician joins Warrior] *That's where the knife goes in. Knives, knives . . . it was a fine thought, wasn't it?* [Lover] *Oh, Henry, we have done a big thing badly.* (46)

Her Lover/Magician ends this scene on a note of renewed hope and energy. She still has a chance to win it all if only the winds of fortune continue to blow in her direction. She is confident now and ventures a look in the

mirror which frightened her so at the top of this scene. The mirror represents her past--youth, beauty, power, passion, love, dreams, and Henry.

ELEANOR. Where's that mirror? I am Eleanor and I can look at anything. My, what a lovely girl.

How could her king have left her? (46)

A moment of regret? A moment of defiance? A moment of self-mocking? Perhaps it is a moment which encompasses all three. She ends the scene, and thus her involvement in Act I, with optimism and a hope for ultimate victory.

At the end of Act I scene 6, all of Eleanor's hopes and plans come to naught. She does not appear in this scene, but her presence is felt through the machinations of her sons. Her schemes backfire when Henry discovers all three sons conspiring with Philip behind his back. The first act ends with Henry, in a rage, disowning all his sons. One can only assume that one of the boys brought the news to Eleanor prior to the second act.

The second act opens on a mystical scene: illuminated only by the fire in the hearth, Alais, singing softly, is seated by the brazier concocting a soothing brew for Henry. Eleanor enters slowly and quietly watches until Alais senses her presence. Eleanor comes with a thwarted Queen, wounded Lover, and exhausted Warrior to surrender to Henry. Her weary Magician reminisces of the past, but Alais senses

an apparent weakness and takes advantage of it. Eleanor is exhausted beyond belief, but yet she manages to quip with Alais. Eleanor maintains the Magician but brings forth the Lover/Mother in an attempt to connect with this beautiful young girl who is her husband's lover. Alais rejects Eleanor's camaraderie and attacks her with remembrances of Rosamund. Eleanor's Warrior is ever vigilant and springs into action when provoked, but only in defense, not to kill.

With her strength at an end, however, Eleanor's Warrior gives way to Lover. Her maternal instinct kicks in as Alais presses her pain. Eleanor offers her bosom for Alais' stings but receives a weeping Alais instead. Craving some human connection of her own, Eleanor holds her close and croons a Christmas lullaby. They share a moment of healing, but Henry's entrance interrupts their bond, and they revert to rivals once again.

Alais exits leaving Eleanor alone with Henry. Eleanor wants no more of this conflict. Her Warrior is ready to surrender and give him what he wants. They exchange insults, as they are wont to do, and her Magician waxes philosophical:

ELEANOR. . . .I wonder, Henry, if I care for
anything. I wonder if I'm hungry out of habit
and if all my lusts, like passions in a poem,

aren't really recollections. . . . I'm so
tired, Henry. (62)

Henry, however, does not believe in her surrender. He goads her and prods her, looking for the fire of her Warrior, the passion of her Lover, and the arrogance of her Queen. She responds to his barbs, and in quick succession, her archetypes come forward:

ELEANOR. [Queen] Henry, stop it.

HENRY. I haven't started.

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *What is it you want? You want the day? You've carried it. It's yours.*

[Lover] *I'm yours.*

HENRY. You're my what?

ELEANOR. Your anything at all. [Queen] *You want my name on paper? I'll sign anything. You want the Aquitaine for John? It's John's.* (62)

Her Warrior knows when to cut her losses and run. She is willing to concede the battle to Henry because she knows that the war is far from over; she will await her opportunity to fight another day.

Her Magician, who is very strong in this entire scene, questions the existence of God and her place in His plan, but Henry does not want to exchange platitudes. He wants to get a rise out of her, so he continues to goad her and prod her until he forces her Warrior into a confrontation. He

refuses her offer of the Aquitaine for John and continues in his opposition of Richard. Finally, in exasperation, Eleanor asks:

ELEANOR. . . . let me have it. Level me. What do you want?

HENRY. A new wife. (63)

She is stunned. He has challenged the very essence of Eleanor's existence--her marriage to Henry. Her Lover/Queen has been dealt a crippling blow, so the strategist in her buys time by questioning his motives:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] So I'm to be annulled, am I? Well, will the Pope annul me, do you think?

HENRY. . . . I think he will.

ELEANOR. Out Eleanor, in Alais. Why?

HENRY. Why? Not since Caesar . . . has there been a dumber question.

ELEANOR. I'll stand by it. Why?

HENRY. A new wife, wife, will bear me sons.

At first, she does not believe he is serious. Her Warrior responds with disdain at the thought, but Jealous Lover is hovering just beneath the surface and gains control when the pain gets to be too much to bear:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] That is the single thing of which I should have thought you had enough.

HENRY. I want a son.

ELEANOR. Whatever for? Why, we could populate a country town with country girls who've borne you sons. [Lover] *How many is it?* Help me count the bastards. (64)

Her Lover, as woman and mother, is threatened beyond her capacity. Her Warrior, with renewed vigor, rises to do battle. She is not going to let him go without a fight. She is engaging in a battle for her self-identity and, through the legitimacy of her sons, her place in history. Her Warrior/Lover appeals to his paternal instincts:

ELEANOR. Your sons are part of you. . . . We made them. They're our boys. (64)

In response to her ploy, Henry dissects each one, enumerating their faults and trying to further the distance he feels from them. Henry's rage increases, and the battle escalates until they get to Richard, where it explodes in both their faces. Accusations fly as they wound each other to the quick. The pain becomes unbearable until, spent and raw, they fall into each other's arms, open and vulnerable. An unspoken, momentary truce prevails and they take some small comfort in remembering the first time they met. Throbbing with her need, Eleanor's Lover hungrily soaks up this moment of closeness, leading him on to the one thing she needs to hear above all else:

HENRY. I had never seen such beauty--and I walked

right up and touched it. God, where did I find
the gall to do that?

ELEANOR. In my eyes.

HENRY. I loved you. (66)

Triumphant, Eleanor's Lover embraces his admission and
revels in the moment. Although she is still open and
vulnerable, her Lover finds renewed strength for her
Warrior to continue the fight:

ELEANOR. [Warrior] No annulment.

HENRY. What?

ELEANOR. There will be no annulment.

HENRY. Will there not?

ELEANOR. No; I'm afraid you'll have to do
without.

HENRY. Well--it was just a whim.

ELEANOR. [Lover] *I'm so relieved.* I didn't want
to lose you. (66)

This admission on Eleanor's part shatters the truce and
riles Henry, and he pushes back. Eleanor's emotions are
strung tight, so her Warrior Queen comes forward with
force, although her Magician pushes through for a moment,
then Queen takes over completely:

ELEANOR. [Queen] Can't you feel the chains?

HENRY. You know enough to know I can't be
stopped.

ELEANOR. [Warrior]. . . *Every enemy you have has friends in Rome. We'll cost you time.*

HENRY. . . . I'm good for years.

ELEANOR. How many years? Suppose I hold you back for one; I can--it's possible. [Magician] *Suppose your first son dies; ours did--it's possible. Suppose you're daughtered next; we were--that, too, is possible. [Lover] How old is Daddy then? [Magician] What kind of spindly, ricket-ridden, milky, semi-witted, wizened, dim-eyed, gammy-handed, limpy line of things will you beget?*

HENRY. Eleanor, what do you want?

ELEANOR. [Queen in all her regal splendor] *Just what you want: a king for a son. You can make more. I can't. You think I want to disappear? . . . I could peel you like a pear and God himself would call it justice. (67)*

The exchange continues to escalate with bluffs and threats until Henry threatens to lock the boys in the dungeon. As he starts to leave, Eleanor's Lover plays her last trump, hurtling her alleged affair with Henry's father, Geoffrey, in his face. Although he himself has been unfaithful countless times, he can't stand the thought of Eleanor sleeping with anyone, but the thought of her and his father

together is enough to make him physically ill. She knows this and uses this knowledge to its fullest extent. Henry bolts from the room retching. Eleanor has achieved a certain victory over Henry; however, she has not won what she most wants--her rightful place in Henry's affection. From Warrior to Lover, Eleanor hurls her last and cruelest dart at Henry as he stumbles from the room then comments on their situation:

ELEANOR. We did it. You were in the next room when he did it. [Henry exits, and Eleanor's Lover comments] *Well, what family doesn't have its ups and downs.* (70)

She has reached the end of her endurance. She has reached the end of her ambition. She has nothing left. She feels nothing but emptiness, a void:

ELEANOR. [Magician] *It's cold.* I can't feel anything. Not anything at all. [Lover] *We couldn't go back, could we Henry?* (70)

It is at this point that Eleanor is at her lowest. She has lost everything: the throne for Richard, her freedom and the freedom of her sons, the regard of her children, and any chance that Henry will put her back in the proper place in his life. She has nothing left to lose except her life which she does not hold in high regard.

Act II scene 2 does not include Eleanor. Henry's

enthusiasm is frenetic and forced as he haphazardly proposes to Alais. Alais is happily excited at first, but soon realizes the most important preparation that Henry refuses to acknowledge. She forces him to see that for them to have any chance at happiness and their prospective children to have any chance at life, Henry must either kill his sons or lock them in the dungeon forever. The scene ends on a note of dread and suspense. Will he or won't he? Although Eleanor does not appear in the scene, she has all this time to formulate her next move. She refuses to give up all control. She must find a way to either turn things to her own advantage, or to the advantage of her sons, particularly Richard.

Act II scene 3, the last scene in the play, takes place in the dungeon at Chinon. The setting is dark and dangerous. The three boys are drinking and imagining the worst of their fate. Eleanor enters and greets them with a veneer of Queen over the consummate Warrior. Always striving to maintain control over events, Eleanor brings them the means for their escape. Instead of breakfast under the tray cover, she brings daggers. She informs them of the chaos in the courtyard as Henry's departure for Rome is readied. They could walk right out, but Geoffrey formulates a different plan. He suggests an ambush, and, when Eleanor balks, he accuses her of planning that very thing:

GEOFFREY. . . . Don't you dare tell me this
wasn't in your mind.

ELEANOR. I tell you I deny it.

GEOFFREY. Swear on something. I'm agog to hear
what you consider holy. (76)

She brings all her cunning and powers of manipulation, attributes of the Magician, to bear to bend the boys to her will. Through the Magician, she blends Warrior and Lover together to fend off their emotional attack and still have an avenue of escape available for herself. When Geoffrey refuses to leave, she turns all her charms on Richard. When Richard falls in with Geoffrey's plan, she is aghast. Their confrontation is intense and deeply wounding. Her Lover is pushed into a moment of truth which none of her sons believe: everything she has done, all the conniving, all the plotting, all the pain, all the neglect, and all the hurt, was for one thing only--to get Henry back. They end in a stalemate. Henry enters at this point and the tension soars up another notch.

Henry's initial purpose is never revealed because Eleanor sets up the next confrontation. She maneuvers the breakfast tray so Henry finds the daggers. She forces Henry to face the ultimate betrayal--of herself and of the boys. Enraged, Henry faces off with Richard, but Richard cannot carry through and backs down. John attempts to use Henry's

love to his own advantage and begs for another chance. Henry appears to accede then attacks John, just short of killing him. All this Eleanor watches with undivided attention. One may assume several things at this point. Either she planned for the boys to execute Henry, or she presumed Henry would never be able to kill his own sons, or she hoped he would satisfy her own need for Medean justice. She goads Henry:

ELEANOR. [Queen] Go on. Execute them. You're the King. You've judged. You've sentenced. You know how.

HENRY. By God, I will. Come Monday and they'll hang you with the washing. There'll be princes swinging from the Christmas trees.

ELEANOR. Why wait? They are assassins, aren't they? This was treason, wasn't it? [Magician] *You gave them life--you take it.* (81)

Why would Eleanor urge the death of her children. Is she really willing to sacrifice even them to her obsession? Does she want Henry back or Henry's destruction? Does her obsession consume every other meaningful attribute in her life? Henry is pushed to the limit and prepares to strike Richard. He heaves his great sword up and then lets it fall harmlessly past Richard's head. Henry collapses and tells them all to get out. The boys flee and Henry is alone with

Eleanor and Alais. Eleanor's Magician breaks the tense silence. She pushed Henry to the breaking point to force him to see he would never be capable of carrying out his threats, and, at the same time, she engineered her sons' escape:

ELEANOR. [Magician] You spare the rod, you'll spoil those boys.

HENRY. I couldn't do it, Eleanor.

ELEANOR. Nobody thought you could.

HENRY. I did.

ALAIS. You saved them. You maneuvered it.

ELEANOR. Did I?

ALAIS. They're free because of you. They'll kill him one day; you know that.

ELEANOR. The next time or the next.

ALAIS. You always win, *Maman*.

ELEANOR. [Lover] *Except the prize.* (82)

Eleanor is spent after witnessing the fruition of her plans, but she still feels rancor as she watches Henry embrace Alais. Her Lover responds with a jealous quip:

ELEANOR. [Lover] That's touching. Is it for my benefit?

HENRY. For your benefit? I've done enough on your account. I should have killed you years ago.

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *There's no one peeking. Do it*

now. (82)

As Henry laments his failures and blames Eleanor for all his misfortune, she rallies with her Warrior/Queen, but her Lover bubbles up as she reaches the end of her endurance:

HENRY. . . . You put me here. You made me do mad things. You've bled me.

ELEANOR. [Queen] Shoulder it yourself. Don't put it on my back. You've done what you have done and no one but yourself has made you do it. Pick it up and carry it. [Warrior] *I can. My losses are my work.*

HENRY. What losses? I've been cheated, not you. I'm the one with nothing.

ELEANOR. [Still in Warrior] Lost your life's work, have you. [Queen] *Provinces are nothing: land is dirt.* [Lover] *I've lost you.* I can't ever have you back again. [Warrior] *You haven't suffered.* I could take defeats like yours and laugh. I've done it. If you're broken, it's because you're brittle. [Lover] *You are all I've ever loved.* Christ, you don't know what nothing is. I want to die. (83)

Everything Eleanor has gambled on, all her scheming and plotting, all her manipulations, all her plans have brought her to this moment of utter despair. She truly has lost.

everything, and now her Lover wants an end to her misery. But Henry will not let her go. Once again, he reveals the truth hidden in his heart--his love for Eleanor:

HENRY. You don't.

ELEANOR. I want to die.

HENRY. I'll hold you.

ELEANOR. I want to die.

HENRY. Stop saying that. Let me do something,
damn you. This is terrible.

ELEANOR. Henry, I want to die.

HENRY. You will, you know. Wait long enough and
it'll happen.

ELEANOR. [Magician] *So it will.* (83)

Henry's astute observation strikes a chord with Eleanor's Magician bringing her back:

HENRY. We're in the cellar and you're going back
to prison and my life is wasted and we've lost
each other and you're smiling.

ELEANOR. [Magician] It's the way I register
despair. There's everything in life but hope.
. . . We're jungle creatures, Henry, and the
dark is all around us. See them? In the
corners, you can see the eyes.

HENRY. And they can see ours. I'm a match for
anything. Aren't you?

ELEANOR. [Lover] *I should have been a great fool
not to love you.* (83-84)

Her Lover rises to the surface for the last time to thank Henry for renewed life, then Eleanor calls up her Queen to resume the business of living, but not before her Warrior lets Henry know that her moment of weakness was just that-- a moment and nothing more:

HENRY. Come along; I'll see you to your ship.

ELEANOR. [Queen] So soon?

HENRY. There's always Easter Court.

ELEANOR. You'll let me out for Easter?

HENRY. Come the resurrection, you can strike me
down again.

ELEANOR. [Warrior] *Perhaps I'll do it next time.*

HENRY. And perhaps you won't.

ELEANOR. [Queen in all her majesty] *It must be
late and I don't want to miss the tide.*

HENRY. You know, I hope we never die.

ELEANOR. [Magician] *I hope so, too.*

HENRY. You think there's any chance of it? (84)

Eleanor ends the play with her Magician responding to Henry's Magician. She shows that she is ever ready to match Henry blow for blow and archetype for archetype. Whatever his plans for the future, she will be there ready to match her wits against his.

As demonstrated in this chapter, mapping out the dominant archetypes for each scene (or beat, or breath) is an effective tool for character analysis. Exploring archetypal traits can help define characters in their interactions with one another. *The Lion in Winter* offers a rich opportunity to examine this very type of analysis. Each character is engaged in vigorous competition with the others. They form and abandon alliances in the space of a breath. While their motivations may remain the same, their tactics change rapidly as they maneuver around obstacles and vie with one another for supremacy. By examining archetypes as the character moves rapidly from one scheme to the next, an actor can enrich her understanding of motivation and through-line. Determining the archetypes for each motivation can aid in developing a deeper rapport between actor and character. Exploring archetypal possibilities, if used in conjunction with other forms of character analysis, can greatly enhance the character's depth and provide more flexibility in playing meaningful actions. In using the archetypes for analysis of Eleanor's character, I was able to discover new levels and dimensions of subtext which provided for a richer, more fully realized characterization.

CHAPTER 4

Reflection and Analysis

The first step in preparing a role is to determine what the character wants, how much she wants it, and how far she will go to get it. As stated in Chapter 2, the single most defining aspect of Eleanor in the play is her love for Henry. She either wants to be an integral part of his life again or revenge her abandonment by thwarting his deepest desire--having John succeed him on the throne. Everything she does in the play works toward this goal. As a mother, she cares for all of her children, but her maternal tendencies are subordinate to her personal ambition. While the queen in her is as much a part of her as is her skin or her hair, it is the threat of forever losing Henry which drives her. She brings all the dimensions of her personality to bear on attaining her goal. To portray this complex and multidimensional character with any degree of success, one must use a variety of approaches. The previous chapter provided a scene by scene analysis of the character and her actions using the archetypes Queen, Warrior, Magician, and Lover.

These provided the basis for the internal work--motivation and tactics. The external work, vocalization and physicalization, evolved throughout the rehearsal process.

In preparation for any role, an actor must be willing to undergo a transformation. Her body, voice, psyche, and emotional make-up must work in sync to create a believable character that is different from, yet still part of, the actor herself. When the character is an historical figure, research can be a valuable aid in fleshing out the character's portrayal. My transformation began with historical research on Eleanor and her family. Reading about Eleanor's life provided remarkable insight into her persona and her relationships with her family.

Her unique position in life began in the court of her grandfather William VII, Count of Poitiers, IX Duke of Aquitaine, who was commonly referred to as William the Troubadour. An innovator in the troubadour style of music and verse, William wrote songs of love and ribald entertainments. Eleanor was greatly influenced by this milieu of cultural diversity "in [her] early years when her grandfather's court was the center of western European culture" (Meade 21). Her education went beyond the learning of typical feminine skills. "She was carefully educated. . . . [having] a quick intelligence and the type of mind that delighted in acquiring knowledge" (22). The inheritance of

a rich literary tradition and her early educational opportunities endowed Eleanor with a keen spirit of intellectual freedom and a progressive outlook on her role as a woman in the twelfth century (Lazar 38). Indeed, Eleanor had an education and appreciation for the arts that surpassed most of her contemporaries. A true woman of the world, Eleanor's quick intellect informed much of her character. Her expectations from life were grounded in these formative years. Her political savvy, her need to be at the center of power and control, her grasp of game-playing strategy, and her ability to manipulate her family all began with her education. Understanding the source of these traits helped to inform my relationships with the other characters.

She shares a love of music, poetry, and literature with Richard. Some of their happiest moments were spent in intellectual pursuits. Eleanor conjures these memories to bend Richard to her will at the end of I.3. She needs the Aquitaine as a bargaining chip against Henry, but first she must get it back from Richard:

ELEANOR. Remember how I taught you numbers and
the lute and poetry. . . . I taught you
dancing, too, and languages and all the music
that I knew and how to love what's beautiful.

(29)

Dr. Cindy Phaneuf, my director, gave a note on this scene:

"treat Richard like a little lover, play lover's games with him." We explored the relationship as one bordering on the incestual. This exploration added a dangerous quality to their relationship which worked well for our production. Richard's character is dangerous and war-like, and although Craig Fitzpatrick, the actor who portrayed Richard, was physically imposing, he was self-effacing and retiring when it came to his physicality. Our exploratory work included improvisation and stage combat work which, after several rehearsals, enabled Craig to feel more at ease with both his own physicality and the physical contact between Richard and Eleanor. The rehearsal work combined with historical reference provided an exciting dimension to the relationship between our two characters that served to enhance another emotionally charged interaction in Act II scene 3 as well.

Historical research may lay a foundation and rehearsal may provide exploratory opportunities, but success is not always guaranteed. Act I scene 5 presented some problems. At the top of the scene, Eleanor feels the first pangs of defeat. She is disjointed, unfocussed, and dispirited. She begins to pick up her mirror, but she cannot bring herself to look her failure in the face. Geoffrey comes looking for some maternal acknowledgment, but instead, he receives the full brunt of Eleanor's intellectual philosophizing:

ELEANOR. I was thinking earlier of Peter Abelard. I was a Queen of fifteen in those days and on dull afternoons I'd go watch Heloise watch Abelard spread heresy like bonemeal in the palace gardens. Here the Seine and there the cypress trees and how it bored me. Thought, pure thought, flashed clear as water all around me and all I could think about was how to make a Caesar of a monkish husband. I'd like to hear the old man talk again; I'd listen now. For my ambition's thin with age and all the mysteries are as plump as ever. (43)

Eleanor expects Geoffrey, as her intellectual equal, to connect with her chain of thought. She is offering him the connection he seeks but on an intellectual level rather than an emotional one. When he does not connect with her, she rejects him:

ELEANOR. . . . "Clever Mother, what's your clever reason for this clever talk?" It isn't clever but you'll make it so. I am so sick of all of you. (44)

Her despondency and disjointedness proved to be difficult for me to internalize, until I managed to connect her emotional state to the pain of watching Henry and

Alais in a lovers' embrace at the end of the preceding scene; however, at the end of Act I scene 5, her mental state proved to be a tenacious knot I could not unravel. Eleanor should end the scene on an up beat. She discovers John's indiscretion which will lead to Henry disowning him, and that puts her back on the winning side. She revels in her new opportunity, but she is still disjointed:

ELEANOR. I haven't lost, it isn't over. Oh, I've got the old man this time. The damn fool thinks he loves John, he believes it. That's where the knife goes in. [Change in tone] Knives, knives . . . it was a fine thought, wasn't it? [Another change] Oh, Henry, we have done a big thing badly. [Another change] Where's that mirror? I am Eleanor and I can look at anything. [Change?] My, what a lovely girl. [Change?] How could her king have left her? (46)

Dr. Phaneuf's notes on this monologue were clear, but I had a difficult time internalizing them. She said, "You need to look at Eleanor's journey in the scene from the start when she's losing to the end when she's winning. Make a clear attempt to look in the mirror, but pull away from looking like you'd pull away from a knife slicing the skin--it hurts to look--it's scary to look, but you find the courage

to look, and you don't like what you see." This was the one moment in the play that never felt right to me. I think it may be that I never fully committed to an archetype for each of the changing moments. I played with the idea of Warrior up to ". . . knife goes in" then switching to Magician for "Knives, knives . . . it was a fine thought . . ." then to Lover for "Oh, Henry . . ." then Queen for "Where's that mirror" The last two lines, however, proved to be the most difficult to internalize--rejected Lover or blind Magician, defiant Warrior or arrogant Queen? While disappointed at the failure to connect with this moment, other difficult scenes proved to be more successful.

Another difficult moment occurred during the final climax of Act II scene 1. The scene has many mini climaxes which build to the fever pitch at the end. Eleanor starts the scene ready to give Henry anything he wants, but he rejects her offer. Instead, Henry tells her he is disowning his entire family, annulling her, and marrying Alais in order to father new sons who will inherit everything. Her political ambition and her urgent need to be an integral part of his life spur Eleanor into action. They fight and throw barbs and manipulate each other until Henry is ready to walk out firmly fixed in his plan. Eleanor, desperate, hurls her deadliest dart--fornication with his father.

Eleanor rapidly changes from Warrior to Lover back to Warrior throughout this part. The rapid changes were difficult to internalize at first. The lines would not come in their proper order. Kenny Glenn, the actor playing Henry, also had difficulty with lines during this segment. The physical action was very involved and difficult to accomplish with scripts in hand. Eleanor had to maintain a physical connection to Henry, clinging to his arms, shoulders, legs, and torso, sometimes grabbing and threatening, sometimes caressing. Henry had to shake her off, put her away from him, or just evade her touch. After several long and emotionally exhausting rehearsals, this scene finally coalesced. We firmly married each specific line to a specific physical and psychological action. Once we got the proper sequence down, muscle memory sparked the correct responses. This was a classic example of an actor working from the outside to the inside. The physical action led to muscle memory and psychological response which led to the proper line sequence. It was my favorite scene in the play. Even though we worked the scene so that it became technically proficient, it never became stagnant. The sheer force of the emotional interplay supplied that "happening for the first time" flavor which is the goal of many actors. I can confidently state that it was the best scene in the play for me.

A highly charged emotional scene such as this one needs more than technical proficiency to be truly successful. A rapport on a personal level must be present between the actors. Such a rapport exists between the actor who played Henry, Kenny Glenn, and myself. Kenny is a professional actor and part-time faculty member. His stage presence commands the eye and his ability to give and take, act and react to the others with which he shares the stage are any actor's dream. We had been friends for years before working together on this production, and I believe our personal rapport helped establish the closeness between our characters. We felt comfortable together from the beginning. We were not afraid to take risks or make bold acting choices with each other. It was wonderful to have the freedom and confidence to explore the many facets of the love-hate relationship between Henry and Eleanor without fear of overstepping personal boundaries or personal space. Our personal friendship helped to ground the characters' relationship on the stage.

As important as the internal factors are to a successful portrayal of a character are the external manifestations of that character--physicalization and vocalization. How does the character move through space? Does she own it or does it own her? How should the voice be used to convey character yet still be audible to the

audience? The vocal and physical requirements of a role of the magnitude and scope of Eleanor of Aquitaine are daunting. One must convincingly incorporate the force of her presence, physically and vocally, into the portrayal, as well as incorporate her sensitivity and vulnerability as a woman, wife, and mother. This was my challenge throughout the rehearsal process. Dr. Phaneuf worked with me on shaping inflection and finding vocal variety. The dialogue is highly stylized and poetic at some points. Eleanor must be able to verbally duel with Henry, matching him quip for quip, as well as roar for roar. The actress must have command of her full vocal range to adequately convey the glee of her victories, the desolation of her losses, the majesty of her commands, the venom of her barbs, and the depth of her despair. Her love of language and able wit should also be conveyed through timbre and inflection, pitch and tone. Vocal warm-ups and exercises helped my voice to attain the necessary range to encompass the demands of Eleanor's characterization.

Physically, I was at a disadvantage. Goldman describes Eleanor in a stage direction upon her first entrance as follows:

Eleanor of Aquitaine is 61 and looks nothing like it. She is a truly handsome woman of great temperament, authority and presence. She has been

a queen of international importance for 46 years and you know it. Finally, she is that most unusual thing: a genuinely feminine woman thoroughly capable of holding her own in a man's world. (11)

As a much younger woman with no exposure to royalty, I had to discover her size and presence. Her movements must be steady and aged, but lithe and graceful, energetic and determined. Her very presence must command attention without calling attention to it. Also, her freedom from captivity, no matter how brief, must be inherent in her physical energy. The costume, designed by Professor Sharon Sobel, helped a great deal in realizing her physicality. The kirtle had long, flowing open sleeves which demanded sweeping arm gestures and moved gracefully with every one. For the formal scenes, I wore a wimple and veil which forced my face up and out. The kirtle was belted and provided a straight back and upward bearing. For the more intimate scenes, the veil and wimple were removed which allowed more freedom of movement and a chance at introspection. The kirtle hung loose for Act II scene 1 which was the most intimate of all the scenes. The skirt flowed around my legs and lent an almost ethereal quality to my movement.

Relationships between the characters also dictated

certain types of movement. I played physically close to Richard, constantly touching and caressing. I avoided John and only approached him hesitantly, but retreated reluctantly when rebuffed. I circled Geoffrey, keeping a wary distance. The formal scenes required majesty and regal bearing, but, once alone with Henry, I became more relaxed and renewed an old familiarity in gesture and demeanor which closed the gap of ten years in confinement.

Another physical aspect that was important to the character was stage combat. In Act I scene 3 Eleanor pulls a dagger from her belt to cut herself to prove her sincerity to Richard. We rehearsed this scene over and over trying to find the correct angle for the audience to be able to see the action. In Act II scene 1, Henry and Eleanor had several instances of physical struggle. Our fight choreographer worked with us on these movements to ensure the maximum audience impact as well as our own personal safety. In the last scene, Eleanor is bombarded by Richard's pent-up hatred and tries to move away, but Richard will not let her escape his grasp. This scene also had to be carefully choreographed and rehearsed. I envisioned this physical struggle as attempted rape, which played well with the suggestion of incest between the two. These kinds of physical exertions are difficult to manage for one who is not accustomed to them. However, I believe

that through the rehearsal process I was able to overcome my physical limitations enough to move convincingly through the combat moments.

As challenging as the physical and vocal requirements were, I found the comedy to be even more challenging. I have always envied actors who seem to have a knack for comedy. As simple as it may appear to be, comedy, at least to me, is the most difficult genre in which to be successful. Comic timing, delivery, and a foundation in truth are the necessary elements for the comedic actor. James Goldman describes his view of comedy and tragedy in *The Lion in Winter: An Avco Embassy Film*:

Comedy, as far as I'm concerned, is just as particular a form as Tragedy. From Tragedy emerges something larger and more terrible than tears; from Comedy comes something deeper and more penetrating than a belly laugh. (n.p.)

Although the subject matter of the play tends toward the tragic--a disputed succession, corruption of power and ambition, the destructive power of love through jealousy and pride, rebellion and betrayal--the play's style is comedic. Tense, psychological and emotional confrontations are punctuated with witty repartee, puns, and *bon mots*. This juxtaposition of comedic style with heavy themes provides an ever-changing and fast-paced view of a truly

dysfunctional family.

While I have played comedic roles in the past, none compare to the role of Eleanor. Her sophisticated wit and ready repartee become effective weapons in her verbal duels with Henry and the boys. At times it was difficult to find the humor through her pain, but once I understood that the pain grounded her humor, that she honed her wit on the stone of her pain, I achieved success. When I played for comedy, I failed; when I played the reality of the moment, I succeeded. Warren Francke, the reviewer for *The Daily Nonpareil*, had this to say about our production:

A decade in prison hasn't dulled her [Eleanor's] sharp wit or deadly tongue. And Willoughby delivers her lines with such comic timing that you can almost hear the punctuating drum roll. (10A)

This comment from an outside source gave me a great deal of satisfaction. Throughout the run, I feared those moments when the audience might not respond to the quips and witticisms which, in turn, caused more anxiety. The more anxious I became, the more I had to concentrate on the reality of the moment by moment interplay between the characters, which turned out to be what I needed to do in the first place.

Performing the play for an audience is one of the

ultimate goals of every theatrical endeavor. While performance provides its own measure of pride and accomplishment, I have always found the rehearsal process to be more rewarding. The craft of acting requires trial and error, observation and imitation, exploration and discovery. The analysis, discoveries, and subsequent formulation of a character also provide a vehicle for self-exploration and revelation. Every character possesses traits which live, to one degree or another, inside of each actor. The actor must be willing to unearth and access these traits, then examine and pursue them to the extent appropriate for the role. In the process, the actor gains insight, and insight leads to self-cognizance which, in turn, leads to growth. I have grown as an actor throughout this process, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to examine, at length, the intricacies of this character.

CONCLUSION

The opportunity to perform Eleanor of Aquitaine in *The Lion in Winter* allowed me to pursue both my passion for theatre and my avid interest in English history. In preparation for the role, I first delved into historical research on Eleanor, her family, and the era in which she lived. I found the research fascinating and thought provoking. The more I read about her, the more I wanted to discover. Some actors may find the portrayal of a character based on an actual historical figure to be daunting or stifling in the creative process. I found it to be rewarding and fulfilling. Researching her life and accomplishments provided me with a foundation on which to build her character in the play.

Analysis of the script provided the next layer of character development. Her relationships with each of the other characters are clearly defined through the text, as are her motivations and through-line. She wants Henry back, and she will do anything to get him. If she cannot have him, she will do everything within her power to thwart his will. She manipulates, plots, schemes, and uses her sons as weapons against Henry. They are like two masters moving

pawns across a chess board: blocking advances, taking prisoners, each trying to out maneuver the other. They experience both victory and defeat, but neither is willing to concede ultimate victory to the other.

Once the character relationships have been established and her super-objective defined, an in-depth beat by beat analysis is necessary to flesh out the character. I found the exploration of dominant archetypal traits to be quite rewarding. In determining the dominant traits at any given moment in the play, I gained valuable insight to the workings of the character's mind and emotional state. Exploring the archetypes also enabled me to connect with the rapid changes in tactics and tone which occurred throughout the play.

Once I had completed the preliminary analysis, the rehearsal process provided the milieu in which to explore the complexities of her relationships with the others. We had a tremendous cast. Kenny Glenn played Henry with wit and vigor. He provided a perfect foil to my Eleanor. Our close personal friendship helped to ease us over the rough spots during rehearsals. Our rapport on stage was solid. Craig Fitzpatrick played Richard. As a young actor, Craig grasped Richard's vulnerability while maintaining Richard's sense of self-importance. Brian Mallgrave played a dark and sinister Geoffrey. Brian is slight of build with very dark

hair and a fair complexion. His Geoffrey slithered across the stage. In the final scene, Geoffrey somewhat threatens Eleanor before Henry's arrival. Brian inadvertently spit in my face during this scene in rehearsal. My reaction was so startled and horrified that we kept it in the production. Don Rush played a petulant and whiny John. Another young actor, Don was immensely proud of his theatrically applied acne. His character's rebuffs of Eleanor were harsh and self-serving (which was wonderful motivation for me), but in the final scene, John shows a kindness to Eleanor when he hands her a cup of wine with which to fortify herself after Richard's attack. Don played the moment with a depth which consistently took me by surprise. Every time we played that scene, tears stung the back of my eyes. Rachel McCutchen played a beautiful Alais. She gave the character an inner strength and strong sense of personal assuredness. Chris Ross played a handsome, young and naive, yet tough and tenacious Philip.

It was both a joy and a privilege to work with a cast whose spirit of camaraderie provided such a true ensemble experience. Dr. Cindy Melby Phaneuf, the matriarch and director of our *dysfunctional family*, guided us with her vision and provided an atmosphere conducive to exploration and creativity. Her tireless efforts in guiding us to discovery and growth inspired our efforts. Dr. Phaneuf's

direction and vision, the scope and magnitude of the role, the rapport of the cast, and the opportunity to apply my love of history with my passion for theatre, helped to make this project a challenging, yet rewarding and fulfilling experience.

WORKS CONSULTED

Historical Background:

- Baltzer, Rebecca A. "Music in the Life and Times of Eleanor of Aquitaine." Kibler 61-80.
- Barber, Richard. *Henry Plantagenet: A Biography*. London: Barrie, 1964.
- Brown, Elizabeth A. R. "Eleanor of Aquitaine: Parent, Queen, and Duchess." Kibler 9-34.
- Contini, Mila. *Fashion: From Ancient Egypt to the Present Day*. London: Paul Hamlyn, 1965.
- Gurney, Gene. *Kingdoms of Europe: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Ruling Monarchs from Ancient Times to the Present*. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1982.
- Hallam, Elizabeth, ed. *The Plantagenet Chronicles*. New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986.
- Kelly, Amy. *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950.
- Kibler, William W. ed. *Eleanor of Aquitaine: Patron and Politician*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1978.
- Meade, Marion. *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Biography*. New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1977.
- Moshér, Lazar. "Cupid, the Lady, and the Poet: Modes of Love at Eleanor of Aquitaine's Court." Kibler 35-60.
- Pernoud, Regine. *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. Translated by Peter Wiles. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1968.

Seward, Desmond. *Eleanor of Aquitaine: The Mother Queen*.

New York: Dorset Press, 1978.

Walker, Curtis Howe. *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. University of

North Carolina Press, 1950.

Warren, W. L. *Henry II*. London: Eyre Methuen, 1973.

Weir, Allison. *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Life*. New York:

Ballantine Books, 1999.

Reviews and Criticism:

Goldman, James. *The Lion in Winter: A Comedy in Two Acts*.

New York: Samuel French, Inc. 1966.

Francke, Warren. "King Meets His Match." Rev. of *The Lion*

in Winter, by James Goldman. University of Nebraska at

Omaha Theatre. dir. Cindy Melby Phaneuf. *The Daily*

Nonpareil [Council Bluffs] 2 Dec. 1997: A10.

Guernsey, Otis T. *Best Plays 1965/66 - 1982/83*. New York:

Dodd, Mead & Company, 1983.

The Lion in Winter: An Avco Embassy Film: Joseph E. Levine

Presents a Martin Poll Production. New York: Ronark,

1968. N. pag.

New York Theatre Critic's Reviews. Vol. XXVII, no. 6. Week

of March 7, 1966.

Stern, Carol Simpson. "Goldman, James." *Contemporary*

Dramatists. 5th ed. Edited by D. L. Kirkpatrick.

Chicago: St. James Press, 1988.

Acting Sources:

Campbell, Joseph. *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology.*

New York: Viking Press, 1959.

Moore, Robert and Douglas Gillette. *King Warrior Magician*

Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature

Masculine. San Francisco: Harper, 1990.

Russell, Douglas. *Period Style for the Theatre.* Boston:

Allyn and Bacon, 1980.

Saint Denis, Michel. *Theatre: The Rediscovery of Style.* New

York: Theatre Arts Books, 1960.

Stanislavsky, Constantin. *Building a Character.* Trans.

Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts

Books, 1949.

---. *Creating a Role.* Trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood.

Ed. Hermine I. Popper. New York: Theatre Arts Books,

1961.