

**The Politics of Madness: Government in the Reigns of Charles
VI and Henry VI**

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Charles VI would have been insufficient. To my proof readers and critics, Roland Alger, Jenny Alger and Kristy Willson-Alger, without whom this thesis would be littered with errors.Â Approximately five hundred years have elapsed since the reigns of Charles VI and Henry VI, thereby rendering direct observation impossible. The historian must rely. 5 C. Rawcliffe, 'The Insanity of Henry VI', *The Historian*, no 50, 1996. 6 B. Wolfe, *Henry VI*, (London: 1981), p. 271. 7 For the characteristics of depressive stupors see, D. Stafford-Clark & A.C. Smith, *Psychiatry for Students*, 6th ed., (London: 1983), p. 242-3. 8 R.L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster*, (Gloucestershire: 1999), p. 136. 9 B.F.L. Clarke, *Mental Disorder in Earlier Britain: Exploratory Studies*, (C Charles VI's mother, Joanna de Bourbon, also exhibited signs of mental illness, as did various ancestors of hers, including Louis I, Duke of Bourbon, Peter I, Duke of Bourbon and Louis II, Duke of Bourbon. The king's cousin, Richard, Duke of York was appointed Lord Protector, to the annoyance of the Queen, who strongly felt that she and her party should govern England.Â A marble tablet placed in the Wakefield Tower in his memory marks the spot where Henry VI is traditionally said to have met his untimely end. Each year, on the eve of the anniversary of his death, the ceremony of the lilies and the roses is played out, white lilies for Eton College and white roses for King's College, Cambridge are placed there in memory of their founder. Some historians have approached the illnesses of Charles VI and Henry VI from the standpoint of modern psychology, thereby attempting a diagnosis? With regard to Charles VI, Famiglietti and Green have suggested that he was a schizophrenic. However Green does not elucidate further, whilst Famiglietti discusses Charles's illness as complying with the criteria for a paranoid schizophrenic in the, *Diagnostic Statistical Manual-III (DSM-III)*. Concerning Henry VI's condition, Green has postulated that he suffered a manic depressive stupor. In a 1987 article, Rawcliffe suggested that Henry might have had Charles VI (3 December 1368 – 21 October 1422), called the Beloved (French: le Bien-Aimé) and later the Mad (French: le Fol or le Fou), was King of France from 1380 until his death. He is known for his mental illness and psychotic episodes which plagued him throughout his life. Charles's reign would see his army crushed at the Battle of Agincourt, leading to the signing of the Treaty of Troyes, which made his future son-in-law Henry V of England his regent and heir to the throne of France. However The reign of King Henry VI was one plagued with monstrous misfortunes and dreadful disasters. He inherited a united kingdom at the peak of its power on the European mainland. Yet over the course of his reign he witnessed the decline of his domain into vicious baronial infighting: the start of the Wars of the Roses. Although he had an evident interest in public affairs and a desire to try and reconcile his warring subordinates, his inability to prevent powerful individuals influencing him – each with their own agendas – caused him to make poor decisions that helped plunge his kingdom into anarc