

Film versions of the play

- The first three film version are the most eccentric and the versions after seem to have left the plot sequence intact.

TREVOR NUNN'S VERSION OF KING LEAR

- Dark symbolically.
- Lear is portrayed as both a majestic, childish and mad old man who is enfeebled by age to the point of senility
- Cordelia is dressed in white
- Note Lear is wearing wedding rings.
- Edgar seems to look intelligent, naive (carrying a book, glasses). This because it is needed to understand his actions when he instantly believes Edmund. When Edmund tells him to go, Edgar is easily moved around and twirled by his brother.
- The fool in this production is developed with a lot of pathos; with emotions.
- When the fool speaks the camera goes onto Lear looking pensive – maybe realising there is truths in what he says.
- We can see goneril is visibly pained by her father when he launches an attack on her wishing her to never have children.
- We also see a sense of Lear's physical deterioration (coupled with his mental deterioration) as the play progresses; he starts shaking more, his hair looks wild, he stoops more.
- Regan speaks fast. When she's talking she is also drinking (supposedly wine).
- We see Edmund knighted by Cornwall (this doesn't directly happen in the text but it is implied).
- We clearly see Oswald being portrayed like a coward when Kent tells him to draw his sword.
- Regan splashes wine in Kent's face when he is in the stocks; this has been added by the director to show her vicious nature.
- In the film the scene of Edgar alone when he is creating his disguise as Poor Tom is a close up of the character centre stage, he is directly speaking to us. He is drawing the audience in and making us complicit in his plans.
- The film cuts Edgar's line, "the gods are just."
- Lear is seen to be holding flashcards during act one scene one, showing him to be weak and dodderly.
- He clings on to his crown, showing his desperation at having to hold onto power
- Edmund is portrayed as physically being more attractive than Edgar – suggesting that all humans are flawed and we are attracted to those who share those flaws
- Kent, Albany and Edgar are seen holding their hands up to the heavens and praying for Cordelia to be alive, yet Lear comes in with her in his arms – shows that the gods do not answer their pleas

OTHER VERSIONS:

- ❖ **ANDREW McCULLOUGH** – paints a riveting portrait of the aging Lear
- ❖ **PETER BROOK** – it is shown in black and white, with emphasis on black.
 - He omits whole scenes and moves things around to suit his dramatic intentions.
- ❖ **EDWIN SHERIN** – this is the only version of an actual staged production. The audience is audible and give a sense of life.
- ❖ **JONATHON MILLER** – it is shot in colour, but its palette is largely monochromatic.
- ❖ **MICHAEL ELLIOT** – set in the time among the Druids and Stonehenge.

