Stritmatter: *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* is the book your English professor still won't read, a kind of samizdat, a grad student's forbidden thrill but not something you would ever dare to discuss with your advisor for fear of being branded with a scarlet letter in academia's hall of shame for "doubting Shakespeare."

Maycock: Such questions have long been the province of authorship doubters such as canon Gerald Rendall, who more than ninety years ago identified Jonson as the "most skilled agent of anonymity." Unfortunately, many mainstream scholars misunderstand the value of this inquiry, and have read little if any of the published scholarship on authorship. Few can claim any specific or detailed knowledge of the most viable alternate candidate, the Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), let alone assess the claims of other candidates....

Rollett: If nothing else, this analysis of Shakespeare's doublet draws attention to an astonishing aberration at the heart of the First Folio. Whatever its interpretation, there can now be no doubt that the left-front/left-back anomaly is a fact. What is usually taken to be a poorly drawn portrait of the playwright turns out to be a skillfully executed depiction of a carefully designed enigma.

Whalen: Jonson's use of ambiguity in the First Folio gets indirect support from his prior publishing experience and his close connections to the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, to whom it was dedicated.....At the time, King James granted him an annual pension of sixty-six pounds for unspecified services. Jonson was personally involved in all aspects of his own thousand-page folio from beginning to end, revising both its contents and presentation....Jonson was....in a perfect position to introduce as much ambiguity and seductive falsehood as he judged necessary and appropriate, especially given his connections with the Herbert family.

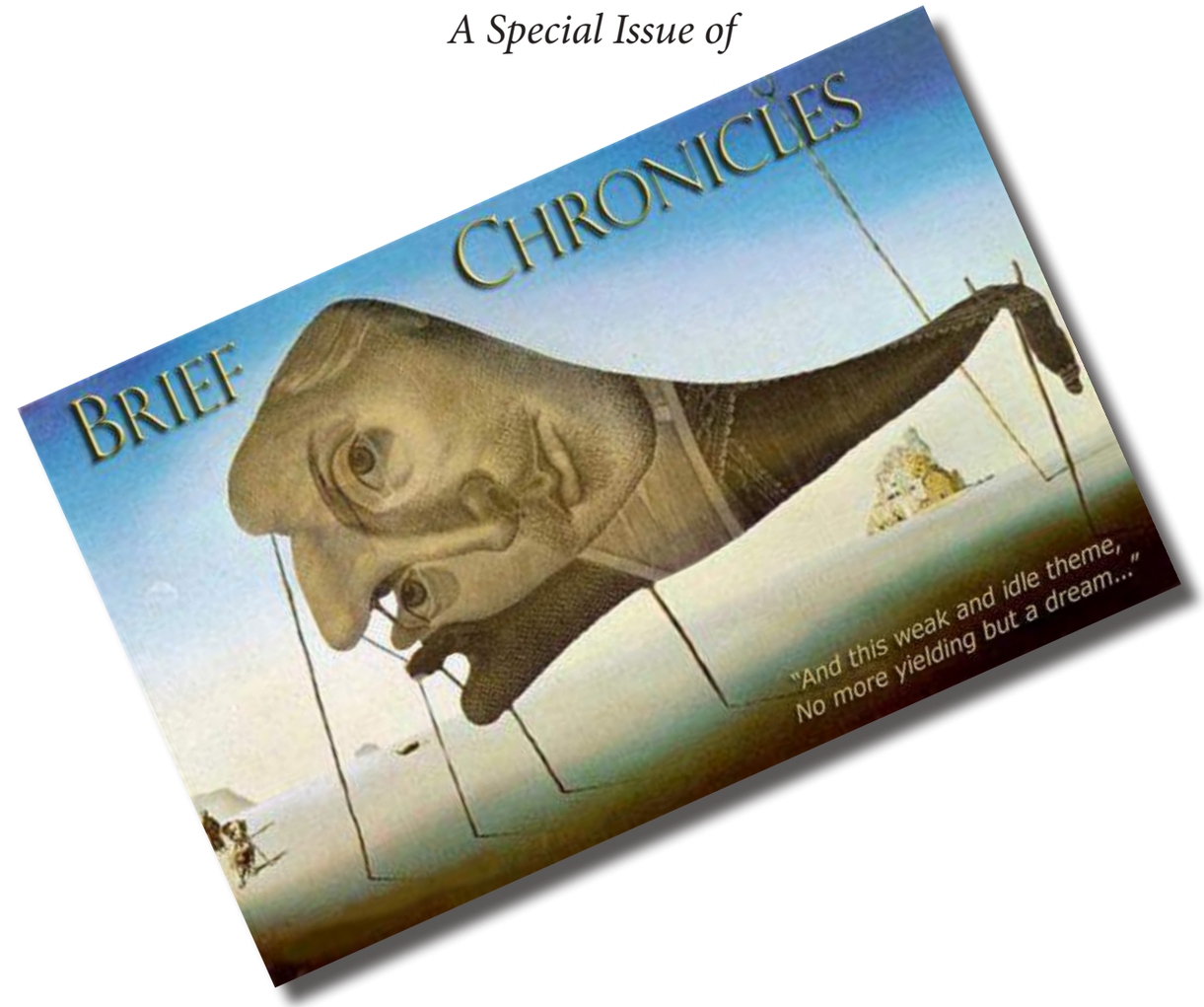
Greenwood: Steevens here speaks *without doubt* as to part of this Preface only as having been written by Jonson, but we need have no hesitation in saying that if Jonson is proved to have written part he undoubtedly wrote the whole....It seems to me absurd to suppose that, having been called in to write in the names of the players, he would have contented himself with composing a fragment of a preface, and have left the rest to others. Least of all would he have left what he had written to be completed by those "deserving men," Heminge and Condell, who were, as Steevens justly remarks, "wholly unused to composition."

Chiljan: The Shakespeare professor is well aware of Jonson's voice in Heminges and Condell's letters but is reluctant to admit he wrote them because of the implications. If they were fraudulently written, then the veracity of the entire preface is questionable, including Droeshout's image of "Shakespeare." And this preface, in conjunction with the Shakspeare monument in Stratford-upon-Avon, is the professor's best "evidence" that the Stratford Man wrote Shakespeare!

Boyle: The first imprisonment of both the 3rd Earl of Southampton and the 18th Earl of Oxford had occurred in the summer of 1621, shortly following the downfall of Francis Bacon over bribery in the conduct of his office—with, interestingly, Southampton leading the opposition against Bacon. The 47-year old Southampton and the 28-year old Buckingham nearly came to blows on the floor of Parliament over this matter.

Warren: Looney believed that the large number of such correspondences was one of the most important factors in proving his case. As he explained, "The predominating element in what we call circumstantial evidence is that of coincidences. A few coincidences we may treat as simply interesting; a number of coincidences we regard as remarkable; a vast accumulation of extraordinary coincidences we accept as conclusive proof" (Looney, *Identified* 80).

Dudley: Henry and Emily Folger and a close circle of confederates were able to operate an enterprise on a *global scale* in secret and at the same time kept his name out of the newspapers *for the better part of four decades* – and all this in an age of mass media, with British newspapers responding with outrage to the loss of their printed heritage at auctions to a faceless American millionaire. If, with the right mix of power and influence this could be accomplished in a democracy during the 20th Century, how much more likely is it that a similarly secretive and powerful man in an authoritarian 16th Century could have disguised his actions to contemporary observers—and thus to history?

The 1623 Shakespeare First Folio: A Minority Report (2016)

A Special Issue of