

**Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship  
2023 New Orleans Conference  
November 9 - 12**

**PROGRAM**

*(All times show are US Central Time)*

**Thursday November 9**

*Session One*

- 11:30 – 1**      **SOF registration desk opens at Hyatt Centric French Quarter**
- 1:00-1:10**      **Opening of Session. Host Don Rubin, Conference Chair**
- Overview and Announcements**
- Welcome: Earl Showerman, SOF President**
- 1:10-1:50**      **Tom Townsend: Finding the True Shakespeare: An Historical Perspective**  
                    *An Authorship 101 Introduction*
- 1:50-2:20**      **Paul Chambers: Employing Mathematics to Identify the Real Shakespeare**
- 2:20-2:50**      **Ralph McDonald: The Shakespeare Brand of 1623:**  
                    *Why a Rose By Any Other Name Smells Not As Sweet*
- 2:50-3:30**      **Guy Sprung: Shakespeare and the Theatre:**  
                    *An Actor Prepares (300 Years Before Stanislavski?)*  
                    *Edited for this conference with a brief introduction by Don Rubin*
- 3:30**              **Break for City Tour and Dinner Cruise**
- 4:00-6:30**      **City Tour Pick-up at 3:50 (drop off at dock at 6:30)**
- 7:00-9:00**      **Jazz Dinner Cruise Reception on the Mississippi River**
- Bus One: Natchez and Creole Queen      --Bus Two: Creole Queen**

## **Friday November 10**

### ***Session Two***

***Host: Dorothea Dickerman***

- 9:30- 9:35**    **Welcome and Announcements**
- 9:35-10:10**    **Lyle Jennings Colombo:**  
**Two First Folio Poems and Three Other Texts Encrypted by John Dee**
- 10:10-10:55**    **Gabriel Ready: Ben Jonson's Desk Fire in November 1623**
- 10:55-11:35**                            **Keynote Speech**  
**(Note: The speaker has asked NOT to be identified in the program)**  
**Reactions and Responses to a recently published book on the authorship**
- 11:35-11:50**    **Refreshment Break**
- 11:50-12:50**    **Panel: Publishing on the Authorship: Real Life Experiences**  
**Moderator: Don Rubin**  
***Panelists: Margo Anderson, Ros Barber, Jim Warren and the keynote speaker***
- 12:50 to 1:10**    **Book signing for *all* authors of authorship books in NOLA**
- 1:10-2:40.**    **Buffet Lunch -- *included for all registrants in the Hyatt's Atrium Courtyard***

### ***Session Three:***

***Host: Tom Woosnam***

- 2:40-3:25**    **William S. Niederkorn: A Secular Tour of *Venus and Adonis***
- 3:25-4:00**    **James A. Warren: Words, Words, Words:**  
***A More Accurate Understanding of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare***
- 4:00-4:45**    **Rima Greenhill: Shakespeare, Elizabeth and Ivan:**  
***The Role of English-Russian Relations in Love's Labours Lost***
- 4:45-5:00**    ***Refreshment Break***
- 5:00-5:45**    **John Hamill: Challenging the Prince Tudor Theory**  
***(representing himself and John Shahan on the topic; rebuttal: James Warren)***

***Dinner On Own***

## Saturday November 11

9:00-10:15 Annual General Meeting (SOF Members Only\*)

(\* Not livestreamed. SOF members not in NOLA should request a Zoom invitation)

10:15-10:30. Refreshment break

### *Session Four:*

*Host: Bob Meyers*

10:30-10:40 Earl Showerman: Informal report on the SOF Annual General Meeting

10:40-11:20 Cheryl Eagan-Donovan and Michael Delahoyde: Music and Lyrics by E.O.

11:20-12:05 Ros Barber: A Thousand Questions Reduced to One:

*How to Win the Authorship Argument*

12:15-1:45 Lunch -- included for all registrants in Deanie's Restaurant

### *Session Five:*

*Host: Bonner Cutting*

1:45-2:30 Michael Delahoyde: Slanders About Nothing in *Much Ado* (Video)

2:30-3:00 Elisabeth P. Waugaman: Shakespeare's French Obsession: *How New Historicism Can Help Advance the Authorship Debate* (Video)

3:00-3:50 Robert Prechter: Was the Earl of Oxford Bisexual?

3:50- 4:05 *Refreshment Break*

4:05-4:55 Richard Waugaman: The Origins of Modern Literary Theory in the Repudiation of Autobiographical Readings of Shakespeare's Sonnets (Video)

4:55-5:30 Earl Showerman: Hamlet's Book Revisited:

*The Identity of the 'Satiric Rogue' Revealed*

*Dinner On Own*

## **Sunday November 12**

### *Session Six:*

*Host: SOF President Earl Showerman*

- 9:30-10:00**     **Michael Dudley: By the Rule of That Philosophy:**  
*Validating the Oxfordian Thesis Using Theories of Knowledge,  
Justification and Truth (video)*
- 10:00-10:45**     **Sky Gilbert: Ben Jonson's Hidden Agenda**
- 10:45-11:00**     *Refreshment Break*
- 11:00-11:40**     **Dorothea Dickerman: Shakespeare in Sicily:**  
*Part II of *Traveling Together Through Shakespeare's Italy**
- 11:40-12:25**     **Roger Stritmatter: Work in Progress:**  
*From Literary Encryptions to Handwriting*
- 12:25 – 12:35**     **Earl Showerman: Announcements and Awards:**  
    --Oxfordian of Year  
  
    --2024 conference

*Closing Banquet -- included for all registrants in the Red Fish Grill*

*Note: All sessions with papers and/or panels are being live-streamed.*

**(Program subject to change)**

## Paper Abstracts and Biographies

*Alphabetical by last name of presenter/session host*



**MARGO ANDERSON**

**Panelist: Publishing on the authorsip question**

**Bio:** Margo Anderson, under her former name Mark Anderson, devoted more than a decade to researching the life of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. The result was a towering biography, now standard in the field, “*Shakespeare” By Another Name: The Life of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, The Man Who Was Shakespeare* published by Gothm Books in 2005. Her numerous publications on the subject include articles in *Harper’s*, *The Boston Globe* and on the PBS.org website. She has also been a contributing writer to *Wired*.



**ROS BARBER**

**Panelist: Publishing on the authorship question**

**Paper: A Thousand Questions Reduced to One: How to Win the Authorship Argument**

**Abstract:** The Shakespeare authorship question is a large and complex area of study, which is further complicated by its association with entrenched belief systems and thus, high emotion. The psychological phenomena of confirmation bias and cognitive dissonance mean that those deeply committed to their beliefs as being ‘true’ (both Stratfordians and non-Stratfordians) are not only unable to process conflicting data, but get angry if challenged to do so, thus reducing clarity of thinking further. Arguing with any stripe of ‘true believer’ is unproductive, so I do not use ‘argument’ in that sense, but in the academic sense of presenting a logical, reasoned and evidence-based case that might persuade the persuadable.

After compiling (so far) 600+ pages of the e-book compendium [\*Shakespeare the Evidence\*](#), and creating the University of London’s [MOOC \(Massive Open Online Course\) on the Shakespeare Authorship Question](#), which has attracted nearly 15,000 participants to date, I have become clear about the strengths and the weaknesses of the arguments on both sides. There are a thousand questions we might ask or be asked by opponents, but I will suggest we first begin by asking

ourselves, and perhaps our opponents, just five. These five questions, devised by someone who escaped a religious cult, effectively level the playing field for a fair game. From a thousand questions to five; but can we simplify further?

Following my recent appearance as one of two non-Stratfordian expert witnesses at the Moot Court trial of William of Stratford at Middle Temple in London – which we lost for simple reasons I will elucidate – I believe there is only *one* question non-Stratfordians need to be able the answer, which is currently beyond us. This question was planted in the First Folio, so never more relevant than in this 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. What is the key question? And is there any way we might, convincingly, answer it?

**Bio:** Dr Ros Barber is a senior lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Goldsmiths, University of London, and Director of Research at the Shakespearean Authorship Trust. She is the author and presenter of the world's first MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on the Shakespeare authorship question ([coursera.org/learn/Shakespeare](https://coursera.org/learn/Shakespeare)). *Shakespeare: The Evidence*, her ongoing online compendium of the evidence, arguments and counter-arguments used in contesting the orthodox case, can be found at [leanpub.com/shakespeare](https://leanpub.com/shakespeare). She is editor and co-author of *30-Second Shakespeare* (2015), *Know-it-all Shakespeare* (2017) in the US. Her articles on early modern literary biography have been published in *Rethinking History*, *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, *Critical Survey*, *Notes & Queries* and *American Notes & Queries*. Barber is three times winner (2011, 2014, 2018) of the Hoffman Prize for a distinguished work on Christopher Marlowe.



**PAUL CHAMBERS**

### **Paper:: Employing Mathematics to Identify the Real Shakespeare**

**Abstract:** My presentation applies text mining analytics and Bayesian analysis to the authorship question and is based on my article published in the *Oxfordian* 24. Based on machine learning and artificial intelligent algorithms, I illustrate the use of textual analytics to compare the poetry of Oxford to the poetic works attributed to William Shakespeare. Historical and literary sources are used only to provide a starting point for the Bayesian analysis. Using only timing events and statistical text based analytical tools, a relative Bayesian inference calculation is performed comparing the relative likelihoods of authorship between Oxford and the man from Stratford. This blend of science, mathematics, and culture demonstrate that the Earl of Oxford is orders-of-magnitude more likely to be the author.

**Bio:** Paul Chambers is an expert in data science and statistics with a Master's degree in Physics from the University of Maryland at College Park and a PhD in Nuclear Engineering. He has served as a Senior Data Scientist with numerous firms including EEOC, CMS, Hitachi Consulting and is currently with Blockchains Inc.



**LYLE JENNINGS COLOMBO**

**Paper: Two First Folio Poems and Three Other Texts Encrypted by John Dee**

**Abstract:** This presentation will demonstrate that Ben Jonson's First Folio poem "To the Reader," the Shakespeare funerary monument at Stratford, and three other texts concerning Shakespeare were encrypted by the Renaissance polymath John Dee using a previously unknown variant of a Cardano Grille cipher. I have discovered that Dee's name is encoded three times in each of these texts, and present multiple proofs that his signatures do not occur randomly but by design. Moreover, four of the texts contain an encryption rule that explicitly instructs us to look for "three Dees." The signatures do not merely identify Dee as the cryptographer but they also form an essential part of the cryptograms' infrastructure with each signature strategically positioned to demarcate the messages concealed in the works. The messages unambiguously state that the author of Shakespeare's works was Edward de Vere. Any one of these encryptions would be enough to take the case for Edward de Vere's authorship of the plays and poems beyond simply evidence and into the realm of definitive proof. The discovery of these multiple texts in which the same unique cryptographic system is used to encode the same messages is difficult to ignore.

**Bio:** Lyle Jennings Colombo did her doctoral studies in philosophy at Tulane University and the Free University of Berlin. She taught philosophy at Loyola University, New Orleans, and currently lectures on creative writing and literature in Tulane University's First Year Experience and Honors Scholars programs. Her publications include articles in the journals *Existentia* and *Heidegger Studies*, as well as translations from German into English. She has presented papers on 20th century German philosophy and archaeological theory in the US and Europe. Fairly new to the authorship question, she is now a member of both the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship and the De Vere Society. Dr. Colombo also organized this week's interdisciplinary panel discussion on the authorship question sponsored by Tulane's Newcomb Institute.



**BONNER MILLER CUTTING**

*Host: Session five*

*Also a guest speaker on the SAQ at a NOLA high school this week.*

**Bio:** Bonner Miller Cutting graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, and has a Master of Music degree from McNeese State University in Lake Charles,

Louisiana, where she also served as an adjunct faculty member. She lectures frequently on the Shakespeare authorship question at conferences, book clubs, and community groups. In her book *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question* (2018), Bonner revealed new information on ten authorship-related subjects, including the Last Will and Testament of William Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon and the £1,000 annuity that Queen Elizabeth I gave to Edward de Vere (Earl of Oxford). Videos of six of Bonner's lectures are posted on the [SOF YouTube channel](#), and interviews with her about the Stratford man's will are available in podcasts. She was a featured speaker at the SOF celebration of the centennial of Looney's 1920 book. Bonner was a board member of the Shakespeare Fellowship before the 2013 merger creating the SOF. She has continued to serve the SOF in many capacities since then. She also serves on the Board of Directors and as Secretary of the [Shakespeare Authorship Coalition](#), which sponsors the "[Declaration of Reasonable Doubt](#)." Bonner was elected in 2020 to a three-year term on the SOF Board of Trustees. She is a member of the Conference, Research Grant Program, and Video Contest Committees. She was elected by the Board as Secretary in 2021.



**MICHAEL DELAHOYDE**

**Paper: Slanders About Nothing in *Much Ado* (video)**

**Abstract:** When the Earl of Oxford eventually realized the nefariousness of his cousin Henry Howard, Charles Arundel, and Francis Southwell, he alerted Queen Elizabeth about their traitorous, indeed murderous, scheming. The would-be assassins desperately countered with what is now known as the Arundel Libels, or Arundel-Howard Libels, accusing Oxford of everything they could exaggerate or invent, ultimately denigrating his legacy as being a homicidal monster, a devil-worshipper, a pederast, a perpetual drunkard, and more.

*Much Ado About Nothing*, according to Percy Allen and Mark (Margo) Anderson, is Oxford's attempted mocking dismissal of the slander. But matters in the play extend far beyond the main issue of slander (a word that occurs 16 times, far more than in any other Shakespeare work), the subjects of numerous specific accusations are thematic and are satirized. The play is a thinly disguised exposé of the panicked villains and their most bizarre and damning defamations. It is Oxford's laugh, and invitation for all at court to laugh, at the accusations he renders ludicrous.

For example, *Much Ado* is obsessed with fashion, literal and metaphoric, with even two thugs passing the time discussing it; Oxford was accused of comparing unfavorably Elizabeth's wardrobe, even on Christmas Day, to the everyday clothing of any common Milanese housewife. The play features music and commentary on singing; Oxford was accused of insulting the Queen's singing voice. Oxford was called "monstrous" and his brain "giddy." Such specific words from the Arundel Libels appear in the play and the concepts are countered and lampooned. Arundel's contorted numbering system in his desperate arrangement of the accusations is also mocked in Dogberry's bungling, and much ado is made of much more.

**Bio:** Michael Delahoyde is a Professor of English in his 32nd non-tenured year at Washington State University teaching Shakespeare, Mythology, and interdisciplinary arts and humanities courses. He earned undergraduate degrees in English, Music, and Education at Vassar College in his hometown of Poughkeepsie, New York, and his Ph.D. in English Literature at the University of Michigan. Delahoyde has published articles on Chaucer, dinosaur films, children's toys, and meat ads, but solely on Oxford as Shakespeare during the current century. He served as Senior Editor for the MLA journal, *The Rocky Mountain Review*, for 14 years and as Managing Editor of *Brief Chronicles* subsequently. He has conducted archival research in Italy thanks to SOF project grants, and has produced Oxfordian editions of *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Twelfth Night*. A less tedious audio biography is available at <https://michaeldelahoyde.org/about/>



**DOROTHEA DICKERMAN**

*Host Session two*

**Paper: Shakespeare in Sicily**

**Part II of Traveling Together Through Shakespeare's Italy**

**Abstract:** New Orleans' culture is deeply French, so why a lecture on Sicily? Because New Orleans' culture is also deeply Sicilian. Between the 1880s and the early 1920s, an estimated 290,000 Italians, most of them Sicilians, entered the US through the port of New Orleans. Three steamships a month ran to Palermo, making New Orleans second only to New York in the number of Sicilian immigrants. St. Joseph's Day parades celebrating Sicily's patron saint and Central Grocery's iconic muffuletta sandwich are but two attestations to the continuing Sicilian influence on New Orleans today.

This paper is a sequel to my prior lecture about Edward de Vere's travels in northern Italy and the evolution of the Shakespeare canon. Armed again with Richard Roe's *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, I use a second Bard-targeted Italian tour to further convince my lawyer husband that "William Shakespeare" really was a pen name for Edward de Vere, the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford.

The paper follows the route Oxford likely took when he disappeared from Venice in May of 1575, and examines why he did not reappear there until late September. Exploring "Bohemia", we land in Messina, Taormina, Siracusa, Agrigento, Palermo, and the mysterious island of Vulcano, savoring the beauty and history of Sicily and treating listeners to details that will help them more fully imagine the "Sicilian" plays, three of which - *The Winter's Tale*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Tempest* - were first published in the First Folio of 1623.

**Bio:** Dorothea Dickerman retired as a partner from a 34-year career in a 1000-lawyer international law firm to research and write on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Using her

legal skills, primary source historical and literary documents and her travels to locations where Oxford lived and visited, she focuses on giving context to his life, to the Shakespeare canon, and to Tudor law, history, politics and personalities. Her foreign language skills include Italian, French and rusty Latin.

A prior speaker at SOF conferences, a Blue Boar Tavern participant and a podcast guest on Oxfordian topics, Dorothea also serves as a trustee of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. She is currently working on a series of Elizabethan historical novels. She was awarded her B.A. from Amherst College *summa cum laude* in English and Political Science and her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School.



**MICHAEL DUDLEY**

**Paper: By the Rule of That Philosophy: Validating the Oxfordian Thesis**

**Using Theories of Knowledge, Justification and Truth (video)**

**Abstract:** In his 2021 history of the Oxfordian movement, *Shakespeare Revolutionized*, James Warren presents what he refers to as the twelve “mental revolutions” downstream of J. Thomas Looney’s 1920 book *Shakespeare Identified* that the public was required to undergo in order to accept the Oxfordian thesis and surrender the Stratfordian one. These included fundamental transformations of our understandings of the circumstances of the composition of the plays and poems, the significance of their internal contents, and the origins of Shakespeare’s vast knowledge.

In this presentation—based on my just published book -- *Epistemology and the Shakespeare Authorship Question* -- I propose adding a thirteenth “mental revolution” to those articulated by Warren: that Oxfordians now need to forward a *meta-understanding* -- an understanding *of* our understanding of the authorship question itself, including the epistemological bases and justifications of competing knowledge claims. In this presentation, philosophical theories of knowledge, justification, truth and historiography are applied to both the Stratfordian and Oxfordian authorship models to demonstrate the extent to which these models are capable of meeting *external and disinterested* philosophical criteria.

The relevant theories encompass: belief-formation processes; the nature and role of evidence in knowledge; reliable knowledge-acquisition practices; the grounds on which our beliefs are justified (as well as how these justifications are structured); the philosophical nature of truth; and the roles of *explanation* and *understanding* in history. The goal of this investigation is to develop an evaluative (and even-handed) framework for assessing the respective *explanatory*

*potentials* of these competing authorship models, thereby transcending conventional internal arguments over competing evidence. I argue that the Stratfordian conception of the author (and the knowledge practices and rhetoric exercised in its defence) *cannot* be accommodated by *any* of these theories, while the Oxfordian claim (and the corresponding suite of practices employed by Oxfordians) are, by contrast, robustly validated and legitimated.

**Bio:** Michael Dudley is an academic librarian at the University of Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada, where he has collection and instruction responsibilities in history, theatre and film. He is the author of numerous articles on the authorship question that have been published in *Brief Chronicles* and *The Oxfordian*, as well as in mainstream publications such as the 2020 book *Teaching and Learning Practices for Academic Freedom*. Most recently, he co-authored (along with Bill Boyle and Catherine Hatinguais) a paper on library subject headings concerning the SAQ that was published in *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, a leading library science journal. Many of his talks may be found on the SOF's YouTube channel. His latest book, *Epistemology and the Shakespeare Authorship Question: Theoretical Perspectives and Approaches* was published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.



**CHERYL EAGAN-DONOVAN**

**Paper: Music and Lyrics by E.O.**

**Abstract:** This talk will explore the work of Edward de Vere as a lyricist and lyric poet, and its relationship to his role as a patron of music composers. Did he also write music? I will explore his education, training, travels, sources, servants, and colleagues, in the search to understand the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford's musical ability and legacy.

In addition to the extant lyric poetry, I will look at the songs embedded in the plays, and the musical properties of the Sonnets and long poem as clues to the author's talent as a writer and musician. Michael Delahoyde's work on de Vere's madrigals, Alexander Waugh's research into the music inherent in his poems, and Sally Mosher's exploration of the Oxford's relationship with composer William Bird will provide a foundation for further inquiry. Additional sources for evidence about the music and lyrics written by Oxford and his contemporaries include works by Steven May and Katherine Eggar. Was Edward de Vere not just the great innovator who changed Elizabethan theater, but also, by default, the inventor of the modern musical?

**Bio:** Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, M.F.A., is a writer, director, and producer whose documentary, [\*Nothing Is Truer than Truth\*](#), premiered on Hulu in 2019, is now available on Amazon Prime in the U.S. and Canada, and has been released in Europe and the rest of the world as *Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Name*. The 2019 Oxfordian of the Year, Cheryl has served on the Boards of

Directors of Women in Film and Video New England, The Next Door Theater, and the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship.

Her debut documentary, *All Kindsa Girls*, screened at festivals and art house theaters in London, Toronto and throughout the U.S. She is a frequent lecturer at conferences, has published articles about screenwriting and film in journals and magazines, has appeared on several podcast series, and serves as a manuscript consultant for screenwriters and producers. She is currently working on a book for screenwriters, *Shakespeare Auteur: Creating Authentic Characters for the Screen*.

Cheryl has also interviewed filmmakers from around the world for online film festivals, awards programs, at conferences, and for magazine features. She teaches writing, film, and literature at Lesley University, Northeastern University, and Grub Street Center for Creative Writing in Boston. She also provides script consultations for screenwriters and producers, and has been a judge for several screenwriting contests and fellowships.

Recently she received a research grant award to travel to London and study manuscript circulation for her next film project. She moderated a panel on screenwriting at the Association of Writers and Writing Professionals (AWP) 2019 conference, was a mentor for the South By Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival and spoke at The National Press Club in 2020, and co-hosted the international online SOF Shakespeare Symposium in 2021.



**SKY GILBERT**

### **Paper: Ben Jonson's Hidden Agenda**

**Abstract:** In this paper, I attempt to prove that far from being a 'friend' of William Shakespeare's, or even an admirer of his style, Shakespeare's work was anathema to Jonson's and Jonson was aesthetically, morally, and philosophically opposed to Shakespeare's writing. I believe scholars have wasted their time on discussing satirical allusions to the man from Stratford's obsession with gaining a coat of arms in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* instead of examining the big picture.

Jonson's comedies indicate that he was clearly critical of courtly life and courtly manners and -- most importantly -- the courtly style of writing that was characteristic of Edward de Vere and euphuism. Jonson's epigrams and epitaphs (particularly his savagely critical satire on courtly lady Cecilia Bulstrode, which was followed by a tribute to her -- gushing, but in praise, that is, the opposite direction) reveal that Jonson was less interested -- when writing about his peers (which he did often, using their real names) -- in describing them accurately, than in instructing readers in moral lessons. In short, Jonson was in the habit of praising and blaming various living and dead people with no regard of the reality of his own personal actual attitudes to them.

**Bio:** Sky Gilbert is a poet, novelist, playwright, filmmaker, theatre director, and professor emeritus of theatre and creative writing at the University of Guelph. He was co-founder of Toronto's Buddies in Bad Times Theatre and was its artistic director for 17 years. He has had more than 40 plays produced, and has written seven critically acclaimed novels and three award winning poetry collections. There is a street in Toronto named after him: 'Sky Gilbert Lane.' This past year, he has been running an online course on the SAQ.



**RIMA GREENHILL**

**Paper: Shakespeare, Elizabeth and Ivan:**

**The Role of English-Russian Relations in *Love's Labours Lost***

**Abstract:** Shakespeare's play *Love's Labours Lost* has perplexed scholars and theatergoers for more than 400 years, because of its linguistic complexity, obscure topical allusions, and non-comedic ending. Traditionally it has been seen as Shakespeare's "French" play, based on events and characters from the French Wars of Religion.

In my book *Shakespeare, Elizabeth and Ivan: The Role of English-Russian Relations in Love's Labours Lost*, I outline an interpretation of the play which, I believe, is rooted in diplomatic and trade relations between Russia and Elizabethan England during the decades following England's discovery of a northern trade route to Muscovy in 1553. In the book I draw on my original research of 16<sup>th</sup> century sources in English, Latin, French, and survey Russian sources previously unavailable in translation.

In this paper, I will provide the context for the Russian-English exchange, describe some of the Russian elements in the play that I have discovered and talk about the significance of this research for both Shakespeare scholarship and for the authorship question.

**Bio:** Rima Greenhill has an MA and a PhD in Russian Language and Literature from University College, London. A senior lecturer in the Department of Slavonic Languages and Literatures at Stanford University, she has lectured widely on Shakespeare in the Slavic world and has spoken at numerous SOF conferences. Her new book, *Shakespeare, Elizabeth and Ivan: The Role of English-Russian Relations in 'Love's Labours Lost'* was published by McFarland.



**JOHN HAMILL**

**Paper: Challenging the Prince Tudor Theory**

**Abstract:** In *The Oxfordian* 24, James Warren argued that the so-called Prince Tudor theory is the only explanation “weighty enough” to account for the long-term concealment of Oxford’s authorship of the works of Shakespeare. That theory argues Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, was the son of Edward de Vere and Queen Elizabeth I.

John Shahan and I wrote a letter to the editor questioning his assertion. Our letter and James Warren's response to it just appeared in the new issue of the journal, *TOX 25*. In our letter, we cite 10 issues that question the PT Theory. Warren's response only addressed one. This joint paper -- which I will deliver for both of us -- will explore the issue further and expand our arguments.

**Bio:** An independent scholar, John Hamill has written frequently for [The Oxfordian](#) and the [Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter](#). John is a former President of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship (SOF) and served as President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society before its 2013 merger with the Shakespeare Fellowship, which formed the present unified SOF. He was instrumental, along with the late Tom Regnier and others, in bringing about the merger. John became the first President of the SOF in 2013 and was succeeded by Tom Regnier in 2014. In 2016 John received a special award from the SOF for his work on the unification, as well as on the establishment of the SOF Research Grant Program. In 2018, he was elected to the Board of Trustees and a new term as President, which ended in 2020.



**RALPH McDONALD**

**Paper: The Shakespeare Brand of 1623:  
Why A Rose By Any Other Name Smells Not As Sweet**

**Abstract:** The materiality of the First Folio (its dimensions, the portrait, page order, dedication semiotics, etc.) are viewed in this paper under the lens of the “primal stamping” embossed through its release. The Folio’s internal semiotics (structure and application of language) are considered by the idea of the nodal “rigid designator” put forward by theorists such as Saul Kripke along with the role of a master signifier as advanced by Slavoj Zizek. Freud, Mark Twain, and others add to the bricolage to deconstruct and uncover this set of “original” nodes, to

dismantle what has been loosely called the “politics” of the authorship question.

Finally, the analysis of metaphor provided in early work of Jacques Derrida (i.e. “White Mythology” in *Margins of Philosophy*, 1982) will be briefly considered in contrast. Derrida viewed the author “Shakespeare” as a usurous coin in which the specific designation has been worn away through changing historical or political needs.

**Bio:** Ralph McDonald graduated with honors from Western Oregon College with majors in English and Philosophy. A book conservator and period book restorer specializing in 16th through 19th century English binding, he has restored numerous Elizabethan volumes and is currently rebinding in period leather the scarce 16-Folio “Copious Archaeological Annotated” Halliwell-Phillipps “Shakespeare” edition (1853 to 1865) which was limited to 75 copies.

He has taught comparative literature, continental philosophy and semiotics at the Free University sponsored by the student body of the University of Oregon. He is published in *The American Journal of Semiotics*. He became an Oxfordian in 2001 after reading Roger Stritmatter’s “The Marginalia of Edward de Vere’s Geneva Bible.”



**BOB MEYERS**

**Host: Session four**

**Bio:** Bob Meyers served for 21 years at the National Press Foundation, including 19 years as president and chief operating officer. He also worked as a reporter at the *Washington Post*, including on its Pulitzer Prize-winning Watergate investigation, and as an editor at the *San Diego Union*. Bob also served as director of the Harvard Journalism Fellowship for Advanced Studies in Public Health.

He has been a freelance writer for *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*, among other publications. He is the author of two books, one of which won the American Medical Writers Association Award for Excellence in Biomedical Writing. Bob has edited the popular “How I Became an Oxfordian” essay series on the SOF website since 2015 and moderated the Looney SOF Centennial Symposium at the National Press Club. He was elected as the third President of the unified SOF at the organization’s Annual Meeting in 2021. He previously served on the Editorial Board of *The Oxfordian*. His interviews with news-making Oxfordians regularly appears on the SOF website.



**WILLIAM S. NIEDERKORN**

**Paper: A Secular Tour of *Venus and Adonis***

**Abstract:** With *Venus and Adonis*, Edward de Vere achieved poetic closure to an intense artistic, personal and political animosity and rivalry he had with Sir Philip Sidney. That is a major conclusion I reach in my new book, *Shakespeare Discoveries I: A Secular Tour of Venus and Adonis*. I plan to deliver as much of its substance as I can in this talk. *Note:* the book itself will be available for the first time at this conference.

A study of the poem, it provides an analysis of *Venus and Adonis* stanza by stanza, or, if they are on one topic, by groups of stanzas. The text I use is from the only known copy of the earliest printing, the 1593 pamphlet in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is transcribed in the book in its entirety, precisely, with a few ephemeral exceptions, involving u's and v's and capital I's and J's, but very exact and true to the eccentric niceties of early printing.

The paper shows how the Venus/Oxford and Adonis/Sidney analogies play out through the poem. I call it secular because, obviously, it is somewhat distanced from academic orthodoxy. It shows that cumulatively, overwhelmingly, Adonis is a portrait of Sidney, while Venus on the whole embodies the passionate opposite personality of Oxford, who in the poem is also the boar.

**Bio:** William S. Niederkorn reported Shakespeare news in *The New York Times* from 2002 to 2009, critiqued Shakespeare scholarship in *The Brooklyn Rail* from 2009 to 2013, and has since been writing and researching independently. Like 18th century editors, he focuses on interpreting the catalogue of plays of 1623 and the pamphlets of poems and plays printed earlier for his *Shakespeare Discoveries: A Secular Tour of the Works*. Besides *Venus and Adonis*, he has substantially completed studies of *The Tempest*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Comedy of Errors*, and plans to continue through as much of the Shakespeare oeuvre as world and time allows. A lifetime member of the Dramatists Guild, he is also a playwright, performer, poet, artist and composer of jazz, underground rock and classical music.



**ROBERT PRECHTER**

**Paper: Was the Earl of Oxford Bisexual?**

**Abstract:** The idea that the Earl of Oxford was bisexual has many adherents and seems of late to have reached new heights of popularity. I will examine inferences that the Earl of Oxford experienced homosexual attraction and will analyze Oxford's return to England with a choir boy in 1576, Arundell's charge of pederasty in 1581, a description purportedly of Oxford by Barnabe Rich in 1581, Oxford's involvement with the theatre, and the text of one of Oxford's poems

I will explore evidence that Shakespeare was bisexual based on inferences drawn by proponents from the plays and sonnets. I will conclude that most of these items fail to survive scrutiny and ultimately prove better arguments against the proposition than for it. Any remaining items are equivocal at best.

**Bio:** Robert Prechter has written 25 Oxfordian articles and papers. He is author of an online set of books titled *Oxford's Voices* ([oxfordsvoices.com](http://oxfordsvoices.com)) which explores Elizabethan-era authorship.

In the business world, he is best known for developing a theory of social causality called socionomics, for developing a new theory of finance and for his long career applying and enhancing R.N. Elliott's model of financial pricing called the Wave Principle.

His publication, *The Elliott Wave Theorist*, won numerous speaking, timing and publishing awards during the 1980s, and in 1989 and he was named "Guru of the Decade" by the Financial News Network (now CNBC). In 1999, Prechter received the Canadian Society of Technical Analysts' inaugural A.J. Frost Memorial Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Technical Analysis. In 2003, Traders Library granted him its Hall of Fame award. The Market Technicians Association presented him with its Annual Award in 2013.



**GABRIEL READY**

**Paper: Ben Jonson's Desk Fire in November 1623**

**Abstract:** In November 1623, Ben Jonson claimed that several of his works in progress were destroyed by fire in a mock epic poem "An Execration Upon Vulcan." Jonson's contemporary, dramatist-poet-translator George Chapman, immediately accused him of lying in a similarly styled poem titled "An Invective."

Manuscript versions of the two poems circulated privately for years and both were only published posthumously. The particulars of Chapman's allegation are curious indeed. Chapman did not dispute the fire but instead questioned Jonson on who was responsible for the conflagration and what was destroyed.

This paper will examine the conflict and what it could mean to the authorship of the plays.

**Bio:** Gabriel Ready has published several articles on the First Folio, including "History of Fixing: On the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Shakespeare's First Folio" and "Commit my Body to your Mercies: The Production of the First Folio Reconsidered," both appearing in Roger Stritmatter's recently published volume, *The First Folio: A Shakespearean Enigma*; and "A Prologue Arm'd: The Printing of *Troilus and Cressida* in the First Folio" (*Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, August 2021), and "Model of Disorder: the story of Alternative First Folios" (*Humanities Commons*, July 2020).

Based in Ottawa, Ontario, he is an independent researcher with an M.A. in English Literature.



**DON RUBIN**

***Conference Chair. Host, Session One. Moderator for the panel on publishing featuring Margo Anderson, Ros Barber, James Warren and a special guest.***

**Bio:** Don Rubin is a long-time member of the SOF Board of Trustees and Professor Emeritus at Toronto's York University where he taught theatre and dramatic literature for more than four decades as well as courses on the authorship question. Series editor of Routledge's six-volume *World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre*, he most recently edited a 160-page special issue of the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* on the Shakespeare Authorship Question.

He studied theatre at Hofstra University, where he played as an actor on John Cranford Adams' reconstruction of the Globe stage and worked with Shakespeare scholar Bernard Beckerman, author of the volume *Shakespeare at the Globe*. His earliest productions of Shakespeare were seen at the American Shakespeare Theater in Stratford, Conn., and he was part of the University of Bridgeport's Shakespeare Institute.

Theatre columnist and critic for the *New Haven Register*, the *Toronto Star* and CBC Radio (where he worked for two years with Alex Trebek), he has served as President of the Canadian Theatre Critics Association, the Canadian Centre of the International Theatre Institute and Toronto's African Theatre Ensemble. He has edited some 60 volumes of theatre writings, including 32 issues of the quarterly journal *Canadian Theatre Review* and the standard volume *Canadian Theatre History: Selected Readings*. He is Managing Editor and Book Review Editor

of the online webjournal *Critical Stages* and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the *The Oxfordian*.



**EARL SHOWERMAN**

**Host:** *Session six. Also a guest speaker on the SAQ at a NOLA high school this week and a panelist at Tulane also dealing with the SAQ.*

**Paper: Hamlet's Book Revisited: The Identity of the 'Satiric Rogue' Revealed**

**Abstract:** Sky Gilbert's *Oxfordian* 24 article "What is Hamlet's Book?" critiques the commonly held view among Oxfordians that Hamlet was holding a copy of *Cardanus Comforte* when confronted by Polonius in *Hamlet* Act 2. *Cardanus Comforte* was translated into English by Thomas Bedingfield in 1573, and published by "commandment of the right honorable the Earl of Oxenford," Edward de Vere. Professor Hardin Craig, founder of the *Philological Quarterly*, published his article "Hamlet's Book" in the *Huntington Library Quarterly* in 1934, reviewing and supporting the theory that Hamlet was holding a copy of Cardano. An alternative source, Gilbert argued is the Greek Sophist philosopher Gorgias' book, *On Nature, or the Non-existent*. "The witty satirical tone of the scene in which Hamlet and Polonius discuss Hamlet's book is remarkably similar to the tone of Gorgias' essay,"

In *The Classical Element in the Shakespeare Plays* (1909), Baconian William Theobald proposed that Decius Junius Juvenal (60-140 CE), a much admired satirist, was the "satiric rogue" author of "Hamlet's Book". Theobald compared a passage from Gifford's translation of Juvenal's *Tenth Satire: On the vanity of human wishes* to Hamlet's description of the miseries that old men suffer: ". . . for mark what ills attend/ Still on the old, as to the grave they bend:/ A ghastly visage, to themselves unknown;/ For a smooth skin, a hide with scurf o'ergrown,/ And such a cheek as many a grandam ape/ In Tabraca's thick wood is seen to scrape." Hamlet abuses Polonius in similar fashion during one of the wittiest exchanges in the tragedy. To Polonius's query "What is the matter you read, my Lord?" Hamlet answers:

Slanders, sir; for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards,  
that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum tree gum,  
and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams.  
(2.2.196-9)

The credibility of the theory that Shakespeare was familiar with Juvenal's *Tenth Satire* is confirmed by several additional previously unrecognized intertextual parallels in *Hamlet*. Juvenal begins his attack on the vanity of those who hunger for power with a critical discourse

on Nero's excesses, on the rise and fall of Sejanus, and how his "eloquent prowess" brought Cicero "tumbling down." "Continuing his examples of how the mighty fall, he notes that countries have come to ruin through the vainglory of those who "lusted for power, who wanted a title that would cling to the stones set over their ashes...Put Hannibal in the scales: how many pounds will that peerless general mark up today? One world, so it seemed, was too little for Alexander, / That unfortunate youth raged against its borders – too narrow", and yet was at the end "happy with a sarcophagus' bonds. Death and death only, announces / What little things are the bodies of men." (142-173)

In numerous passages in *Hamlet*, we find similar sentiments regarding the greatness of human achievement, and the unmarked dusty remains of our bodies as time devours even our tombs. Hamlet's own words bespeak of this dusty, earthen imagery of human remains. Juvenal's *Tenth Satire* thus has no fewer than three narrative elements that echo text, images, and themes from *Hamlet*, several of which have not been previously recognized and accepted by modern critics.

In *Shakespeare's Books* (2001) Stewart Gillespie acknowledges that there are "passing resemblances to Juvenalian lines in *Hamlet*, where most possible echoes of him have been found in Shakespeare; they are insufficient to establish direct acquaintance." (270) The fact that there were no English translations of Juvenal's satires during Shakespeare's lifetime, that editions were only available from Continental publishers, may explain the reluctance to accepting the Roman satirist as a credible source.

For Oxfordians, however, this would not be an impediment as the inventory of William Cecil's library from that era includes item 238, *Juvenalis & Persii Satyr*. Given the attention of early Shakespeare scholars, but largely neglected over the past century, Decius Junius Juvenal's satires as potential Shakespeare sources merits further investigation. "Hamlet's Book" is every bit as likely to be an edition of the satires of Juvenal as it is to be an edition of Cardano or the upstart Gorgias.

**Bio:** Dr. Earl Showerman, president of the SOF, graduated from Harvard College and the University of Michigan Medical School, and practiced emergency medicine in southern Oregon for 30 years. After retiring in 2003, he enrolled at Southern Oregon University (SOU) to study Shakespeare. Over the past two decades he has presented and published scholarly papers on a variety of topics, including the Greek dramatic sources of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Timon of Athens*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 2012, he presented the keynote address on the playwright's medical knowledge at the Shakespearean Authorship Trust Conference in London. Over the past decade he has taught a series of courses on Shakespeare and the authorship question at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at SOU, and is the author of a chapter on Shakespeare's medical knowledge in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* (2013), and contributed three topics to *Know-It-All Shakespeare* (2017), edited by Ros Barber. He is the executive producer of the first collection of songs related to Edward de Vere, *My Lord of Oxenford's Mask*, by the lute duet Mignarda (2006).



**GUY SPRUNG**

**Paper: Shakespeare and the Theatre: An Actor Prepares (300 Years Before Stanislavski?)**

William Shakespeare – whoever he, she or they were -- and the generation of theatre makers around “them” were inventing live theatre for the Elizabethan world. A hyper-interest in the fundamentals of the craft would have been axiomatic.

This paper, by a major Canadian theatre director, examines Shakespeare’s words from the standpoint of both actor and dramatist to suggest that the author cryptically layered an acting handbook onto the story of Hamlet’s revenge. *Hamlet* is, in fact, the author’s personal advice on the internal journey every actor must take to prepare themselves to play a major role on stage.

It is suggested here that Shakespeare’s advice on acting essentially parallels the theories that the Russian director Konstantin Stanislavski was to develop in his own acting “system” more than 300 years later, a system which still dominates much of world theatre. While closely examining issues connected to the performance of *Hamlet*, this unique reading of the text provides a glimpse of an answer to the larger question of who really wrote the plays of Shakespeare.

**BIO:** One of Canada’s major directors, Guy Sprung founded Toronto’s Dream In High Park, the largest natural outdoor venue for Shakespeare productions in the world. There he directed productions of *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Comedy of Errors*. Other Shakespeare productions in his over 50 plus years of directing, acting and writing plays, include *Hamlet* with R.H. Thompson for the Toronto Free Theatre, *Richard III* with William Hurt for the Manitoba Theatre Centre and *Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Russia, a production which ran for eleven years in repertory at Moscow’s Pushkin Theatre.

His most recent Shakespeare staging was his own compilation of the sonnets, performed in half mask, for Infinithéâtre in Montreal in association with McGill University’s Department of English. Sprung co-founded and was the first Artistic Director of the Half Moon Theatre in London, England, is former Artistic Director of both the Toronto Free Theatre and the Canadian Stage Company in Toronto. A former Associate Director at the Stratford Festival, his productions have played across Canada, the UK, Ireland and in Cairo. He currently makes his home in Montreal.



**ROGER STRITMATTER**

**Paper: Work in Progress: From Literary Encryptions to Handwriting**

**Abstract:** This presentation will report on two ongoing projects. The first is being published in *Critical Survey*, a Stratfordian journal, edited by Graham Holderness (with an editorial board including such well-recognized scholars and creative spirits as Stanley Wells, Sir Derek Jacobi, Anabel Patterson, Ania Loomba, Katherine Belsey, and Leah Marcus). The article documents the literary encryption of Francis Meres in his 1598 commonplace book, *Palladis Tamia*. Carefully examined, the book discloses an unambiguous identification of Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, as the real “Shakespeare.”

The second project involves my study and documentation of a set of annotations discovered in books of Roman history from the great estate of Audley End near Saffron Walden in Essex. This includes a critical source for *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Julius Caesar*. Funded by the de Vere Society, it is uncovering visible evidence of an author taking notes for plays he is writing. The author in fact seems to be reading with an attentive eye for dramatic detail and a concern for dramatic patterns in the events he’s taking notes on.

Along with the dramatic aspects of history, the Audley end annotator shows an interest in the names of the great Roman theatres, laws pertaining to the seating of nobles in Roman theatres, and the expulsion of actors from Italy for causing political offense. He also takes note of Seneca’s use of “shifting his scene,” from Rome to Marseille, as a way to disguise his dramatic criticism of his fellow Romans. And while documenting these more general interests in the history of drama, the annotations provide a study of the artist working out many curious aspects – of character, plot, theme, or literary shading, for the two Roman plays.

Although previously misidentified as being in the handwriting of Sir Henry Neville, my ongoing research seems to disprove this belief and is actually confirming that the writer is Edward de Vere. Already published in preliminary synopsis in both the *de Vere Society Newsletter* and the *Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Newsletter*, this new evidence from Audley End is potentially a game-changer, the full significance of which will require many more months to fully unravel.

**Bio:** Roger Stritmatter is a professor of Humanities at Coppin State University and was the editor of the journal *Brief Chronicles* from 2009 to 2016. He was a founder of one of the predecessor organizations of the SOF, the Shakespeare Fellowship. Educated at Evergreen State College (B.A. 1981) and the New School for Social Research (M.A., 1988), he was awarded a Ph.D. in 2001 in comparative literature from the University of Massachusetts Amherst on the basis of a study of 1,043 marked passages found in Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible, which is now owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library. He has edited numerous books on the authorship question.



**TOM TOWNSEND**

**Paper: Finding the True Shakespeare: A Historical Perspective**

*An authorship101 presentation*

**Abstract:** Shakespeare’s plays and poems have enthralled innumerable people over the years. Yet most continue to ask who was this phenomenal author? English Literature professors (most of whom are Stratfordians) continue to maintain their traditional conjectures supporting their Stratford Man as the true author. However, historians argue that history is always evolving and that we always need to be open to new ideas because more new historical data is discovered all the time. Oxfordians specifically have discovered a substantial amount of new data clearly demonstrating that Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford is the real author behind the Shakespeare pseudonym. This introductory presentation reshapes the Shakespeare Authorship Question with new historical data aiming to show why de Vere was unable to use his name or take credit for writing his plays, poems, and sonnets.

**Bio:** For 35 years Tom Townsend has been researching Elizabethan history and the Shakespeare Authorship Question. He has presented at past SOF Conferences as well as for several general audiences in the Seattle area. He was previously Director of Consumer Insights for a large advertising agency. He holds a master’s degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.



**JAMES A. WARREN**

**Paper: Words, Words, Words:**

**A More Accurate Understanding of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare**

During the past decade, as I conducted research for *Shakespeare Revolutionized* and for some two dozen shorter pieces that I've written, I came across several dozen words or short phrases used in telling the story of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare that have been misconstrued. This paper presents some two dozen of them, along with brief explanations of their real meaning in the context of the times. It concludes by tying all the words and phrases together in a short, coherent restatement of the authorship story.

One example: Sidney and Oxford are described as “rivals for the hand of Anne Cecil” (Ward, 283). Nothing could be further from the truth; Sidney didn’t court Anne as a rival to Oxford or anyone else. His guardian, Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, and Anne’s father arranged a marriage for

them in 1569 when Sidney was only 15 and Anne only 12. Fifteen-year-old boys simply don't court and seek to marry 12-year-old girls. As well, Oxford didn't become engaged to Anne until two years later, in July, 1571.

Such misunderstandings came about, perhaps, because of inappropriately applying literary evidence to real-life events, showing that great care is needed when reading de Vere's life into the plays or when applying situations in the plays to his life.

**Bio:** James A. Warren is the author of *Shakespeare Revolutionized: The First Hundred Years of J. Thomas Looney's "Shakespeare" Identified* (2021). As an editor and publisher, he has issued new editions of 16 books and collections of hundreds of articles by the first generations of Oxfordian scholars, including J. Thomas Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified* (2018) and *"Shakespeare" Revealed: The Collected Articles and Published Letters of J. Thomas Looney* (2019). His new hardback edition of Bernard M. Ward's *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford 1550-1604* was issued earlier this year, and his novel on an Oxfordian theme, *Summer Storm: A Novel of Ideas*, was published in 2016. He has given presentations at more than a dozen Oxfordian conferences, and in 2020 was named the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship's Oxfordian of the Year. His interest in the authorship question developed more than a decade ago, at about the time he retired from the U.S. Department of State, where he had served as a career diplomat.



**ELISABETH P. WAUGAMAN**

### **Paper: Shakespeare's French Obsession: How New Historicism**

#### **Can Help Advance the Authorship Debate (Video)**

**Abstract:** Shakespeare was obsessed with the French language, French court gossip, French culture, French and pan-European politics. This paper shows how exploring these elements can help keep Oxfordian studies relevant to current literary trends such as the New Historicism and how Oxfordian studies can expand and benefit from it in ways Stratfordians cannot.

Among the topics explored: Shakespeare's knowledge of the French language, his knowledge of little known and unpublished French history (e.g. Court gossip), his knowledge of French culture, and his knowledge of pan-European politics.

*Hamlet* was first performed in 1593. Shakespeare did not begin to possibly learn French until 1598 as a roomer with a French Huguenot family, and the French source was not translated until 1608. These problems led Stratfordians to create the *Ur-Hamlet* theory (a lost *Hamlet* play possibly by Kyd for which there is no record). The *Ur-Hamlet* theory has now been abandoned by many Stratfordians, including Harold Bloom. Stratfordians generally ignore the studies of the French scholars Abel Lefranc and his protégé Georges Lambin because both point out that Shakespeare's knowledge of little-known historical figures and events was not put into print until after Shakespeare's death.

Richard Hillman is a New Historicist who examines Shakespeare's knowledge of politics beyond even that revealed by Lefranc and Lambin. He reveals not simply an awareness of French politics, but also how Shakespeare's work reflects a pan-European vision. This vision (the basis for New Historicism) reveals a political sophistication Stratfordians never considered because it requires a political sophistication only to be found in the upper echelons of English government where sensitive political intrigues were examined and plotted.

**Bio:** Elisabeth P. Waugaman is a faculty member in the New Directions writing program at the Washington Center for Psychoanalysis. She wrote and illustrated her first book, *Follow Your Dreams*, which won the Santos Dumont Medal from the Brazilian government. Her second book is *Women, Their Names, and the Stories They Tell*. She did graduate work at Princeton and obtained her PhD in medieval French literature from Duke. She has taught at both Duke and Johns Hopkins Universities and blogged for *Psychology Today*, *Nameberry*, and *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*. Her articles on the French influence in Shakespeare have appeared in *The Oxfordian*, *Psychoanalytic Inquiry* and the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*.



**RICHARD WAUGAMAN**

**Paper: The Origins of Modern Literary Theory in the Repudiation of**

**Autobiographical Readings of Shakespeare's Sonnets (Video)**

**Abstract:** For a century, prevailing literary theories have amputated authors from their fictional works, reducing characters to mere words on the page. Many of us who love reading literature are puzzled by this disconnect between our subjective assumptions about it and those of literary critics, who reject common-sense understanding of the vital role of the author, and of the interaction between our imagination and fictional characters.

A major but unacknowledged reason for this counterintuitive trend has been efforts to buttress the traditional but increasingly dubious legend about who wrote the works of William Shakespeare. Since the late 1500s, there have been doubts as to the identity of the real Shakespeare. His name was often hyphenated as Shake-speare in early years, when hyphenated last names in England were rare then. But assumed names in plays *were* sometimes hyphenated.

Sir Sidney Lee was one of the most prominent and influential Shakespeare scholars at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He looked for biographical clues about Shakespeare in his Sonnets. But he quickly did an about-face in reaction to the bisexuality of these Sonnets. Lee's reversal was

pivotal in literary critics' subsequent dogma that Shakespeare's works, and fiction in general, need to be separated from the author.

This irrational dogma was also applied to fictional characters, in part in reaction to reductionistic uses of psychoanalytic theory to "analyze" literary characters. The close study of this history may help free us from misconceptions about the real Shakespeare, and from misguided literary theory.

**Bio:** Richard Waugaman, M.D., is Training and Supervising Analyst Emeritus at the Washington-Baltimore Psychoanalytic Institute. He is also Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University, where he has been a volunteer faculty member for 45 years. He caught the Oxfordian bug by reading the 2002 *New York Times* article about Roger Stritmatter's pivotal research on de Vere's Geneva Bible. That led to Rick's own research at the Folger Shakespeare Library. With Roger's generous collaboration, he discovered a major new literary source for Shakespeare's works in the marked psalms bound at the back of de Vere's Bible, in the musical *Whole Book of Psalms*. That discovery led to more than a hundred articles, book chapters, and book reviews about Shakespeare and the authorship question. He has as well written more than a hundred publications on psychoanalysis and psychiatry. The SOF named him its 2021 Oxfordian of the Year.



**TOM WOOSNAM**

### ***Host Session Three***

**Bio:** Tom Woosnam was born in England, where he earned his B.Sc. in physics from Imperial College, London. After teaching in Chile he received his M.A. from Stanford in 1976 and taught high school physics and math in California before retiring with his wife Julia to Ashland, Oregon in 2019. His avocation is acting. He has performed in over 60 amateur and professional productions, including seven Oxfordian plays. About his fascination with the Shakespeare authorship question, Tom has stated: "It's all about the data." He adds that this is "also a subject that disdains authority as the ultimate arbiter of truth. We've all noticed that the case for Oxford attracts a large number of people whose jobs center around evidence — lawyers, judges, engineers, scientists, and others. I am no different." Tom was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Trustees at the Annual Meeting in 2021.

## A Welcome

Welcome to New Orleans. Welcome especially to the French Quarter.

You are in a great and historic southern city with truly fabulous food and music traditions. On Thursday night you'll be on the Mississippi River for a jazz dinner cruise. In case you've not been here before, they are offering a variety of basic NOLA dishes to try. We're sure that while you're here you'll be trying lots of different Cajun food including NOLA's not always humble po'boy sandwiches. We also know you'll be watching and listening to the astounding variety of music from zydeco to blues to every kind of jazz.

But please don't forget that you are also in a big city, one with the problems that all big cities have these days. That is, be careful especially at night. Don't carry a lot of cash or wear flashy jewelry. Be aware of your surroundings. We need you happy and healthy at our wide range of exciting conference sessions. And know that there are people all over the world who will be tuning into them via livestream, many wishing they could be here.

As for where to go after our sessions, we've asked local SOF member Lyle Jennings Colombo to make some recommendations. Here's her list:

### ■ **Some of the finest Louisiana food is just one block from the Hyatt:**

**Acme Oyster House** / fried oysters and other seafood . Casual. <https://acmeoyster.com/french-quarter/>

**Arnaud's** / Classic Creole cuisine since 1918. <https://www.arnaudsrestaurant.com/>

**Felix's** / Fried oysters and seafood. Casual. <https://felixs.com/french-quarter/>

**Galatoire's** / Fine dining New Orleans style. In its fifth generation. Founded 1905. <https://www.galatoires.com/>

**GW Fins** / Chef Michael Nelson is a nationally recognized expert on Gulf Seafood. <https://gwfins.com/>

### ■ *Within two blocks of the Hyatt:*

**Antoine's** / Fine New Orleans Dining since 1840 (The USA's oldest family-run restaurant). <https://antoines.com/>

**Brennan's** / Modern New Orleans Creole food. <https://www.brennansneworleans.com/>

**Mr. B's Bistro** / Award-winning Louisiana food. <http://www.mrbsbistro.com/>

■ ***Within five blocks of the Hyatt:***

**Dat Dog** / Elevates the hot dog to a work of art. From a 475 square foot hotdog stand to an award-winning and eclectic culinary institution. <https://www.datdog.com/>

**The Court of Two Sisters** / Live jazz brunch buffet served 9-3 seven days for \$33). <https://www.courtoftwosisters.com/>

**The Gumbo Shop** / Consistently voted best gumbo in New Orleans; reasonably priced. <http://www.gumboshop.com/>

**The Napoleon House** / Good New Orleans food at reasonable prices and great atmosphere and service (the house was built for Napoleon, but he never got to live there). <https://www.napoleonhouse.com/>

■ ***Within eight blocks of the Hyatt:***

**Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop (drinks only)** Reputedly the oldest structure used as a bar in the US. Come play the piano! <http://www.lafittesblacksmithshop.com/Homepage.html>

■ ***For Music AND Food:***

*Try Frenchman Sreet, a live music district bordering the French Quarter. Among the most interesting eating spots with music are:*

**Snug Harbor Jazz Bistro** / Live jazz and great regional cooking. <https://snugjazz.com/>

**Sukho Thai** / Fine classical Thai cuisine. <https://sukhothai-nola.com/marigny/>

■ ***In the Warehouse District:***

**Mulates** / The "King of Cajun Dance Halls" with authentic Cajun food, music, and dancing seven nights/week. <https://mulates.com/>

■ ***A Taxi/Uber/Streetcar/Car/or Rideshare Away:***

**Commander's Palace** / (2.3 mi.) Best restaurant in New Orleans since 1893. In the Garden District. <https://www.commanderspalace.com/>

**Jacques-Imo's Cafe** / (5.3 mi.) Since 1996, one of the hottest places in New Orleans for "real Nawlins' food." <https://jacques-imos.com/>

**Joey K's** / (2.7 mi.) Beloved New Orleans comfort food in the thick of the Magazine Street shopping district <https://joeyksrestaurant.com/>

**Parkway Bakery and Tavern** / (2.3 mi.) Best poboys in New Orleans. <https://parkwaypoorboys.com/>

**Pizza Delicious** / (2.2 mi.) The name says it all. <http://pizzadelicious.com/> Right next to a beautiful park with picnic tables along the Mississippi River. <http://www.crescentparknola.org/>

**Shaya** / (4.1 mi.) Israeli food on Magazine Street (Named the Country's Best New Restaurant at 2016 James Beard awards). <https://www.shyarestaurant.com/>

■ ***For music:***

Try almost any main street in the French Quarter or the Garden District and you'll find fine musicians playing for you. Among the famous seated venues are:

**Preservation Hall** at 726 St Peter St. (504) 522-2841.

**The Jazz Playhouse** at 300 Bourbon St. (504) 553-2299

**Tipitinas** at 501 Napoleon St., (578) 895-8477

**The Maison** at 508 FrenchennSt. (504) 371-5543

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**Couldn't do it without you!!!**

*A most sincere thank you to SOF's webmaster Jennifer Newton, to all our technical people on the ground, and to our videographer and livestream director Laura Duval.*

—————  
*Special thanks to Bonner Miller Cutting for helping SOF get to New Orleans for this conference and to that special NOLA foundation (which has asked to remain anonymous) for supporting our event.*

—————  
*Thanks to Lyle Jennings Colombo for yeoman work in connecting us with Tulane University and for arranging a live-streamed panel on the authorship question there. Lyle also allowed us to use her home address to receive books and conference materials in advance. Much appreciated.*

—————  
*Thanks to the SOF Conference Committee: Bonner Miller Cutting, Rick Foulke, John Hamill, Richard Joyrich, Alex McNeil and Tom Woosnam. The committee had the constant support of SOF President Earl Showerman.*

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*Thank you speakers and guests for coming.*

—————  
*And special thanks to all the members of the SOF Board who supported the work at every step.*

**--Don Rubin, Conference Chair**