



# Shakespeare Matters

*"The Voice  
of the  
Shakespeare  
Fellowship"*

7:3

*"Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments..."*

Spring 2008

## Groundbreaking! Authorship Studies Research Centre Arrives at Concordia University

By Howard Schumann

Portland, Ore. – Don't look now, but the unthinkable is already happening. At 12th Annual Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference held April 3-6 at Concordia University, Executive Vice-President Gary Withers, JD, announced plans for the official groundbreaking for the new Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre. The ceremony took place on April 11<sup>th</sup>. According to Withers, Concordia expects to become the preeminent academic institution for scholarly inquiry into the authorship of the poems and plays of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. Dr. Withers asserted that the authorship question is riveting and that "it is important to touch minds in a way that will have an immediate impact."

The Centre is to be located in the penthouse of an "environmentally friendly" 74,000 sq. ft. library facility to be built on campus, with construction scheduled to begin in May and the opening set for September 2009. It will house the resources for scholarly investigation and meetings, including a 90-seat classroom for

credit courses, annual seminars for in-depth study, additional programs and courses, and will provide stable funding for program leadership and scholarly research. In addition to the Research

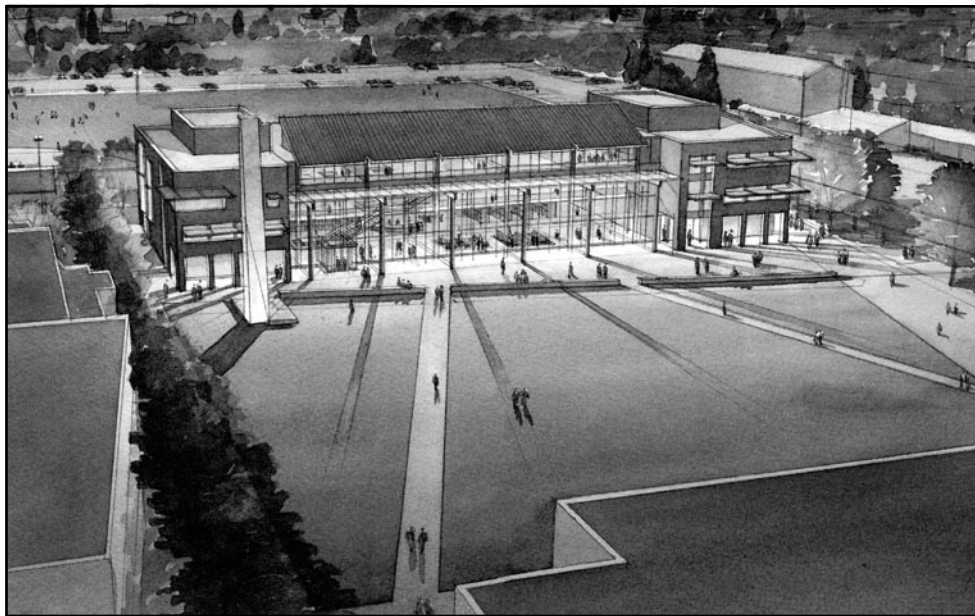
Centre, the building will also house a nursing center and a center for children's literature.

Speaking in support of the project were Concordia President Charles Schlimpert, PhD, and Daniel Wright, PhD, Professor of English who was the Conference Chairman. President Schlimpert declared that the authorship issue deserves a permanent home, and declared, "It is about investing in the country's future

and the world's future."

The Conference welcomed both familiar and first-time presenters including Hank Whittemore, Dan Wright, Richard Whalen, Rima Greenhill, Charles Beauclerk, William Boyle, Michael Delahoyde, Ren Draya, Earl Showerman, Ian Haste, Amy Freed, Michael Thomas, David Gontar, Bonner Miller Cutting, Alex McNeil, William Farina, and Roger Stritmatter.

*(Continued on p. 21)*



Architectural vision for Concordia University's 74,000 square-foot library and Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre. Ground was broken April 11, 2008.

## Letters:

To the Editor:

I enjoyed Sundra Malcolm's analysis of the M. O. A. I. riddle in the letter in *Twelfth Night* (*Shakespeare Matters*, Fall 2007) and agree with David Roper (Winter 2008, Letters) that "Already O" is a more complete solution to the anagram when it's rearranged as IAM O. If their solution is correct, I suggest the O stands for the playwright Oxford, as well as Orsino.

I here propose another solution that keeps the anagram in the same order, makes sense in the verse, and possibly follows the author's intent. Malcolm suggested this solution when she wrote that an instruction given in the letter is, "If this fall into thy hand, revolve." Revolve is defined as "turn on axis, turn over in mind, rotate, ponder." Malcolm concluded that, "...the letter 'A' prevents flipping the riddle upside down." But I think it is possible. When you flip the letter, MOAI can be read as "I VOW."

This reading is possible because an inverted A can serve as a V (or vice versa). The "rustic" alphabet—which appears in the 5<sup>th</sup> century texts of Virgil and as a brush letter on the walls of Pompeii—is written in all caps, and its letter A has no cross bar (Svaren, *Written Letters*, 1982). Designers use a similar alphabet today. If you need further proof, print "I V O W" in all caps, and turn it upside down. You will see a fair approximation of MOAI. Note that if this solution is correct, it means Shakespeare started with I VOW, turned the letters on their head as a group (which requires the anagram to be written down on paper as it was in *Twelfth Night*, not just spoken aloud), and then created Malvolio's name from it.

This solution makes sense in the verse: The writer is painfully silent, and there is a vow. He or she could be silent because of a vow of silence, because of another vow that that cannot be spoken of, or both. The solution also fits the meter in the verse: The meter changes, but it still works—the lines in the verse now start and end with six beats; all the others are eight. Inserting this solution, the verse reads:

Jove knows I love, But who?  
Lips, do not move; No man must know.  
I may command where I adore;  
But silence, like a Lucrece knife,  
With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore;  
I VOW doth sway my life.

Something in the text could suggest that revolving the letter is what the author intended by "If this fall into thy hand, revolve." After Malvolio repeats the last line of the verse, "M. O. A. I. doth sway my life," he says "Nay, but first let me see, let me see, let me see." I suggest the playwright intends Malvolio to turn the letter on its axis as he says this, examining M. O. A. I. on its three other sides.

While revolving the letter could help someone watching the play to solve the riddle, it is not in Malvolio's script to do so. He mistakenly concludes the letter is from Olivia based on her handwriting and her wax seal. He assumes she loves him because M. O. A. I. almost spells his name. The play continues without an obvious need for a correct solution to the riddle. Even so, the riddle is there for a reason, and it is possible that it has more than one intended solution. Perhaps one solution is arrived at by ear (listening to what

the characters say), which is Malcolm and Roper's method, and the other is arrived at by eye (looking at the anagram when it is revolved on paper), which is my method. The final meaning of the verse might derive from both.

Who really wrote the *Twelfth Night* letter? I believe Oxford (as Shakespeare) wrote the letter and the verse within it that contains the anagram. He wrote it, and he pretends Olivia said it. He carefully distances himself from that fact in the play by making it a practical joke, employing the literary device of Maria's "authorship," and demonstrating that only a fool would think it's from Olivia. Oxford was a master of finding ways to have his say without directly saying it. Here, he appears to be sending a message that transcends the action of the play itself. If Elizabeth was Oxford's primary audience, I suggest the riddle was primarily meant for her and that its ultimate message goes beyond the action of the play, alluding to a real-life drama involving Elizabeth, Oxford, and other members of her court. He could be saying that he already sways her life, and that she or both of them have taken a vow of silence.

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### Shakespeare Matters

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The purpose of the Shakespeare Fellowship is to promote public awareness and acceptance of the authorship of the Shakespeare Canon by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), and further to encourage a high level of scholarly research and publication into all aspects of Shakespeare studies, and also into the history and culture of the Elizabethan era.

The Society was founded and incorporated in 2001 in the State of Massachusetts and is chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state. It is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit (Fed ID 04-3578550).

Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

*From the Editor*

## New York's Shakespearean Tragedy: Authorship and the Astor Place Riots

Oxfordians often don't pay enough attention to social class. But when National Public Radio ventured into the authorship question recently the program reminded us how important this subject is to us, not to mention our society at large, which (at least in America) loves to pretend social class doesn't exist or that, if it does, it is sociologically insignificant. It is an irony of Shakespearean proportions that rational discussion of authorship



often falls victim to the pseudo-populist prejudices of the same society that denies that social class is a relevant category of analysis. The sociological realism of Walt Whitman's astonishingly perceptive and proleptic remark that "only one of the Wolfish earls....would seem to be the true author of these amazing works" (i.e., the Shakespeare history plays) seems lost on the majority of English professors. Such opinions are today instead mistaken as manifestations of a vaguely constituted shadowy right wing conspiracy to undermine American democracy and destroy the concept of a liberal education.

All too often, these arguments turn out on closer inspection to be either (on HLAS, for example) little more than envy disguised as social virtue, or (when expressed by professional Shakespeareans) the uninformed reactions of "liberal" academicians who feel guilty because they are, after all, among the privileged citizens of our globe and don't know what to do

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about it. But three seven-minute segments on authorship aired July 2, 3 and 4 on "Morning Edition," hosted by Renee Montagne, have led towards transforming our depressing circumstance. No longer can bad pop sociology by English professors remain a compelling substitute for rational discussion of the authorship question on

its merits.

Indeed, the "Morning Edition" shows not only marked NPR's first serious examination of the authorship question, but also signaled the growing respectability and prominence of the authorship debate within the wider Anglo-American world, at least outside the rarified towers of many higher ed English departments. In a few deft moves, Montagne and her staff distilled the essence of the authorship question for an abbreviated radio format. They began in a place that might surprise Oxfordians, by placing the issue of social class in the foreground. The first segment, based on Nigel Cliff's book *The Shakespeare Riots: Revenge, Drama and Death in 19th-Century America*, covers the infamous May, 1849 Astor Place Riot, the deadliest class riot in United States history. What, you may ask, do riots have to do with authorship? Well, everything.

Strange as it may sound, in the days

*(Continued on page 17)*

# From a Never Writer to an Ever Reader: News...

## Trustee Nominations: Regnier, Cutting, Goldstein, and Story

The SF nominating committee has proposed four names to the Board of Trustees for appointment/election for 2008 and these names have been approved by the Trustees. Two are new appointments, one is a returning Trustee who served with distinction before rotating off the board in accordance with Fellowship Bylaws, and the fourth is currently serving on a replacement term for another retiring Trustee. The nominated persons are Ms. Bonner Cutting (currently serving a replacement term), Tom Regnier, JD, Gary Goldstein, MA, and past trustee and President, theatrical producer and director Ted Story. In addition, Alex McNeil was nominated to serve another one-year term as President. Fellowship bylaws allow the appointment of these persons without formal election if uncontested. In her report to the Trustees, Nominations committee Chair Lynne Kositsky stated, on behalf of a committee consisting of herself, Dr. Richard Desper, and ex-officio member-at-large Dr. Earl Showerman: "Leaving the board after years of sterling service to the Shakespeare Fellowship are Sarah Smith, PhD, and Michael Dunn. We thank them for their service."

Shakespeare Fellowship Bylaws also provide that nominations to the Board of Trustees, and for President, may be made by petition signed by at least ten members in good standing. For further information on that process, please contact the Fellowship Treasurer, Richard Desper, P.O. Box 421, Hudson MA 01749, or by email: [desper4oxford@gmail.com](mailto:desper4oxford@gmail.com). Any such petition must be submitted by August 27, 2008.

For biographies of the nominees, please see p. 8.

## 4th Annual Joint SOS/SF Conference Scheduled for 2008

The 4th Annual joint SOS/SF Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, NY, Thursday to Sunday, October 9-12 (Columbus Day Weekend). Please note the change of venue from any prior announcements you may have seen. The Crowne Plaza is located at 66 Hale Avenue in White Plains. The closest airports are Westchester County Airport in White Plains (8 miles) and LaGuardia Airport in Flushing, NY (35 miles). There is a complimentary shuttle to the hotel from Westchester County Airport and a shuttle bus from LaGuardia is about \$60 one-way.

There are a limited number of guest rooms being held at the Crowne Plaza at a discounted rate of \$169/night (plus



Professor Burghstahler and Shanghai Colleague (see "Oxfordiana in China" for details).

tax) until 9/18/08. (usual rate \$279). Reservations can be made at [www.crowneplaza.com/whiteplainsny](http://www.crowneplaza.com/whiteplainsny) or by calling 1-800-2-CROWNE or 914-682-0050. Mention group code SAC (Shakespeare Authorship Conference) to get the discount.

Further details as to the conference agenda, other events, registration information, travel information, and a list of alternative nearby lodging will be forthcoming.

## Oxfordiana in China, Round Two

A previous issue of *Shakespeare Matters* reported on Mark Anderson's tour of Taiwanese Universities promoting the Oxfordian case. Now a Oxfordian chemistry professor has taken the Shakespeare authorship question to four universities in mainland China, where he says he found keen interest in the issue and his presentations.

Albert W. Burgstahler, professor emeritus of the University of Kansas at Lawrence, was the keynote speaker at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual conference on American drama at the University of Shanghai during a whirlwind visit last fall.

At Shanxi Agricultural University he addressed an all-university assembly organized by the English department. A translation of his presentation into Chinese is scheduled to appear in the

(Continued on p. 19)

# Dueling Stylometricians: Shahan vrs. Elliott

By Sally Mosher

Most Oxfordians are familiar with the Claremont Shakespeare Clinic, and its advisor and public spokesperson, Professor Ward Elliott. Because the Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable (SAR) was the original instigator of this stylometric investigation of various authorship candidates, it seemed appropriate for it to provide a venue for debating the validity of the clinic's findings.

The setting for the debate was the Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable's meeting at the large, handsome Beverly Hills Library on Saturday, November 17, 2007. The formal proposition chosen for debate was "Resolved: that the Shakespeare Clinic's stylometric evidence makes Oxford a highly improbable Shakespeare claimant," or in the wording of the announcement sent to the SAR membership: "Is Edward de Vere Still a Viable Shakespeare authorship candidate?"

Based on the Claremont Clinic's stylometric analysis, Professor Elliott has maintained that the Earl of Oxford is not a viable authorship candidate. Elliott has written more than a dozen articles presenting the clinic's findings, and for years they have been cited by Stratfordian proponents as conclusively debunking Oxford's claim to authorship.

Long-time SAR member and former Shakespeare Oxford Society Vice-President John Shahan has written two previous critiques of the clinic's work for *The Oxfordian*, the first of which was co-authored with Richard Whalen in 2006. Shahan and Whalen argue that Elliott's unqualified conclusion — that Oxford has been eliminated — is unwarranted, due to obvious imperfec-

tions in the design of the study, which used the data available, rather than that needed to answer the question.

Following are my eyewitness thoughts and observations:

With about forty people present, including some non-members, the room was standing room only. The entire debate was filmed. Both Shahan and Elliott provided multiple handouts, and Elliott used a Power Point presentation. Professor Alan

Nelson, together with his wife, had come down from Berkeley to lend support to Elliott.

Elliott has a good presence, in the genial professor mode. In a resonant baritone he presented his sweeping conclusions, replete with unsubstantiated attacks on the quality of Oxford's writing. Shahan projected serious conviction and thorough preparation, with attention to the minutiae of the facts. He was a dogged, well-prepared opponent.

Among the major topics:

- Elliott proposes that sixteen poems are a sufficient sample of Oxford's style for a comparative analysis based on differences in style. The clinic used these poems because they are accepted by Elizabethan poetry authority Steven May as being definitely written by Oxford. It seems clear, however, that at least eight of the poems were written by Oxford in his teens, and another probably dates to his early twenties. Although Elliott claims that the other seven were written much later, he did not offer credible proof of this assertion. In Elizabethan England works were often printed long after their original composition. May is clear that Oxford wrote more than these sixteen poems, while Oxford's contemporary Meres, in 1598 characterized Oxford as the "best for comedy" (plays, of course, but where are they?).

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Sally Mosher, attorney and musician, has served on the board of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and written articles for *The Oxfordian* and *The Elizabethan Review*.

(Continued on p. 14)

# An Overlooked Sub-Plot in *Macbeth* Reveals Oxford's Hand

By Richard F. Whalen

*Macbeth* focuses so intensely on the protagonist and his wife that the Machiavellian maneuverings of the Thane of Ross have been almost entirely ignored by commentators—both Stratfordian and Oxfordian. They see Ross simply as a messenger, and a puzzling one.

Ross's important role in the play was proposed by M. F. Libby, a secondary school teacher of English literature in Toronto. In 1893 he published an ingenious interpretation of the role of Ross as a cunning liar and treacherous courtier. The 1903 Variorum edition cited his interpretation, among others, in its footnotes, but subsequent editors of *Macbeth* have totally ignored his insights.

As a result, they have long been puzzled and are still puzzled by what they see as the many difficulties and incongruities in the play: Why Lennox is suspicious of the Thane of Ross when Ross arrives to tell the king about the Thane of Cawdor's turning traitor and joining the Norwegian invaders. And especially why Macbeth, who was on the battlefield, is astonished when Ross and his accomplice, the Thane of Angus, tell him that Cawdor turned traitor and was captured and that the king has made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor, too.

And why Macbeth should thank Ross three times for what seems to be simply his role as a messenger. And who was the third murderer when Banquo was ambushed and slain? And what is

Ross doing at Macduff's castle just before Lady Macduff and her children are murdered by Macbeth's agents? And why at the end of the play does Ross stall and blatantly equivocate about the fate of Macduff's family?

These difficulties and discrepancies were "hopelessly incongruous" for Horace Howard Furness, the elder, in his 1873 Variorum edition of the play (Libbyvi). Modern-day editors glance at the textual difficulties, usually suggesting errors and/or omissions in the play text. For example, in his notes to the first act, Harden Craig calls them "strange inconsistencies." Macbeth cannot have been ignorant of the events in which he himself took part. This is explained by forgetfulness on Shakespeare's part, and also, more probably as due to the play's having been tampered with by "another hand" (1048). Kenneth Muir says in his edition of *Macbeth*, "The words and actions of Ross...are confusing, if not confused" (lxii).

Readers and playgoers have seen Ross and Angus as rather inconsequential thanes who appear now

and then in the play. Commentators generally ignore them. For actors, their roles must seem dull and undramatic. Directors often cut them from the play.

It was in the next Variorum edition, in 1903, that Furness the younger added Libby's findings to the footnotes. He called them "ingenious and carefully worked out" (24). Indeed, Libby offers a simple, coherent, convincing explanation for the many

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[This paper was originally presented at the Oct. 2007 joint SF-SOS Conference in Carmel, California, hosted by the Pacific Repertory theatre.]

# *Shakespeare By Another Name: A Biography of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, The Man Who Was Shakespeare*

By Mark K. Anderson

New York: Gotham Books, 2005. 598 pp.

Reviewed by Richard M. Waugaman, MD

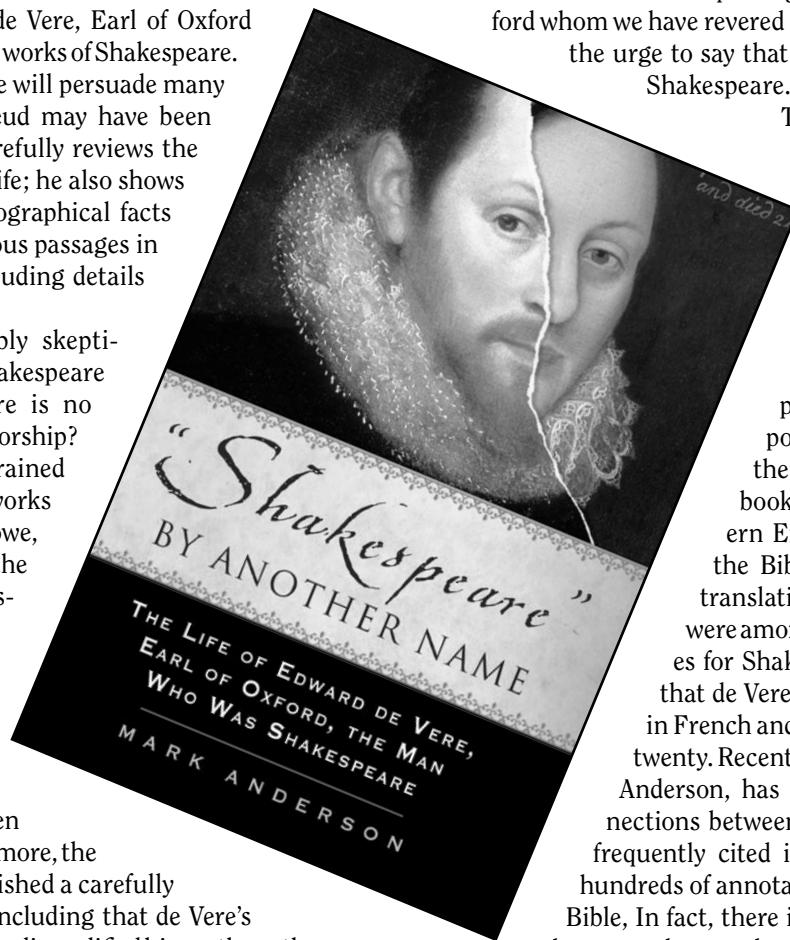
Reprinted with permission from *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*  
Vol. 76: 1397-1403.

This may be the most exciting biography you will read in a long time. Freud believed from 1925 until his death that Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), probably wrote the works of Shakespeare. Anderson's biography of de Vere will persuade many open-minded readers that Freud may have been correct. Anderson not only carefully reviews the documented facts of de Vere's life; he also shows again and again how those biographical facts parallel and illuminate numerous passages in the works of Shakespeare, including details that were hitherto obscure.

Many of you are probably skeptical at this point. Haven't Shakespeare experts assured us that there is no doubt whatsoever about authorship? Haven't there been many harebrained theories that Shakespeare's works were written by Bacon, Marlowe, or Queen Elizabeth? Is it not the case that only snobs would question Shakespeare's authorship, since they cannot abide the well-established fact that a commoner with little education penned the greatest works of English literature? And aren't those snobs also given to conspiracy theories? Furthermore, the paleographer Alan Nelson published a carefully documented life of de Vere, concluding that de Vere's sometimes abominable character disqualified him as the author of Shakespeare's works.<sup>1</sup> And Anderson himself agrees that de Vere could be "a tyrannical egomaniac" (221). But I hope you will read on anyway.

Previous books (especially those by Greenwood and Price)

have cast doubt on traditional beliefs about Shakespeare's identity, so Anderson does not devote much space to rehashing those arguments.<sup>2</sup> He has the wisdom to know that his book challenges entrenched beliefs about one of the most beloved authors in the world. So he refrains from putting down the man from Stratford whom we have revered for centuries. (And he resists the urge to say that we should instead "re-Vere" Shakespeare.)



The more one delves into de Vere's life, the more impressive the connections with Shakespeare become. Scholars have marveled over the phenomenal erudition displayed in Shakespeare, reflecting a high level of expertise in history, philosophy, politics, religion, science, and the Bible, despite the fact that books were luxuries in early modern England. Scholars agree that the Bible, Plutarch, and Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were among the most important sources for Shakespeare. Records document that de Vere purchased Plutarch's works in French and a Geneva Bible when he was twenty. Recent scholarship, summarized by Anderson, has demonstrated striking connections between the biblical passages most frequently cited in Shakespeare's works and hundreds of annotations in de Vere's copy of the Bible. In fact, there is a direct, linear correlation between the number of times that Shakespeare quoted a given passage and the likelihood that de Vere marked that same passage in his Bible. While de Vere and his uncle Arthur Golding were both living in the same household,

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## Meet the Trustee Nominees...

### Gary Goldstein

Gary Goldstein conceived and co-produced the three-hour authorship documentary, "Uncovering Shakespeare," in association with the GTE Corporation in 1992, rebroadcast twice by PBS. He founded the first Oxfordian peer reviewed journal, *The Elizabethan Review*, in 1993, and served as editor for all 13 print issues through 1999. Its print run of 930 pages is on searchable CD, and more than 50 US and foreign universities and libraries



subscribed to the publication, including Harvard, Stanford, McGill, Oxford, Cambridge, Goettingen and Ferrara universities. *The Review* was on the World Wide Web from 1997 through 2001, attracting a total of 300,000 unique visitors.

Gary served as editor of the *Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter* from 2003 to 2004, and then as news editor and Editorial Board member of *The Oxfordian* from 2005 to 2007. He earlier had served as a member of the SOS Board of Directors from 1988 to 2005. He holds a BA in English from City University of New York and an MA in Communications from New York University. An abridged version of Gary's master's thesis appeared

in the 2005 issue of *The Oxfordian*.

### Tom Regnier

Tom Regnier, a lawyer and teacher, is the author of "Could Shakespeare Think Like a Lawyer? How Inheritance Law Issues in *Hamlet* May Shed Light on the Authorship Question," published in the *University of Miami Law Review* (and available on the Shakespeare Fellowship website). He has taught "Shakespeare and the Law," as well as a Fourth Amendment seminar, at the University of Miami School of Law.

Tom was the keynote speaker at the 2004 Shakespeare Fellowship conference in Baltimore, where he received the Fellowship's award for outstanding scholarship. He has also spoken on Shakespeare and the law at the Ashland and Ann Arbor conferences in recent years. He is a



member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition. Currently pursuing an LLM degree at Columbia Law School in New York City, Tom was previously a criminal appeals lawyer in the Public Defender's Office in

Miami, Florida. Before that, he clerked for Judge Melvia Green in Florida's Third District Court of Appeal. He earned a BA, Phi Beta Kappa, from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and a JD, summa cum laude, from the University of Miami School of Law.

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**Among recent achievements, this year Tom argued a landmark case in the Florida Supreme Court, winning by a 5 to 2 vote. A July 7, 2008, *Miami Herald* article quoted him as stating: "This case is a victory for due process and fair notice. Laws have to be clearly written so they're understandable. And when they're not clearly written, they can't be used against a defendant."**

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### Bonner Miller Cutting



A Louisiana native, Bonner Miller Cutting graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Tulane University in New Orleans and has a Masters of Music from McNeese State University in Lake Charles, where she served as ad-



junct faculty after her graduation. Both of her degrees are in piano performance, and she is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Bonner still concertizes occasionally and appeared recently as soloist with the Columbia River Chamber Orchestra in Longview, Washington, playing Mozart's

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**The articles were published together in a little green book titled *Shakespeare Cross-Examination*. Mom was intrigued and ordered the book. That little green book was the culprit! She was intrigued with the Shakespeare Authorship debate and things just snowballed from there!"**

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21st piano concerto. In years past she has appeared as soloist with the New Orleans Symphony and other orchestras in Louisiana. She was a teacher of piano for many years and still judges piano festivals and auditions for the National Guild of Piano Teachers and other organizations.

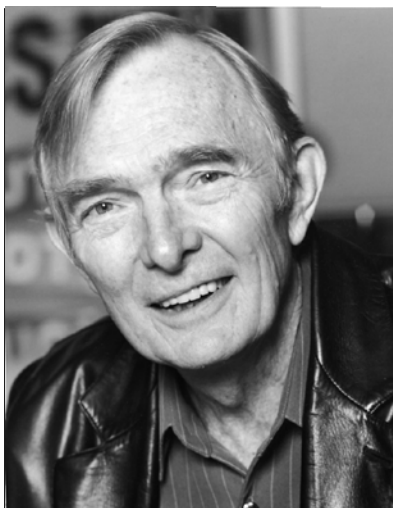
Bonner came to the Shakespeare

Authorship debate by "right of heredity." As many Fellowship members are aware, she is the daughter of Oxfordian pioneer Ruth Loyd Miller and Judge Minos Miller. As Bonner tells the story: "Mom's interest began when I was in college. Mom was a lawyer and had read a series of articles on the authorship question that appeared in the *Journal of the American Bar Association*. The articles were published together in a little green book titled *Shakespeare Cross-Examination*. Mom was intrigued and ordered the book. That little green book was the culprit! She was intrigued with the Shakespeare Authorship debate and things just snowballed from there!"

In recent years, Bonner assisted her mother in her continued research, and is now working to further the cause in which her parents made such significant contributions. Bonner notes that "Being a Cradle Oxfordian is a lot of responsibility."

#### **Ted Story**

Ted Story has spent most of his adult life in the theatre, as an actor, director and producer, appearing on Broadway and on television before moving to the other side of the curtain. He was Co-founder and Artistic Director of the IRT (The Impossible Ragtime Theatre), one of the best known and most



respected theatres in the hey-day of Off-off Broadway where he produced over 100 plays. He was a resident director and

dramaturg at the Shenandoah Valley Playwrights retreat for six years and co-produced (with Michael Tolen) the Plays by Players series at the famous Players Club in New York.

Ted is one of the founding members of the Shakespeare Fellowship and has had the honor of serving on the Board for two terms and as president for two terms. He has just finished co-writing (with Hank Whittemore) a one-man show called *Shakespeare's Treason*, which is based on Hank's book *The Monument*, which they hope to bring to Off-Broadway in the near future.

He is married to Cabaret singer Cynthia Crane, and has two grown daughters, Alexandra and Samantha.

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*(Letters, cont. from p. 2)*

While the deeper meaning of this verse remains elusive, and further speculation is beyond the scope of this letter, these new solutions could help us improve our understanding of *Twelfth Night* and its context from an Oxfordian perspective.

Kathryn Sharpe  
Seattle, Wn.

# *Anonymity: A Secret History of English Literature*

By John Mullan

London: Faber and Faber, 2007.

Reviewed by Richard M. Waugaman, MD

All Oxfordians have had the experience of being asked (sympathetically, skeptically, or sarcastically), “If de Vere wrote Shakespeare’s works, why would he have used a pseudonym? Wouldn’t everyone have known? How was it possibly kept secret?” Non-Oxfordians treat this as the missing link in our case. Personally, I believe we have ample evidence for our case even if we are never able to answer these questions with certainty. But we will expand de Vere’s acceptance as Shakespeare if we make a good faith effort to grapple with his possible motivations for pseudonymity.

So along comes this book on the history of anonymity (and pseudonymity, one of its subtypes) in English literature.

Mullan writes as though he is an Oxfordian without realizing it himself. Although he devotes only a small fraction of his book to the Elizabethan period, he has much to say that helps us reflect on and speculate about the many internal and external factors that may have led to de Vere’s pseudonymity. I suspect that we Oxfordians take a special pleasure in discovering that yet another ally has unwittingly helped us build our now unassailable case for de Vere’s authorship of Shakespeare. Please ponder possible parallels with de Vere even when I don’t raise them explicitly myself in what follows.

The book is organized around various forms of and motivations for anonymity. As a result, it jumps around in time. Mullan is a specialist in 18th and 19th century English literature, so he

is naturally at his best in dealing with those periods. More than 70 percent of English novels between 1770 and 1800 were published anonymously. He writes in his Epilogue that he expected to write a much shorter book. However, “There is no possible grand narrative of the changing conventions of anonymous and pseudonymous publication because, at any given time, there are different reasons for it” (286). “Anonymous” authorship was so much the norm in the Middle Ages that the word wasn’t even used until the sixteenth century. One historical pattern Mullan discovered was that “Anonymity became much less common in the twentieth century” (286). This recent aberration is of the most profound significance for Shakespeare authorship studies. Blinded by the peculiarities of their own historical era, many Shakespeare scholars fail to approach the authorship question with the knowledge that anonymity was the rule rather than the exception in the early modern era,

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especially when it came to published plays.

The first chapter, "Mischiefs," deals with social and political satirists. Jonathan Swift is the first example in the book, since "All Swift's satirical writings first appeared anonymously or pseudonymously" (10). Mullan concludes that "Swift liked to make trouble, and anonymity helped him do so" (14). He quotes Irvin Ehrenpreis as giving a further speculation about Swift's psychology: "His passion for hoaxes involving various games with his own identity strengthened Swift's instinct for self-protection" (14). These observations probably apply as well to de Vere's literary anonymity. Anonymity shields blasphemers and political satirists.

Sir Walter Scott shared the secret of his authorship of the Waverly novels with only a small circle of friends, until he revealed it publicly 18 years after the first of these novels was published. Mullan plausibly observes that "Scott's achievement was... to make the places he knew seem known to his readers-- to make locality universal. His anonymity was a way of turning his personal experience into impersonal fiction" (27-28). Anonymity universalizes the personal.

Mullan gives an example of an author whose anonymity reflected his religious scruples. John Newton served on the crew of a slave trading ship, until a dramatic conversion experience during a life-threatening storm at sea. He later wrote the text of the popular hymn, "Amazing Grace." When he published one of the best-selling autobiographies of the eighteenth century, he did so anonymously. Mullan explains that "Newton maintained his anonymity as a kind of propriety... a conventional self-effacement

that became all the more significant when the author's suspicion of his own self-regard was fundamental to his narrative. Paradoxically, the autobiographical particularity made anonymity more desirable" (257). For authors like Newton, anonymity helped lessen their guilt about publication. Such confessional authors felt that only anonymity allowed them to overcome their fear that publication was a sinful act of self-aggrandizement.

As Tennyson put it in his *In Memoriam*, "I sometimes hold it half a sin/ To put in words the grief I feel" (278). Tennyson may also have felt conflicted about the homoerotic nature of his intense affection for the subject of *In Memoriam*. Anonymity lessens shame and permits confession.

Mullan's book suggests that we are asking the wrong questions if we assume anonymity was an all-or-none thing. Either/or thinking is one of most common cognitive errors we all make. Mullan helps the Oxfordian case by giving many examples of writers whose anonymity was partial in one or more of numerous ways-- he calls it "a paradox we will find over and over again: the anonymous writer who does not truly attempt to remain unknown" (29). Until the past century, a convention of authorial reticence dictated anonymity as a common course, even if, paradoxically, the goal was to stir up curiosity about the author's identity and eventually draw more attention to oneself.

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A first edition might be anonymous to test the waters. If critical and popular reactions were favorable, the author's name might appear on subsequent editions.

The anonymity of many books gave way to printed attribution after the author's death. Many writers admitted their authorship freely to their friends, while some pretense of ano-

*(Continued on p. 12)*

(Anonymity, cont. from p. 11)

nymity was maintained publicly. (It is safe to assume that this was precisely the case with de Vere-- many, if not all members of the court who knew him and saw him act in his own plays at court knew he was the playwright. Many skeptics conveniently

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**Tennyson's *In Memoriam* was so well received that he was made Poet Laureate some six months after its publication. From multiple lines of evidence, everyone soon knew he was its author, but he insisted that all editions of it during his lifetime were printed without his name....Like the first 126 Sonnets, the poem was mistaken by one reviewer as expressing heterosexual love, since Tennyson's tenderness toward his dead friend "A.H.H." (Arthur Henry Hallam) was so effusive. Tennyson's son reported that his father did not originally write his poem for publication. He seemed to accept the poem's publication only by telling himself it was now not about his highly personal feelings toward Hallam, but "the voice of the human race" that spoke through the poem. Anonymity serves negative capability.**

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ignore the fact that de Vere was known as one of the best authors of comedies in his day.) In still other cases of anonymity, the psychology of the author and the highly personal meaning of a particular publication seemed central in their insistence that it remain anonymous. Anonymity is partial.

In 1850, Tennyson's *In Memoriam* was so well received that he was made Poet Laureate some six months after its publication. From multiple lines of evidence, everyone soon knew he

was its author, but he insisted that all editions of it during his lifetime were printed without his name. In 1867 he was still insisting that "*In Memoriam* is an anonymous work and not to be meddled with" (277). Like the first 126 Sonnets, the poem was mistaken by one reviewer as expressing heterosexual love, since Tennyson's tenderness toward his dead friend "A.H.H." (Arthur Henry Hallam) was so effusive. Tennyson's son reported that his father did not originally write his poem for publication. He seemed to accept the poem's publication only by telling himself it was now not about his highly personal feelings toward Hallam, but "the voice of the human race" (279) that spoke through the poem. Anonymity serves negative capability.

We can take Edmund Gosse as another example. He wrote a highly personal account of growing up with his peculiar father. When Gosse published the book anonymously in 1907, he wrote, "I hope the secret of the authorship will be kept as long as possible" (280). If so, why did he include a photograph of him with his father in the book, and why did he furnish so many identifying details? Emphasizing how common this pattern is, Mullan calls this story "another version of that anonymity without actual disguise that we find so often" (282). Mullan perceptively quotes an early reviewer's hunch about Gosse's motives for "anonymity": "In the minds of some, it was clearly wrong for a son to bare the relationship between himself and his father. Given this resistance, *anonymity* liberated the author to write of his father and his young self with the book's peculiar, melancholy intimacy" (283; my emphasis).

When all else fails, we should listen to children. I was recently chatting with a five-year-old friend (Ava Haraldsson), and I noticed a game nearby that was labeled "Pretend-Land." "Oh," I told her, "that's where I live." She frowned momentarily, then she conceded, "You can't really live there, but you can pretend to live in Pretend-Land." Play can be a serious matter for children. Like a role-playing child, the anonymous author ventures deeply into Pretend-Land. Anonymity may help him enact an unconscious fantasy of temporarily leaving behind his usual sense of self, and merging instead with his fictive narrator. The resulting distance from his usual sense of self, superego, and social role may open up a creative space that frees the author from psychological constraints that would otherwise silence or muffle him. The facilitating role of pseudonymity is likely to be especially salient when the content of the literary work is highly autobiographical in origin, and addresses issues about which the author is in significant conflict. Reverend C.L. Dodgson said of his pseudonym Lewis Carroll, author of *Alice in Wonderland*, "For 30 years I have managed to keep the 2 personalities distinct, and to avoid all communication, in *propria persona*, with the outer world, about my books" (44). Anonymity liberates authors.

In our narcissistic era, we project our own wishes for as much attention as possible onto our forebears, blinding ourselves in the process to contrasting cultural practices. Ours is the age of plagiarism, the converse of anonymity. One of our more massive blind spots is for the vast influence of religious belief and practice on earlier generations, including de Vere. Recall that Henry VIII rejected the pope's offer to annul one of his marriages, because he disagreed with the pope's theological

grounds. Henry was concerned with the fate of his ever-lasting soul. The reader may perform a thought experiment at this point. Think of your deepest, darkest secret, that you have never shared with anyone. Think of the conditions that might allow you to reveal it. Some of my psychoanalytic patients write in their journals about events they have never revealed to anyone. Could you imagine writing down your secret, if you thought no one would ever know you had written it? As Freud discovered, the unconscious mind is torn between conflicting wishes to keep its secrets and to tell them. One compromise for telling a secret might be to do so anonymously, like the many people who role play anonymously on-line. Mullan recounts several stories that suggest certain books never would have been written unless anonymous publication was the author's goal from the outset. Anonymity overcomes writer's block.

Mullan has dug deeply into the historical record to tell his story. He frequently quotes contemporary reviews of the books he discusses. How the reader will react to the degree of detail he provides will naturally depend on the reader's level of interest in any given story. Mine varied widely as I worked my way through Mullan's book. Not surprisingly for an Oxfordian, I was most intrigued by stories that struck me as relevant to *de Vere*. And there are plenty of them. By contrast, the chapter on anonymous book reviews only seemed like the longest one in the book.

The psychology of anonymity and pseudonymity is one of my greatest interests in these topics. The reader has to construct his or her own story about this topic out of the rich but scattered material Mullan provides, since he does not address it in a sustained, comprehensive manner. Mullan calls anonymity an "act of creative self-dispossession" (28). I would suggest that one important psychological factor in many cases of anonymity is the author's wish to distance herself from unbearably painful inner feelings. It is far more than a matter of keeping one's authorship secret from others. My many years experience in treating patients with dissociative identity disorder (formerly known as multiple personality) has taught me how vital it is for the psychological survival of some deeply scarred people to deceive themselves into thinking that their worst traumas happened to "someone else," not to them. This dynamic is at the root of the creation of "alters," or alternate self states. In less severe forms, a similar coping process occurs across a wide spectrum in its pervasiveness and longevity. Previously well adjusted rape victims commonly report that they "floated up to the ceiling and gazed down on the poor woman being raped." Anonymity blunts trauma.

Great writers create fictional characters who come to life. It should not surprise us if writers such as *de Vere* also create a fictive authorial identity who, in turn, creates these literary characters. Such a pseudonym may facilitate the author's entry into the world of his imagination, the wellspring of her creativity. Charlotte Bronte, for example, gives an eloquent explanation for insisting on remaining anonymous even after the great success of *Jane Eyre* — "If I were known — I should ever be conscious in writing that my book must be read by ordinary acquaintances — and that idea would fetter me intolerably" (99). A personal story — I wrote to a few of my favorite authors to point out errors in

their books. On a whim, I wrote under the identity of characters in their books. Both John Updike and Walker Percy played along in their replies. John Updike told me he still remembered my

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letter when I met him nearly twenty years later.

In addition to a chapter on women who wrote under male pseudonyms, Mullan also devotes a chapter to the less well

( continued on page 14)

(Anonymity, cont. from p. 13)

known converse phenomenon of men writing as women. In 1987, for example, the young female Asian writer Rahila Khan turned out to be Toby Forward, an Anglican vicar. He explained that he wrote under pseudonyms that “released me from the

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**Mullan does himself and his readers a disservice by not integrating his book with North’s *Anonymous Renaissance*... In his brief discussion of the sixteenth century, Mullan does admit that “in the sixteenth century a gentleman usually avoided print. Ambitious writers who did allow their work to be printed often exhibited reluctance or distaste.” Mullan also addresses the paradox that the 1589 *Arte of English Poesie* advocates that poets sign their works, while the book that offers this advice remains anonymous... Although Mullan has no excuse for omitting North’s book, he can justify the absence of authors such as Mark Twain, Alice Sheldon, and Fernando Pessoa on the grounds that he narrows his focus to English authors. The need is thus all the more compelling for someone to write a more comprehensive book on anonymity, one that includes more of Western literature, and explores more deeply the psychological meanings of anonymity and pseudonymity....**

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obligation of being what I seem to be so I can write as I really am... [His own alienation] was too personal and painful for me to write about, but it [his use of pseudonyms] gave me a way into the lives and minds of others who for different reasons and in different circumstances felt [some] of the same things” (115). Mullan calls *Pamela* “probably the single most influential novel of

the eighteenth century” (p. 123); its author, Samuel Richardson, initially passed it off as written by a young woman, the narrator herself. Similarly, Daniel Defoe initially claimed that his novel *Moll Flanders* was written by a woman.

Remarkably, Mullan does not cite and seems unaware of Marcy L. North’s 2003 book, *The Anonymous Renaissance*. Mullan does himself and his readers a disservice by not integrating his book with her important contribution, which is so relevant to de Vere’s era. North’s book will be the topic of a subsequent review. In his brief discussion of the sixteenth century, Mullan admits that “in the sixteenth century a gentleman usually avoided print. Ambitious writers who did allow their work to be printed often exhibited reluctance or distaste” (50). Mullan addresses the paradox that the 1589 *Arte of English Poesie* advocates that poets sign their works, while the book that offers this advice remains anonymous. It is important to emphasize that no convincing proof exists that George Puttenham wrote it. Some, including myself, believe de Vere himself may have written or collaborated on the *Arte*. Mullan also briefly discusses “E.K.,” the anonymous commentator on the poems of Edmund Spenser’s 1579 *The Shepherdes Calender*, itself published anonymously. E.K. may have been de Vere. Mullan devotes several pages to the tracts of Martin Marprelate; Oxfordians such as Elizabeth Appleton, Roger Stritmatter, and Nina Green have argued de Vere may have written some of these — more particularly that he is the author of the otherwise authorless “Pasquill” pamphlets that were written at the behest of the Anglican establishment to counter Martin Marprelate’s satiric barbs.

Although Mullan has no excuse for omitting North’s book, he can justify the absence of authors such as Mark Twain, Alice Sheldon, and Fernando Pessoa on the grounds that he narrows his focus to English authors. The need is thus all the more compelling for someone to write a more comprehensive book on anonymity, that includes more of Western literature, and explores more deeply the psychological meanings of anonymity and pseudonymity. Such a book should focus especially on our

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(Dueling Stylometricians, cont. from p. 5)

- Elliott would have us believe that Oxford felt that a writer must publish. Shahan made it clear that this claim is based solely on a letter Oxford wrote to the translator of *Cardanus’ Comfort*, a philosophical work, urging him to publish his translation. However, a “pep talk” to someone else isn’t necessarily an indication of what the writer himself either can or will do for his own writings.
- Elliott repeatedly characterized Oxford’s verse as bad – using an extensive array of pejoratives. The favorable comments of Oxford’s contemporaries and Henry Peacham (in 1622’s *Compleat Gentleman*) were dismissed as being empty compliments by people who said everyone was great. The favorable comments by a number of distinguished contemporary non-Oxfordian scholars were ignored. Further, Shahan pointed out that computer analysis is not capable

(Continued on p. 32)

(Anderson, cont. from p. 7)

Golding created the translation of the *Metamorphoses* that so deeply influenced Shakespeare. De Vere's guardian, Lord Burghley, had one of the best libraries in the country. One of de Vere's tutors wrote of his intense interest in recent and ancient history. Most Elizabethan plays were published anonymously, and pseudonymous publication of books was common then.

Those who teach Shakespeare are often at a loss when students ask about obscure passages in the plays. But Anderson has shown that these very passages bear close parallels with details of de Vere's life experiences. If one takes a Shakespeare play and deletes all plot elements that appear in known sources for the plays, what is left often has startling similarities with details of de Vere's recorded life. For example, Anderson writes, "The outlines of Hamlet are so pronounced within de Vere's life that one invariably illuminates the other" (190)—noting in particular that de Vere's father died when he was twelve, and Freud believed his mother remarried so quickly that de Vere became permanently estranged from her, out of anger at her disloyalty to his father.

Among other characters whose circumstances bear striking resemblances to details of de Vere's life are Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well* and Berowne in *Love's Labours Lost*. In the histories, the author shows a partiality to de Vere's ancestors.<sup>3</sup> Scholars know of earlier plays from which Shakespeare borrowed in writing *King Lear*, *Henry V*, *Richard III*, and *King John*. In many cases, Shakespeare himself would have been too young to have written the earlier plays, but Anderson shows that de Vere may have written some of these antecedent sources.

There is no single fact that proves beyond dispute that de Vere wrote Shakespeare. But Anderson provides a steady accumulation of hundreds of the sorts of connections that led Orson Welles to comment in 1954, "if you don't believe [de Vere is Shakespeare], there are some awful funny coincidences to explain away" (Anderson xxvii).

In 1920, Thomas Looney was the first to propose de Vere as the author of Shakespeare. Freud had expressed skepticism

in the traditional theory of authorship for many years before the appearance of Looney's book. Freud read Looney twice between 1923 and 1927. In 1930, Freud wrote to Theodore Reik, "I have been troubled by a change in me....I no longer believe in the man from Stratford."

The same year, Freud wrote:

It is undeniably painful to all of us that even now we do not know who was the author ... of Shakespeare .... And it is unavoidable that if we learn more about a great man's life we shall also hear of occasions on which he has in fact done no better than we, has in fact come near to us as a human being .... Our attitude to fathers and teachers

is, after all, an ambivalent one since our reverence for them regularly conceals a component of hostile rebellion.<sup>5</sup> [ 211-212]

So, in acknowledging his support for de Vere, Freud also began to speculate about the general unwillingness of many to question Shakespeare's identity.

Shakespeare is as powerful a transference figure as Freud, which complicates our efforts to approach the authorship question objectively. But Freud's monumental discoveries about the mind were based on his willingness to face unsavory truths. His deep interest in Shakespeare's identity reflected his reverence for Shakespeare's works, which not only confirmed but contributed to his psychoanalytic discoveries. Some have speculated that Freud's doubts about his own paternity may have further deepened his in-

terest in the authorship debate. Such subjective motivations sometimes create blind spots, but in this case, I believe they sensitized Freud to evidence that others may have overlooked.

Freud's description of de Vere as "passionately wayward" (1930, 212) echoes Sidney Lee's brief biography of de Vere.<sup>6</sup> Lee's account offers the advantage of having been written decades before Looney initiated the ongoing controversy about de Vere as Shakespeare. Describing de Vere as a young man, Lee wrote:

While manifesting a natural taste for music and literature, the youth developed a waywardness of temper which led

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(Continued on p. 16)

(Anderson, cont. from p. 15)

him into every form of extravagance, and into violent quarrels .... Oxford [de Vere] became a prominent figure at Elizabeth's court during his boyhood .... Meanwhile his guardian Cecil [Lord Burghley] found his perverse humour a source of grave embarrassment.

(1895, 226)

When de Vere was twenty-three, a contemporary wrote that "the queen's Majesty delighteth more in his personage . . . than in any other .... If it were not for his fickle head, he would pass [all other courtiers] shortly" (Lee, 226). In fact, Anderson documents in de Vere's character the complexity we would expect in the man who wrote Shakespeare's works. In describing de Vere, Lee wrote that "Oxford's eccentricities and irregularities of temper grew with his years .... Oxford had squandered some part of his fortune upon men of letters whose bohemian mode of life attracted him. He was patron of a company of players" (227). Furthermore:

Oxford . . . wrote verse of much lyric beauty. Puttenham and Meres reckon him among "the best for comedy" in his day; but ... no specimens of his dramatic productions survive. A sufficient number of his poems is extant, however, to corroborate Webbe's comment that he was the best of the courtier-poets in the early years of Elizabeth's reign.

(Lee 1895, 226)

What difference does it make, in the end, who wrote the plays and poems? The fact that we raise the question at all highlights the exceptional position that Shakespeare's works occupy for us as psychoanalysts. It would be surprising to hear such a question raised about any other author. We are always deeply interested in connections among an author's life, psychology,

and literary works. But so little is known about Shakespeare of Stratford that has any direct bearing on his poems and plays, that of necessity we have developed the habit of attributing his remarkable works to disembodied genius, virtually dissociating the literature from real-life experience. Yeats wrote, "works of lyric genius, when the circumstance of their origin is known, gain a second beauty, passing as it were out of literature and becoming life" (italics added).<sup>6</sup>

Anderson provides us with what would be a more familiar

framework that connects biography with artistic output, were we dealing with any other creative writer. Recognizing the hundreds of connections between Shakespeare's works and his life represents a profound but deeply exciting paradigm shift. Ample biographical evidence points to de Vere's bisexuality, for example, which offers a very different reading of the first 126 sonnets. Previous generations went to great lengths to obscure and deny the obvious homoerotic content of those sonnets (including changing pronouns from male to female).

What about the weaknesses of

Anderson's *Shakespeare by Another Name*? The book's excellent 157 pages of endnotes are unfortunately not cited in the index. And the author does not devote nearly the same attention to Shakespeare's poetry as he does to his plays. This is a time-honored tradition of neglect, reflected as early as 1623, when the poems were omitted from the First Folio (though writers such as Helen Vendler have done much to correct this imbalance<sup>7</sup>). Looney (1920; see footnote 3 of this review) wrote of the sonnets that de Vere's authorship makes "these verses really intelligible and rational for the first time" (377). The sonnets read like a sort of self-analysis on the part of de Vere.

**Freud's description of de Vere as "passionately wayward" echoes Sidney Lee's brief biography of de Vere. Lee's account offers the advantage of having been written decades before Looney initiated the ongoing controversy about de Vere as Shakespeare. Describing de Vere as a young man, Lee wrote:**

**"While manifesting a natural taste for music and literature, the youth developed a waywardness of temper which led him into every form of extravagance, and into violent quarrels .... Oxford [de Vere] became a prominent figure at Elizabeth's court during his boyhood .... Meanwhile his guardian Cecil [Lord Burghley] found his perverse humour a source of grave embarrassment."**



(Riots, cont. from p. 3)

The first seventeen sonnets, the so-called “procreation sonnets,” entreat a young man to marry and reproduce. Critics have speculated that the poet wrote them to the Earl of Southampton in 1590 while the latter’s guardian, who was also de Vere’s father-in-law, Lord Burghley, was ordering the 17-year-old Southampton to marry de Vere’s daughter. One sonnet refers to the poet’s being forty years old, which was de Vere’s age in 1590 (Shakespeare was then twenty-six—leading traditional scholars to conjecture that the age of forty was merely a figure of speech<sup>8</sup>).

Some reviewers have criticized An-

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**All who love the works of Shakespeare owe it to themselves to read this important and scholarly book. If Anderson is correct about Shakespeare’s identity, there should be an explosion of new psychoanalytic studies linking Shakespeare’s works with his life.**

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derson for introducing too many speculations about connections between de Vere’s life experiences and the works of Shakespeare. It is reasonable to ask for further evidence to support these assertions. But it is also fair to acknowledge the speculative nature of every biography that has been written of Shakespeare of Stratford. Many reviewers have taken Stephen Greenblatt<sup>9</sup> to task for what one (Colin Burrow<sup>10</sup>) called his “subjunctive biography.” And one of Shakespeare’s most respected biographers, Samuel Schoenbaum, justified the many speculations he included with the statement that “the workings of myth have a place in the historical record.”<sup>11</sup>

All who love the works of Shakespeare owe it to themselves to read this

important and scholarly book. If Anderson is correct about Shakespeare’s identity, there should be an explosion of new psychoanalytic studies linking Shakespeare’s works with his life.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Nelson, A. (2003). *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere., Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*. Liverpool, England: Liverpool Univ. Press.

<sup>2</sup> See the following: (1) Greenwood, G.G. (1908). *The Shakespeare Problem Restated*. Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press; and (2) Price, D. (2001). *Shakespeare’s Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an authorship problem*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

<sup>3</sup> Looney, J. T. (1920). “Shakespeare” *Identified*. London: Cecil Palmer. See in particular 187, 140.

<sup>4</sup> Freud, S. (1930). Address delivered at the Goethe house in Frankfurt, S.E., 21.

<sup>5</sup> Lee, S. (1895). *Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 56. New York: Macmillan, 1913.

<sup>6</sup> Yeats, W.B. (1937). Introduction to *The Lemon Tree*, by M. Ruddock. London: J.M. Dent.

<sup>7</sup> Vendler, H. (1997). *The Art of Shakespeare’s Sonnets*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press.

<sup>8</sup> Burrow (2002) acknowledges that “references to the poet’s age in the Sonnets often deny literal interpretation” - i.e., as long as Shakespeare of Stratford is assumed to be their author. See *William Shakespeare: The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, ed. C. Burrow. Oxford, England: Oxford Univ. Press, 155).

<sup>9</sup> Greenblatt, S. (2004). *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York: Norton.

<sup>10</sup> Burrow, C. (2005). “Who Wouldn’t Buy It?” *London Review of Books*, 27 (a): 9-11, January 20.

<sup>11</sup> Schoenbaum, S. (1970). *Shakespeare’s Lives*. Oxford, England: Oxford Univ. Press, xi.

before television, Shakespeare was popular entertainment American interpreter of Shakespeare for the masses, Edwin Forrest. Forrest specialized in a brash declamatory style of performance loved by the American underclass for its power to transport them from the miseries of 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism. For one brief shining moment, anyway – before the bitter realities of industrial capitalism returned with a vengeance -- Shakespeare had become the opiate of New York’s masses.

Forest’s English rival, William Charles Macready, preferred the more genteel, aristocratic delivery expected at

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the uptown Astor Place theatre, where the scions of New York’s emerging industrial nobility consumed their entertainment. When Macready conspicuously and aggressively arrived in Manhattan to perform Macbeth at Astor place, not only during Forrest’s run of the same play at the Bowery but after having allegedly conspired to ruin Forrest’s own recent European tour, Forrest’s working class fans — 20,000 strong — took to the streets to smash windows, and to the opera seats, from which they expressed their dislike, among other ways, by pelting Macready with foul kitchen waste while he was trying to listen to the witch’s prophesy. Before it was over,

(Continued on p. 18)

(Riots, cont. from p. 17)



Edwin Forrest as Lear.

of the 20,000 rioters, twenty-five were dead and at least 38 injured when the Seventh Regiment of the National Guard opened fire after the rioters refused an order to disperse. Double, double, toil and trouble indeed.

Few who have any experience with the authorship question can doubt that many Americans are still deeply committed to a populist bard remade in the Edwin Forrest mold. At the same time, it is difficult not to sympathize with the social injustices symbolized, for the Astor place rioters, by Macready's more nuanced and aristocratic Shakespeare. They were immigrants to a promised land that cheated them of their human dignity and worked them to death in conditions that were often only marginally better than those assigned to Africans transported as slaves from Rhode Island or Massachusetts to run the sugar plantations of the southern states. Particularly victimized, of course, were the Irish Immigrants of the industrial northeast: Boyles, Fitzpatricks, Shaughnessys, and all the rest.

In 1849, many of the most recent of these Irish emigrants in New York were refugees of the potatoe famine brought on by the cash-cropping greed of English landlords. No wonder these newly created proletarians preferred an actor who could apply the appropriate histrionics to a per-

formance of a gleefully evil Aaron rather than one skilled at imitating the subtle ratiocination of a prince who "lacked gall to make oppression bitter."

By the same token, no one awake to the daily tragedies of our world can

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**Forest's English rival, William Charles Macready, preferred the more genteel, aristocratic delivery expected at the uptown Astor Place theatre, where the scions of New York's emerging industrial nobility consumed their entertainment. When Macready conspicuously and aggressively arrived in Manhattan to perform *Macbeth* at Astor place, not only during Forrest's run of the same play at the Bowery but after having allegedly conspired to ruin Forrest's own recent European tour, Forrest's working class fans – 20,000 strong – took to the streets to smash windows, and to the opera seats, from which they expressed their aesthetic preferences by pelting Macready with foul kitchen waste while he was trying to listen to the witch's prophesy.**

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fail to notice that social class, broadly defined, still often determines not only an individual's opportunity, but his or her fate. Turn on a television set. The faces of

children starving in Africa are transmitted to us by electronic miracle; their only crime is be born on that continent, of all the rest, most affected by global warming and ethanol-induced food inflation.

One would think that by now, one hundred and fifty-nine years after Astor Place and forty after Kent State, Americans would have grown out of needing to remake the Bard in the image of a working class hero who did so well for himself writing about worlds of which he had no real experience, chronicling the vicissitudes of manic-depressive princes and aristocratic changelings. It is among the most basic of all logical fallacies — right up there with the ever-popular argument *ad hominem*



William Macready as Shylock.

(employed with such subtle yet effective innuendo by the congenial Professor Nelson in *Monstrous Adversary*)— to equate what we *prefer* with what *is*. To insist that Shakespeare belonged "to the people," just because we ourselves may identify with them, does no favor to the ideals of justice, human equality, democracy, or progress. It simply bases our hopes on an example of doubtful credibility and hence undermines the very notions it was supposed to support, clearing the way for the next Macbeth (or Richard III) to come sweeping into our lives with his promises of salvation, lower gas prices, and perpetual war on terrorism.

-R.S.

(News, cont. from p. 4)

At Shanxi Agricultural University he addressed an all-university assembly organized by the English department. A translation of his presentation into Chinese is scheduled to appear in the university's centennial publication.

At Beijing Normal University, he spoke to an overflow audience in an English literature class; and at Fudan University he discussed the issue at a graduate seminar on Shakespeare.

Burgstahler, who is editor of the journal *Fluoride*, also delivered a paper at the three-day, 27<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the International Society for Fluoride Research, held in Beijing. And he gave seminars on his fluoride research at Shanxi Agricultural University and at the China Agricultural University.

"The Chinese have a great appreciation of Shakespeare," said Burgstahler, "and they have a keen interest in the authorship question."

### Sue Sybersma Passes On...

The Fellowship was saddened to report in our last issue the passing of long-time anti-Stratfordian activist and scholar Sue Sybersma, who passed away. Sue served for many years on the board of the SOS and was a regular attendee at many Oxfordian gatherings, including the annual Authorship Studies Conference at Concordia University.

SOS Trustee Richard Joyrich remembers her in the most recent SOS newsletter: "Sue was well known to all the booksellers in Stratford, Ontario and was almost single-handedly responsible for Oxfordian and other Authorship books being on offer, including at the official Theater Store for the Festival. Just imagine this kind of thing in a place called Stratford! She always increased my enjoyment of watching the plays there as well as the conferences we attended together. Her insights and dedication to the Authorship Question were amazing and something I desired to emulate."

May she Rest in Peace.

### Elizabethan Review Available on CD

The semi-annual *Elizabethan Review*, edited by Gary Goldstein, was published from 1993 to 1999 in 13 issues. The entire print run, totaling 930 pages, is now available on CD in searchable PDF format.

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Among the contributors are Professor Felicia Londre on the French, Spanish and Russians in *Love's Labour's Lost*; Professor Ross Duffin on Giulio Romano in *The Winter's Tale*, Professor Peter Usher on astronomy in *Hamlet*; Professor Warren Hope on the identity of the singing swallow in the John Davies poem *Orchestra*; Professor Roger Stritmatter on *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Comedies*; Peter Moore on the chronology of the Shakespeare plays; Diana Price on the Prince Tudor theory; and Father Francis Edwards, SJ, on the English Secret Service.

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The only peer review journal that covered the Shakespeare Authorship Issue during the 1990s, along with other topics relevant to the Elizabethan era, the *Review* is indexed by the *World Shakespeare Bibliography*, the *MLA International Bibliography*, and the *Bibliography of English Language and Literature* by Cambridge University. Among the contributors are Professor Felicia Londre on the French, Spanish and Russians in *Love's Labour's Lost*; Professor Ross Duffin on Giulio Romano in *The Winter's Tale*, Professor Peter Usher on

astronomy in *Hamlet*; Professor Warren Hope on the identity of the singing swallow in the John Davies poem *Orchestra*; Professor Roger Stritmatter on *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Comedies*; and early modern censorship, Peter Moore on the chronology of the Shakespeare plays; Diana Price on the Prince Tudor theory; and Father Francis Edwards, SJ, on the English Secret Service.

The CD can be ordered from the editor for \$50 by check, made out to "Gary Goldstein" and mailed to his attention at 2064 Exeter D, Boca Raton, FL 33434. Gary can be contacted by email at garygoldstein1@bellsouth.net

### Anderson on Spring '08 Tour on Authorship Debate

Mark Anderson, author of the best-selling *Shakespeare by Another Name*, is again touring to promote his book and debate all comers from the orthodox camp and promote his book. Anderson was in Houston (March 13-15), New York (March 27), Boston/Concord (May 30-June 1) and Las Vegas (July 11). The final stop on this spring-summer tour was a debate (at Bally's Casino in Reno, Nevada) on the authorship question, where Anderson took on Alan Nelson of U.C. Berkeley (arguing for the Stratfordian theory) and William Rubenstein of the University College of Wales (arguing that Elizabethan courtier Henry Neville was the Bard). The verbal tussle was part of the "great debates" series at the weekend-long Freedom Fest conference on July 11. Details forthcoming, next issue of *SM*.

### New England Authorship Conference

May 30-June 1, a group of Massachusetts Shakespeareans hosted three days of presentations, conversations and performances in Concord, Mass., some of which examined the plays and poems from Edward de Vere's perspective and some of which argued the orthodox view for William Shakspeare/Shakespeare of Stratford. The Concord Shakespeare Conference and

Festival was one of those rare gatherings that brought both Montagues and Capulets — Oxfordians and Stratfordians — to the same venue to discuss one thing both sides hold in common: a profound love of The Bard. Oxfordian speakers included Mark Anderson and Fellowship trustee Dr. Sarah Smith and President Alex McNeil.

As local press coverage of the event pointed out, Concord's famous son Ralph Waldo Emerson said that tracing the identity of the Bard is "the first of all literary problems."

—Contributed by Mark K. Anderson

## Hath Shakespeare Been a Tourist in Venice?

The March 25 issue of the *London Times Online* carries notice of a new book, *Shakespeare in Venice*, co-written by Shaul Bassi, a lecturer at Venice University, and Alberto Toso Fei. "Most scholars believe that what Shakespeare knew about Venice must have been the fruit of wide reading and his contact with Italians," says Mr. Bassi. "But the local references — implicit as well as explicit — are so numerous they point to an alternative hypothesis: what if he did come here after all?"

According to *London Times* Rome correspondent Richard Owen, about a third of Shakespeare's works are based in Italy or make specific references to events and locations in Italy. However, "there is no concrete evidence that Shakespeare ever left England, and the most widely accepted theory is that he gleaned background information from Italian travellers and merchants, including Venetians, whose glass and other products were highly prized in Elizabethan England."

Here at the Shakespeare Fellowship, we predict that the new book by Bassi and Fei, is bound to incite further interest in the authorship question. Although there is no reason to believe that the Bard of Avon ever left his native England, it is well known that de Vere toured Tuscany in 1575-76, and well attested tradition records that he was fond enough of Venice — then the most cosmopolitan

city in Europe — to build himself a house there.

John Aubrey probably exaggerated when he had the Earl remaining in Venice for seven years in humiliation after breaking wind in the presence of Elizabeth I, but it does seem likely that the prodigal earl spent considerable time there during the decades after his 1575 junket.

## Authorship in the Princeton Alumni Review

Dr. Richard Waugaman, a noted Washington, DC, psychoanalyst, member of the Shakespeare Fellowship, and regular contributor to *Shakespeare*

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**“For most of us ordinary folk, the authorship wars are irrelevant.. and ‘Shakespeare’ means interchangeably the man and his works.” Think about it. I tried to, but I failed to grasp what the hell that means. As best as I can figure it out, it means “We are ducking the issue.... We won’t fall for those nutty conspiracy theories. But we’ll put the name ‘Shakespeare’ in quotation marks, so if it turns out to be someone else we can say ‘Yes, we knew it all along.’”**

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*Matters*, has landed a brief authorship article in the current issue of the online *Princeton Alumni Weekly*.

"I believe there are many sources of the skepticism, apathy, and even hostility

I have encountered on my authorship quest," writes Waugaman.

"We trust experts, and we should — usually. But literary studies lack a reliable methodology to evaluate....authorship claims. We assume that it's difference in science. But recall that Wegener had accumulated overwhelming evidence for his theory of continental drift by 1915. He was a mere geographer, though, not a geologist. Geologists — the specialists in that field — argued that there was no known conceivable explanation of how continental drift could have occurred, so they ridiculed Wegener's theory. But, by the mid-1960s, new information about plate tectonics provided the missing pieces of explanatory theory, and geologists now fully accept Wegener's 1915 proposal.

The situation is analogous when it comes to de Vere as Shakespeare. We have abundant evidence that he was regarded by his contemporaries as the best of the Elizabethan courtier poets...There are hundreds of connections between the content of the plays and poems of Shakespeare and the documented facts of de Vere's life."

## Wall Street Journal: Official Shakespeare Story Wearing Thin

A February 16 *Wall Street Journal* review by Frances Taliaferro, covering two new orthodox biographies by Bill Bryson and Charles Nicholl, got us to sit up and take notice. Taliaferro starts with a predictable quote from Bryson: "For most of us ordinary folk, the authorship wars are irrelevant.. and 'Shakespeare' means interchangeably the man and his works." Continues Taliaferro:

"Think about it. I tried to, but I failed to grasp what the hell that means. As best as I can figure it out, it means "We are ducking the issue. We won't take a stand that could prove us wrong in the future. We won't fall for those nutty conspiracy theories. But we'll put the name 'Shakespeare' in quotation marks, so if it turns out to be someone else we can say 'Yes, we knew it all along.'"

(Conference, cont. from p. 1)

Talks focused on the literary, historical, political, and religious significance of the works of Shakespeare and the dynamics of the authorship question. While the SASC continues to demonstrate a commitment to the Oxfordian perspective, it also included papers on different aspects of Shakespeare's works and alternative theories of authorship.

Bonner Miller Cutting, an independent scholar and Shakespeare Fellowship Trustee from Houston, opened the Con-

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**According to Ms. Cutting, there are numerous reasons for the Susan Vere identification: the angry break-up of the marriage between Pembroke and his second wife, 18<sup>th</sup> century historical identifications, the sitter's lack of resemblance to Lady Anne's established portraits, the bleak, funereal pose and fictionalized aspects of the sitter as rendered in the thin paint by Van Dyck, and – finally – “plain common sense.”**

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ference with a paper titled “The Case of the Wrong Countess.” The Countess in question is the woman in black in the 1635 painting by Sir Anthony Van Dyck known as “The Celebrated Family Piece,” a huge 11' x 17' painting, now displayed at Wilton House, the ancient manor of the Earls of Pembroke. According to an official catalog of the Pembroke family, the woman sitting to the left of Philip Herbert, the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Pembroke, is identified as the Earl's second

wife, Anne Clifford. The reason given for the identification of Lady Anne Clifford is the fact that Philip was married to Lady Anne when this family portrait was painted.

Ms. Cutting argued, however, that the woman is not Pembroke's second wife, who was bitterly put out of the house by Pembroke after only 4½ years of marriage, but his first wife of

25 years, the deceased Lady Susan Vere, the daughter of Edward de Vere, the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. According to Ms. Cutting, there are numerous reasons for the Susan Vere identification: the angry breakup of the marriage between Pembroke and his second wife, 18<sup>th</sup> century historical identifications, the sitter's lack of resemblance to Lady Anne's established portraits, the bleak, funereal pose and fictionalized aspects of the sitter as rendered in the thin paint by Van Dyck, and – finally – “plain common sense.”

Citing Dr. Alexander Grosart's comment about Edward de Vere: “An unlifted shadow somehow lies across his memory,” the speaker concluded that the gradual disappearance of Countess Susan from the annals of the Pembroke family and the concurrent elevation of Lady Anne Clifford indicate that this shadow has fallen on his third daughter as well.

Ian Haste, a retired educator from Mission, British Columbia, presented an introduction to the authorship question designed for teenagers. The purpose is to have the teenagers question what they have been told and to look at what we actually know about Shakespeare of Stratford. Mr. Haste pointed out that the known records of Shakespeare amount only to buying property, hoarding grain, and avoiding



Shakespeare Fellowship member Ian Haste, a retired educator from Mission, B.C., regaled the Conference with his innovative Power Point tool on authorship, designed for middle school students.

Photo: William Boyle.

taxes. There is no known connection in his life between the plays and poems. and the use of untranslated sources and extensive travels in France and Italy as evidenced in the plays do not coincide with what we know about the life of the Stratford man.

Boston attorney and Fellowship President Alex McNeil, JD, in an out-take from his popular “Oxfordian Jeopardy” series, discussed the Jeopardy topic, “But Not Shakespeare,” referring to the many categories of early modern historical records in which one would expect to see Shakespeare but does not. These include letters received and sent, the number of books dedicated to him, eulogies for Queen Elizabeth and Prince Henry, books owned, and records of conversation. Mr. McNeil focused on the 1611 publication, *Coryate's Crudities*, to which dozens of Jacobean poets and playwrights affixed dedicatory verses. Once again, however, Shakespeare was missing when the donation plate was passed around.

Stratfordian data were subjected to analysis by Sam Saunders, PhD, Professor of Applied Mathematics at Washington State University. Dr. Saunders asserted that the odds of Shakespeare of Stratford completing the Stratford Grammar School depends on such factors as the population of Stratford and the number of students

(Continued on p. 22)



*Henry V*, *Richard II* and *King Lear*, he asserted that the issue of succession is a pattern that is at the center of all his plays. They are written to the Crown about rulers who have “reaped the whirlwind” and his goals are purposeful and political – to teach the sovereign that the absence of royal authority leads to doom.

Independent researcher Peter Dawkins, who received an award at the Conference Banquet for the quality of his scholarship, presented evidence of Francis Bacon being a leader, principal poet, and editor-in-chief of a group of poets who composed the Shakespeare canon. He cited the Northumberland Manuscript, in which the name of Bacon is shown on the contents page alongside that of Shakespeare’s two plays. He also asserted that letters show Bacon wrote plays for the stage and had referred to himself as a “concealed poet” and that the Shakespeare monument infers that the author was Francis Bacon in its comparison of Shakespeare to Nestor, Socrates, and Virgil.

Dawkins’ interpretations and use of evidence were challenged by Lynne Kositsky, award-winning author and poet and past President of The Shakespeare Fellowship. When Mr. Dawkins cited Bacon’s knowledge of the Strachey letter delivered to the Virginia Company as evidence of his composition of *The Tempest*, Ms. Kositsky pointed out that there is no evidence that the “letter” ever went to the Virginia Company, or was in fact written at all in the fall of 1610. She pointed out that William Strachey’s “True Repertory,” the only Bermuda pamphlet now thought to have significantly influenced *The Tempest*, was put into its only extant form too late to be used as the play’s source, most likely after the play had been produced in 1611, and had elements that were plagiarized from earlier works.

In another talk that challenged the Oxfordian analysis of the authorship debate, Alan Nelson, PhD, Emeritus Professor of English at The University of California at Berkeley, asserted that the epithet “Ever-Living,” as it appears in the phrase “ever-living poet” attached to the prefatory materials of the 1609 Q edition of *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*, can be used to refer to living persons. He said that the premise that it only refers to the deceased is

Professor Amy Freed, playwright and Stanford Drama Department’s Artist in Residence, recounted her sometimes humorous experiences writing and helping to produce her critically acclaimed “The Beard of Avon.” Photo: William Boyle.

**(Conference, cont. from p. 21)**

eligible to enter school each year, average length of life during the sixteenth century, and the childhood mortality rates for males and females.

In his talk titled “*Hamlet* Made Simple,” California attorney and former Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Humanities at Southern University, David Gontar, PhD, JD, asserted that the ghost in *Hamlet* is the “prime mover” of the play and the key to Hamlet’s uncertainty. Although the Ghost relates some factual information, Shakespeare cautions us that he is untrustworthy and his claim to be Hamlet’s father is questionable. Dr. Gontar posed four key questions about the play:

- (1) Why is the Ghost believed, and what follows if, in fact, it is a deceiver?
- (2) Why is the Prince angry with his mother?
- (3) Why is Hamlet unable to avenge the King’s murder by killing Claudius?
- (4) Why isn’t Prince Hamlet the King of Denmark at the beginning of the play rather than Claudius?

To these puzzles, Dr. Gontar sug-

gested a single key: Hamlet should be viewed as the son of Claudius; that is, as a bastard born of an affair between Gertrude and Claudius. He cannot take revenge because he senses that in slaying Claudius he would be murdering his own biological father. This would also account for his anger towards his mother. Finally, Hamlet’s failure to inherit the Danish throne is easily understood when we grasp that, as the bastard son of Claudius, his claim to succession is weak. Dr. Gontar further suggested that the play is heavily autobiographical and that Prince Hamlet represents Oxford as a young man, a topic covered in the second half of his paper but not delivered because of time.

Conference Director Dr. Daniel Wright, PhD, Professor of English at Concordia University, spoke on the subject of “Legitimizing Illegitimacy in Shakespeare.” Dr. Wright suggested that Shakespeare aims at conferring legitimacy on the Earls of Oxford even if the subject is irrelevant to the play. He erases failures and rewrites the historical record of the Oxford clan, elevating secondary and incidental efforts to major importance. According to Dr. Wright, Shakespeare is obsessed with the issue of legitimacy. Citing *Henry IV*,

doubtful because it may refer to God rather than to Shakespeare, and had been used in reference to a living Queen Elizabeth in 1595. Thus, although a preponderance of evidence still supports the interpretation that the phrase refers to a deceased person, Nelson tried to argue from one exception that the case for this interpretation is void. Asked by Roger Stritmatter whether he thought the principle of “a preponderance of the evidence” should be applied in instances in which evidence is not conclusive, Nelson bluntly replied “No. People who can’t prove their case should shut up.” Nelson, clearly unwilling to enter into a serious discussion about methods and inferences, devoted the remainder of his time to critiquing paleographical minutiae in Charles Nicholl’s new book, *The Lodger*, and complained that Nicholl had not properly credited him for his contributions to the book.

The keynote address for the Conference was given by author and lecturer Charles Vere Beauclerk, President of the de Vere Society and collateral descendant of Edward de Vere. Beauclerk spoke on “Shakespeare’s Identity Crisis,” the title of his forthcoming book. The capstone of his talk was a quote from the journal entry of Henry David Thoreau, “The one word that explains the Shakespeare miracle is unconsciousness.” In his lecture, Mr. Beauclerk argued that the Shakespeare authorship question grew out of the dramatist’s own identity crisis, which manifests itself through the principal themes and characters of his plays. These reveal Shakespeare to have been – like Hamlet – a disinherited prince who used the theatre to assert his royal right.

Expressing his alienation through the figures of the fool, the bastard, and the king without a crown, Shakespeare reworked the same key ideas and characters throughout his career. His chosen themes were necessarily integral to his life: the fall from grace, banishment, loss of identity, the royal succession, contested kingship, exile and return, the concealed prince, and the philosopher king. These themes, claimed Beauclerk, crystallize around a core myth: that of the king or man of high estate who loses his crown or station – and with it his identity – only to



Concordia Assistant Professor of Classical Languages and Biblical Studies Michael Thomas lectured on the history of concepts and practices of authorship in the ancient world. Photo: William Boyle.

recover them at a deeper level after exile or some other humiliation.

The question of what constitutes true kingship was, he said, not so much a theme in Shakespeare as an obsession and was clearly bound up with the author’s sense of identity. Indeed, he spoke of Shakespeare’s “king-complex.” In exploring these themes to elucidate the author’s psychology, Mr. Beauclerk showed how Shakespeare used the chivalric romance tradition to present himself as the lost redeemer. Through this archetype the playwright found an ingenious means both of celebrating his outcast status and shaping the literary persona of the Spear-Shaker, England’s hidden champion.

Assistant Professor of Classical Languages at Concordia University and biblical scholar, Michael Thomas, MA, looked into the inventory of methods used by biblical scholars and how it may be related to the Shakespeare authorship question. Prof. Thomas asserted that dating and that authorship questions are problematic in antiquity and meant something very different from the modern age. The ancient culture did not regard authorship as a creative activity or a means of self-expression. Authors were considered more as

re-tellers and re-counters of an oral tradition that may have lasted for centuries. Written texts were only an approximation, at least until they became scripture and were fixed. Although names are linked to important works such as Moses and Luke in the Bible, they are not considered to be the men who wrote the works, just as prominent figures who are linked to the stories in the books.

Dr. Earl Showerman MD, a former Fellowship trustee and prominent physician from Southern Oregon, examined the numerous Herculean allusions contained in the works of Shakespeare. Dr. Showerman said that Heracles, a son of the Greek God Zeus (renamed Hercules by the Romans), was worshipped first as a hero, then as a God. He was a divine hero whose legend grew by oral tradition as Greek civilization spread. He represented masculinity, courage, intelligence, as well as rage and excessive appetite – “everything too much” and was renowned as having “made the world safe for mankind” by destroying many dangerous monsters. He was revered by Alexander the Great, Mark Antony, Commodus, Maximian, and Plutarch.

Hercules embodied two distinct

(Continued on p. 24)

(Conference, cont. from p. 23)

traditions: a man of virtue and one whose vices led him to perform the twelve labors at the Oracle of Delphi as a means of cleansing his madness, a task of immeasurable difficulty. Although Robert Root alluded to Shakespeare's knowledge of Hercules as "exceedingly scanty" and consisting of general impressions and conversations, Dr. Showerman pointed out six allusions to Hercules in *Love's Labours Lost* in which he depicts Benedick as a satiric Herculean hero, four in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and many others in *Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Hamlet*.

According to Dr. Showerman, Shakespeare's references to Hercules in the plays are a clear demonstration of his proficiency in the Greek language by his use of untranslated Greek source material such as works from Euripides and Aeschylus. The plays also indicate that Shakespeare was familiar with Homer, Lucian, and Hesiod, as well as Latin sources such as Virgil, Plautus, Cicero, and Seneca, not likely for the man from Stratford.

Four presentations addressed the meaning of some puzzling and controversial poems. A familiar voice at Shakespeare conferences, Richard Whalen, author of the book *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* spoke on the topic "Is the Basse elegy written to the 'Shakespeare who died in April 1616' valid evidence for the Stratfordian thesis?" According to Mr. Whalen, Stratfordians use the Basse elegy to Shakespeare as evidence for the Stratford man because its title clearly states that he died in 1616. Mr. Whalen pointed out,

however, that the date in the title appeared on only seven of thirty-four manuscript copies as well as on John Benson's 1640 volume. The earliest printing of the eulogy was in the 1633 posthumous edition of John Donne's poems, and contained no mention of the author's alleged 1616 death date.

Mr. Whalen suggested that the Basse elegy urging burial in Westminster is not valid evidence for the Stratford man and

that Centerwall's Stratfordian conjectural scenario works better for Oxford, who was buried in Hackney (though Percival Golding said he was buried in Westminster), and there is no evidence of removal. Whalen said that he and Chris Paul of Atlanta are continuing to work on what he called "the anomalous and uncertain" his-tory of the so-called Basse elegy on Shakespeare.

Hank Whittemore, author of the book *The Monument*, a study of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* spoke about "A Lover's

Complaint," a poem originally published in 1609 as an appendix to the *Sonnets*. Recent scholarship, however (notably by Brian Vickers), has devastated the claim to Shakespearean authenticity and made a strong case for the authorship of John Davies of Hereford (1565-1618) – Davies being an admirer and imitator of Shakespeare.

"Vickers says it's not good enough for Shakespeare! And Vickers is an honorable Shakespeare scholar!" Whittemore thundered in full Marc Antony voice.

The narrative poem consists of forty-seven seven-line stanzas written with the rhyme scheme ababbcc, similar to Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*. Indeed, the first stanza

of *A Lover's Complaint* closely resembles the first stanza of *The Rape of Lucrece* in structure and word choice. A comparison of lines from "Lover's Complaint" and *King Lear* also clearly demonstrates the similarity between the two works. Vickers' response is that "The Complaint's" author in 1609 could easily have imitated those lines.

Mr. Whittemore emphasized the fol-

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can be better seen as evidence for Oxford as the poet-dramatist. He cited Brandon Centerwall, who argues in *Shakespeare Survey* 2006 that Donne, not Basse, is the author of the eulogy and suggests that Donne ascribed it to Basse because he had failed to realize that the curse on the Stratford man's gravestone prohibited moving his bones to Westminster as his eulogy urged. Whalen also showed



lowing key points: “Lover’s Complaint” is in fact the work of Shakespeare and probably a very early work of Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford. The young man of the poem is Oxford’s description of himself as a young nobleman at Court and, in the poem, Oxford is dramatizing the dynamics of his early relationship with Queen Elizabeth leading to the birth of their son Henry Wriothesley, the Third Earl of Southampton.

The poem tells the beginning of the story recorded in the Sonnets – which, in the view of Mr. Whittemore, uses the “noted weed,” or familiar language of love poetry to record a political story about the succession, specifically about how Robert Cecil held Southampton in Tower until King James succeeded Elizabeth. In conclusion, Whittemore declared that “Lover’s Complaint” is an integral part of all the published poetry, attributed to the pen name Shakespeare — *Venus and Adonis*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, *The Phoenix and Turtle*, and *The Sonnets* – all written in relation to the same political story.

Roger Stritmatter, PhD, Assistant Professor of English at Coppin State University in Baltimore, spoke about the elegy to Ben Jonson known as *Jonsonus Virbius*. The book is a collection of elegiac poems published in 1638 in English (25), Latin (6), and Greek (1) by Jonson’s friends, “the Sons of Ben,” to honor the playwright, who had died in 1637. Prof. Stritmatter pointed out that Jonson is a “person of interest” in the authorship question because of his role as a leading dramatist of the age, one who gave his seal of approval to the First Folio of 1623 and became the first witness for orthodox Shakespeareans.

Stritmatter argued that the book, dismissed by some mainstream scholars as “an undistinguished collection of hyperbole and stock metaphor” (D. H. Craig, 1995), on close examination reveals that the contributors covertly celebrate Ben

Jonson for acts of literary genius that could not be overtly acknowledged. While praising Jonson, they also hint at Jonson’s penchant for trickery and secrecy, casting doubt on Jonson’s Preface to the First Folio. The suggestion that the contributors are covering up for Jonson is indicated by a number of statements, including Robert Waring’s statement in Jonson’s memory, “Æternum scribi debuit, quidquid æternum legi (Whatever ought to be written for ever, ought to be read forever),” a possible reference to the enigmatic, “Jonsonian” preface to *Troilus and Cressida* (1609), “From a Never Writer to an Ever Reader.” Stritmatter concluded that contextual clues indicate the contributors know

***Willobie* was “found” by Oxford student “Hadrian Dorrell” while his roommate Willobie was on tour. Needless to say, no Hadrian Dorrell has ever been discovered. To make things even more obvious, *Penelope’s Complaint*, a sequel published two years later, announced that Willobie is dead and proclaimed that Avisia is “an innkeeper’s wife.” Controversial in its day, the 1594 narrative poem was one of the books included in the “bishop’s bonfire” of 1599.**

more than they are revealing, and that in the words of William Cartwright they are “hiding” and “covering” what they “should” disclose, and that the cover-up, if it existed, seems to have been authorized with great care at the highest levels of the ecclesiastical bureaucracy.

Librarian and longtime Oxfordian lecturer William Boyle in his talk “*Willobie His Avisia*: Why Getting it Right Matters in the Authorship Debate,” spoke about an unusual work that may hold a key to the true authorship of the Shakespeare canon. According to the book’s preface, *Willobie* was “found” by Oxford student “Hadrian Dorrell” while his roommate Willobie was on tour. Needless to say, no Hadrian Dorrell has ever been discov-

ered. To make things even more obvious, *Penelope’s Complaint*, a sequel published two years later, announced that Willobie is dead and proclaimed that Avisia is “an innkeeper’s wife.” Controversial in its day, the 1594 narrative poem was one of the books included in the “bishop’s bonfire” of 1599.

*Willobie His Avisia* is preceded by two commendatory poems, the second of which, signed “Contraria Contrariis; Vigilantius; Dormitanus,” contains a reference to Shakespeare’s poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, published four months earlier. It is the earliest known printed allusion to Shakespeare by name:

Yet Tarquyne pluckt his  
glistering grape,  
And Shake-speare paints  
poore Lucrece rape.

The main poem, according to Mr. Boyle, is about Avisia’s chastity and five suitors trying to relieve her of same. Boyle, with tongue in cheek, told the group that Avisia holds the world’s record for chastity. Among those who have tried and were rejected are “Henrico Willobego,” or “H.W.” In his disappointment and unrequited love he turns to his friend W.S. for advice. Mr. Boyle

pointed out that in Elizabethan times, “wooing” meant jockeying for succession to the throne, not a romantic quest. He said that in interpreting the main poem, the only thing that makes sense is that Oxford is the author, H.W. is intended to represent Henry Wriothesley, and Avisia, Queen Elizabeth, though B.N. DeLuna in her book, *The Queen Declined: An Interpretation of ‘Willobie His Avisia’* suggests that H.W. is a combination of Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex.

Boyle pointed out that if Avisia is the Queen, W.S. could not be the actor from Stratford. This is given more credence by

(Continued on p. 26)



Fellowship member and author (*De Vere as Shakespeare: An Oxfordian Reading of the Canon*) William Farina spoke on *Coriolanus* and its connection to the Earl of Oxford. Photo: William Boyle.

*(Conference, cont. from p. 25)*

the cryptic lines that end the poem “ever or never, I am content.” *Willobie* proved to be popular and had five printings, though few copies survive. In the 1596 edition, the preface contains an apology for the original edition, now claiming that Avisa was a “feigned” person, not a real one, prompting Mr. Boyle to recall the phrase from *As You Like It*, “The truest poetry is the most feigning.”

Professor Rima Greenhill, PhD, Coordinator of the Russian Language Program at Stanford University, continued her informative series of lectures about English-Russian relations and their relevance to the authorship question. The theme of Dr. Greenhill’s remarks was the duplicity of Queen Elizabeth I in flagrantly breaking her oath not to sell arms to Russia and how the Queen’s oath breaking is reflected in Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labours Lost*, a play whose title reflects the growing distrust and the worsening relationship between England and Russia. Dr. Greenhill stated that broken oaths were Elizabeth’s *modus vivendi* and that *Love’s Labours Lost* is about how a monarch should behave,

implying that Oxford felt a sharp contrast between what he expected to see her cynical view of royal behavior.

Dr. Greenhill’s paper began with a detailed history of English trade relations with Russia, particularly Queen Elizabeth’s dealings with Ivan Grozny, who was called Ivan the Terrible because of his despotic rule.

Elizabeth assured Ferdinand I, head of the Holy Roman Empire, that she would do her best to prevent the trade of arms to Russia that were being used in a cruel war in Livonia. Though the Queen issued a proclamation forbidding the shipping of arms to Russia, evidence abounded that Elizabeth perjured herself.

Though Elizabeth did not want to be Russia’s ally and downplayed Ivan’s atrocities, her relationship with Ivan was borne out of necessity since Russia was an excellent market for English cloth and trade with Russia was a portal to potential trade with China. Indeed, England’s victory over the Spanish armada was made possible by supplies made in Russia. Dr. Greenhill cites evidence of this from the correspondence of Antony Jenkinson, Jerome Horsey, and Giles Fletcher. These accounts proved that Ivan was afforded

munitions in great secrecy.

Though the Russian elements in *Love’s Labours Lost* were minimized, the play captures the world of arms, edicts, and oaths through the character of Don Adriano de Armado and pays homage to Russian suffering by parodying Ivan’s dismembering of women and ridiculing Ivan’s crudities. According to Dr. Greenhill, *Love’s Labours Lost* was a satire designed for Elizabeth’s court that contained the kind of insider information that could have been known only by those close to the seat of power. This sensitive political material could have caused a commoner like Shakespeare of Stratford to lose his life.

Among the other presentations, Professor Ren Draya, PhD, of Blackburn College, joined forces with Michael Delahoyde, PhD, Associate Professor of English at Washington State University, to examine Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* as a play that reveals the hand of Edward de Vere. Prof. Delahoyde acknowledged that *Titus* is considered a second-rate play by most critics and is full of gratuitous and grisly violence, but stated that its images of dismemberment are metaphorical in nature and that the play explores the tension between violence and communication.

Though *Titus* is believed to have been written in 1593 (it was published anonymously in 1594), Ben Jonson’s comment in 1614 that the play has held the stage for twenty-five or thirty years might, according to Prof. Draya, bring the date of composition closer to the period of 1584-1589. Dr. Delahoyde also speculated that an even earlier version might have been written in 1576 at the time of the war between the Spanish Catholics and the Dutch Protestants known as the Spanish Fury, with Saturnine representing Philip of Spain and Lavinia representing the rape of Antwerp.

*Titus*, according to Dr. Draya, presents clear evidence of Oxford’s authorship, dealing with themes that run throughout the canon, the problem of succession—who has the rightful claim to rule, revenge, and the idea of banishment and return. Though proximity to the center of power drives both Titus and Oxford close to madness and the play seems to be saying that madness is the only escape from suffering,

the ending brings a restoration of moral sanity and hopes for an era of peace. Oxford may have been severed from his writings, but those texts can still be seen to bear the “hand” of their creator.

In other talks, author William Farina spoke about *Coriolanus* and its connection to the Earl of Oxford. Farina noted that *Coriolanus*, first printed in the First Folio of 1623, is a “bitter, harsh play” and an unflattering portrait of the artist as an old man that may have reflected how de Vere felt at the time. According to Farina, the play “is a good example of how a supposedly minor work that has befuddled critics and audiences can shine with clarity once viewed through the Oxfordian lens.” Shakespeare’s primary source material was Plutarch’s *Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans* and the original Amyot translation was purchased by 19-year old Edward de Vere (the receipt for this purchase still exists).

Themes in *Coriolanus* reflect Oxford’s own experience: missing father, surrogate father, wild young son, arrogance, flawed relationship with his mother, and exile from society. Plutarch noted that violent men who lose their fathers at an early age often use this as an excuse for their own bad behavior and this was true of *Coriolanus*. In a similar vein, de Vere’s father died when he was only twelve years old. Kermode describes *Coriolanus* as “a particularly cheerless snob...a schoolboy crazed with notions of privilege,” perhaps another portrait of Edward de Vere.

At the Banquet, a special tribute was presented to Russell des Cognets, a landmark contributor who has led the way toward establishment of the Authorship Research Centre. Awards were presented for Excellence in Scholarship to Peter Dawkins, author of the book *The Shakespeare Enigma*, and one of the world’s leading Baconian theorists. In announcing the award, Dr. Wright noted that that Mr. Dawkins’ perspective “contributes to better understanding of this great problem.”

The award for Excellence in Achieve-

of our time.”

Bertram Fields, author of *Players: The Mysterious Identity of William Shakespeare* and prominent attorney, delivered the banquet keynote. Mr. Fields stated that the Shakespeare authorship issue is a serious one, though in his view we will probably never know who the true author is and the issue may have to be decided by a preponderance of the evidence. Fields cited the main reasons why the Stratford man is probably not the author: he lacked the education, was never out of the

country, could not have known legal, military, sporting, and naval terms, the only writing he left is six signatures that “look like those of a palsied child,” did not know French and Italian, and could not have had a 21,000 word vocabulary. He did suggest, however, the possibility that the plays were a collaborative effort between an educated nobleman and a street-wise actor.

The Conference ended with a rousing

game of Oxfordian Jeopardy led by Alex McNeil, court administrator of the Massachusetts Appeal Court in Boston, Shakespeare Fellowship President, and frequent contributor to *Shakespeare Matters*. Contestants were Prof. Michael Delahoyde, Winona Sharpe, and an anonymous Concordia student. Prof. Delahoyde managed to eke out a win by 19,200 points. These are redeemable at any future conference for E.O. dollars. With that the 12<sup>th</sup> annual SASC adjourned for another year.



Stanford Professor Amy Freed and independent researcher Peter Dawkins, a Baconian, received Conference Awards for Scholarship. Photo: William Boyle.

ment in the Arts was presented to playwright Amy Freed whose satire on the authorship debate, *The Beard of Avon*, has won critical praise and attracted huge audiences all over the country. In her talk, Ms. Freed discussed the process in her own life that saw a “sea change” in her own consciousness of the subject. In acting and directing Shakespeare and in reading the sonnets and working on her play, Ms. Freed noted that she realized the seriousness of the authorship debate and now considers it “one of the great subjects

(*Macbeth*, cont. from p. 6)

difficulties and incongruities in the play, and at the center of them is the Thane of Ross.

For Oxfordians, the explanation also adds powerful evidence that the author of *Macbeth* was an insider at the court of Queen Elizabeth—someone who knew first-hand how courtiers like Ross lied, schemed and maneuvered in the corridors of power to position themselves to their advantage and to be ready to switch sides at the opportune moment. The 17<sup>th</sup> earl of Oxford was just such an insider, and he would have known that the Elizabethan audience for the play, primarily royalty and aristocrats, would appreciate the subtle maneuvering by the Thane of Ross in a sub-plot that complements and reinforces *Macbeth*'s conflicted grab for power.

First, a bit of background on the Thane of Ross: Over the centuries, there were at least ten chronicles of Scotland that told the legendary history of *Macbeth*, who ruled Scotland in the 11<sup>th</sup> century (1040-57). These ever-expanding chronicles were essentially much-embellished translations, from Old English to Latin to the Scottish vernacular to early modern English. The first of them was more than two centuries after *Macbeth*'s rule. (Fordun circa 1384) And it was three centuries later that the Thane of Ross first appears in the chronicles of the *Macbeth* story.

Ross gets only a mention in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, published in 1577 and 1587. The 1587 edition was the last of the ten chronicles before the Shakespeare plays began to appear, and scholars call it the source for *Macbeth* and many other Shakespeare plays. But Ross appears in Holinshed only as one in a line of Thanes of Ross. One Thane of Ross was executed by *Macbeth* along with other thanes "because through them and their seditious attempts, much trouble daily rose in the realme." Another was made an earl along with other thanes (Variorum 388, 393). No details and nothing more about the Thane of Ross. He plays no role in the *Macbeth* story; Oxford added that to the play. So it was not until Shakespeare's *Macbeth* that Ross enters as an active player in this ever-expanding story of *Macbeth*.

Libby throws light on the seemingly dull and enigmatic characters of Ross and

Angus, suggesting that they are in the play for a purpose. Illuminating that purpose can greatly enhance an appreciation of the intrigue, treachery and equivocation in *Macbeth*. Understanding what Ross is doing adds a new dimension to the play. Like *Macbeth*, he's a self-serving, ambitious, deceiving intriguer; unlike *Macbeth*, he survives through cold-blooded cunning and by adroitly switching sides.

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**Act one, scene two:** The bleeding sergeant, arriving exhausted from the battlefield, tells King Duncan in a long account how *Macbeth* slew the traitor Macdonwald and defeated the Norwegian invaders. Duncan orders surgeons to tend to his wounds. Enter the Thane of Ross with his accomplice, the Thane of Angus. Lennox, who is the detached observer throughout the play, says of Ross:

What a haste looks through his eyes!  
So should he look that seems [about] to speak  
strange things.

(1.2.46-7)

This is the first clue that Ross is a man with an agenda. Lennox is marveling at Ross's demeanor, noting the "haste" in his eyes. The first and earliest meaning of "haste" in the Oxford English Dictionary is "urgent" or "impetuous." Lennox is suspicious of Ross, and indeed Ross, steeling himself, is about to tell a "strange" and startling story about the battle and the Thane of Cawdor. Ross tells King Duncan that the Norwegians "assisted by that most disloyal traitor, the Thane of Cawdor" (1.2.64-5) began the battle, but that *Macbeth* defeated the invaders and the Scottish rebels who joined them, led by Cawdor.

The honest sergeant, however, has just told Duncan about the battle and Macdonwald's treason and death—but nothing about treason by Cawdor. He could not have failed to tell Duncan about Cawdor's treason and capture if it were true. So it's not true. Ross was lying, and the injured, exhausted sergeant (if still on stage) cannot contradict him. A sergeant would not dare contradict a nobleman in front of the king.

King Duncan believes Ross. He orders that Cawdor be executed and orders Ross to tell *Macbeth* that he succeeds to Cawdor's title and property. Duncan never asks why the sergeant said nothing about Cawdor; and two scenes later he will express his surprise at Cawdor's betrayal, saying: "He was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust" (1.4.13-14). The weak and credulous king will not question Ross's story about Cawdor's rebellion.

Ross slandered the innocent Cawdor, inducing the king to order his execution, so that *Macbeth* could succeed Cawdor, his rival, and position himself to be elected king if Duncan should die. With a treacherous lie, Ross has hitched his star to *Macbeth*'s. Typical court intrigue.

Reinforcing the interpretation that Ross was lying about Cawdor's rebellion is *Macbeth*'s reaction when he hears about it.

**Act one, scene three:** The witches hail *Macbeth* as Thane of Glamis and Thane of Cawdor, who "shalt be king hereafter," but *Macbeth* can't believe it:

I know I am thane of Glamis,  
But how of Cawdor? The Thane of Cawdor  
lives,  
A prosperous gentleman, and to be king  
Stands not within the prospect of belief,  
Nor more than to be Cawdor...  
....Speak I charge you.

(1.3.71-8)

But the witches vanish. Macbeth and his comrade in arms, Banquo, who was also on the battlefield, refrain from discussing the prophecy about Cawdor, but the reader and the audience know that the lying Ross has told the king that Cawdor was a rebel and will be executed.

While Macbeth and Banquo marvel at the witches' prophecies, Ross and Angus show up. Ross tells Macbeth that the king has made him Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth is even more incredulous, since he and Cawdor were together at the battleground:

The Thane of Cawdor lives.  
Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?

(1.3.107-8)

The answer comes from Ross's confederate, Angus:

Who was the Thane lives yet,  
But under heavy judgment bears that life,  
Which he deserves to lose....  
...treasons capital [that is, capital crimes],  
confessed and proud,  
Have overthrown him.

(1.3.109-116)

Macbeth and Banquo now begin to realize that Ross must have lied when he told the king that Cawdor was a traitor and will be executed, and that Macbeth can take advantage of Ross's treachery on his behalf. Ross has brilliantly and daringly seized an opportunity to remove Cawdor as a rival to Macbeth. He goes beyond currying favor with Macbeth. Without Macbeth's knowledge and anticipating the extent of Macbeth's ambitions, he removes Cawdor from the competition simply with ten words of slander to the king. Macbeth had nothing to do with it and enjoys deniability, but he begins to see he should be grateful. He says to Ross:

Glamis and Thane of Cawdor. The greatest is behind. Thanks for your pains.

(1.3.117-18)

This is the first of three times that Macbeth thanks Ross and Angus for what they have done to further his ambition.

To draw Banquo into Ross's deception, Macbeth turns to him and asks whether he hopes that his children will

....trusted home, [they]  
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange.  
And oftentimes to win us to our harm  
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us  
In deepest consequence. [And then Banquo says to Ross and Angus]  
Cousins, a word, I pray you. [Perhaps to confirm his suspicions.]

(1.3.119-127)

As the three step aside to talk, Macbeth, realizing what Ross and Angus have done for him, says, "I thank you, gentlemen." For the second time.

Alone now, Macbeth goes into a musing soliloquy on the theme of "If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me without my stir." Finished, he turns to Ross and Angus and reaffirms his thanks for Ross's maneuverings that won him the title of Thane of Cawdor. He acknowledges his debt to Ross and Angus with these words:

Kind gentlemen, your pains are registered  
Where every day I turn the leaf  
To read them.

(1.3.150-2)

That is to say, I will not forget what you have done for me.

This expression of thanks for the third time is rather elaborate because Macbeth realizes that their daring deception has eliminated a rival to the throne. And as the scene closes, Macbeth's last words to Banquo, Ross and Angus are "Come, friends." His friends are now his co-conspirators.

To advance their ambitions, Macbeth and Banquo have allowed Cawdor to be slandered, ruined and wrongfully executed for treason. Typical court maneuvering. They maintain a guilty silence, not even discussing Ross's slander and how it furthers their ambitions. But the audience knows about it from ten words spoken by Ross in scene two: The Norwegians "assisted by that most disloyal traitor, the Thane of Cawdor." It is hard to believe that William of Stratford could have invented a courtier's subtle, complex deception and power play that has eluded Stratfordian

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**Macbeth and Banquo now begin to realize that Ross must have lied when he told the king that Cawdor was a traitor and will be executed, and that Macbeth can take advantage of Ross's treachery on his behalf. Ross has brilliantly and daringly seized an opportunity to remove Cawdor as a rival to Macbeth. He goes beyond currying favor with Macbeth. Without Macbeth's knowledge and anticipating the extent of Macbeth's ambitions, he removes Cawdor from the competition simply with ten words of slander to the king. Macbeth had nothing to do with it and enjoys deniability, but he begins to see he should be grateful.**

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be kings, which the witches prophesied at the same time they prophesied that he, Macbeth, would be Thane of Cawdor, a prophecy that has come true.

Banquo goes along, but he is suspicious. He finds the Cawdor story strange (he was there, on the battlefield) and suggests that ultimately the witches' prophecies may mislead and betray himself and Macbeth. He says about the witches:

(Continued on p. 30)

*(Macbeth, cont. from p. 29)*

commentators, causing them so much puzzlement. Nor would he have bothered. But the aristocratic and royal audiences in the court of Queen Elizabeth for whom *Macbeth* was written would have recognized Ross's deceptions, especially if the actor played Ross as intended by the aristocratic dramatist.

**Act three, scene three:** In a forest near Macbeth's palace. Enter three murderers, in the dark. But here's another difficulty: Two scenes earlier Macbeth had commissioned two murderers, not three, to kill Banquo and Fleance, and he told them that

Within this hour at most  
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,  
Acquaint you with the perfect spy of the time,  
The moment on it, for it must be done tonight.

(3.1.127-130)

The third murderer is not identified. His identity is mysterious, as it should be for a spy. Commentators on the play have conjectured why the third murder was introduced and who he could be. Some suggested that it was Macbeth himself. But that seems unlikely after he had commissioned two murderers to do the deed. But if the third murderer is the Thane of Ross, it fits perfectly with Ross as Macbeth's principal co-conspirator. He is, as Macbeth said, "the perfect spy of the time."

When Banquo and Fleance fall into the ambush, the third murderer, Ross, identifies him: "Tis he!" They attack and Banquo, mortally wounded, cries:

Oh, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, Fly! Fly! Fly!  
Thou mayest revenge. [and then he exclaims] O slave!

(3.3.16-17)

With this exclamation, Banquo recognizes Ross as one of the murderers. "Slave" was an Elizabethan term of contempt. Somebody puts out the torch, so that Ross remains in the darkness. He says, "There's but one down, the son is fled." He had killed Banquo.

The case for the third murderer being Ross is compelling. He wants to make sure Macbeth's orders are carried out, and perhaps more important he wants to make sure that Banquo, his chief rival to be Macbeth's principal aide, is eliminated.

**Act four, scene two:** Macduff's castle. Enter Lady Macduff, her son and Ross. He tells her that her husband fled to England. She is incensed that he left her and her children unprotected. Ross tries to explain, but at the same time tries to get away, saying:

I dare not speak much further.

And then, a few lines later,

I take my leave of you;  
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.

And then,

I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.  
I take my leave at once.

(4.2.17-29)

And he exits.

Within a minute or two, a messenger arrives to warn Lady Macduff that danger approaches and that she should escape right away. Within seconds, assassins arrive and kill Lady Macduff and her son. Ross could not have been far away. He could hardly have had time to leave the castle. He's still nearby, but he does not defend them. He allows them to be slain. Given his role in the play, it's very possible Shakespeare wanted his audience to realize that Ross also engineered the assassinations. Otherwise, there is no reason for Ross to be at Macduff's castle.

**Act four, scene three:** In England with the exiles from Scotland. Malcolm, King Duncan's son and heir, first tests Macduff's loyalty and then says he will join forces with him to return to Scotland, defeat Macbeth and gain the throne. He says an English earl with ten thousand men will join the campaign.

Enter the Thane of Ross, who has just arrived from Scotland. They ask him what news he brings. He says Scotland suffers. Macbeth's power is being challenged. He acts very strangely and for good reason. He has to know what Malcolm and Macduff might be planning and what forces they have mustered so that he can decide whether nor not to switch sides and join them:

**Macd.** How does my wife?

**Ross.** Why, well.

**Macduff.** And all my children?"

**Ross.** Well, too.

**Macduff.** The tyrant has not battered at their peace?

**Ross.** No, they were well at peace when I did leave them.

(4.3.176-9)

This is a blatant equivocation, a pervasive theme in the play. Ross's answers are literally true but a cruel lie. Lady Macduff and her son indeed were alive when he left them, but Ross knows full well they were killed minutes later. He could also excuse his lying equivocation, if he ever had to, by saying he meant that they were well and at peace in the arms of the Lord.

Macduff loses his patience:

Be not niggard of your speech. How goes it?

(4.3.180)

Ross immediately changes the subject. He has to know whether Malcolm is strong enough to overthrow Macbeth. Turning away from Macduff, he tells Malcolm that there is resistance in

Scotland to Macbeth and that he would find support in Scotland. Malcolm tells him that he plans to return to Scotland and with an army of ten thousand English soldiers.

Now Ross knows that Malcolm will prevail, that Macbeth will lose and that he, Ross, should switch sides from Macbeth to Malcolm. Now he can answer Macduff, who has been pressing him. Ross says he has some bad news. Macduff says stop stalling, "quickly let me have it." Ross stalls some more but finally says bluntly and cruelly:

Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner  
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer,  
To add the death of you.

(4.3.204-7)

And he says nothing about his being there when Lady Macduff and her children were slain. When Ross's treachery is understood (he's not just a clumsy messenger), these lines are a deliberately heartless way to break the news. Ross has no pity.

**Act five, scene eight:** The last scene in the play, in Macbeth's castle. Malcolm has won the battle. Malcolm, Ross and Siward, leader of the English forces, are assessing the casualties. In his last appearance in the play, Ross carries favor with Malcolm, now the king of Scotland, and Siward, leader of the English forces. He brings the bad news that Siward's son was killed in battle, "but like a man he died" with his mortal wounds in front, not in his back, so Siward can say that if he had many sons, "I would not wish them to a fairer death" (5-9-17).

Macduff brandishes Macbeth's severed head, probably impaled on the point of spear. He hails Malcolm as king, and Malcolm concludes the play with these lines:

So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.

(5.9-45)

In act one, Ross had gone to Scone to see Macbeth crowned king. Now he goes to Scone to see Malcolm crowned king.

When the role of Ross is understood, many of the difficulties and incongruities in the play disappear. Ross is not the dull character who has puzzled commentators. His successful maneuverings are a fascinating, evil sub-plot reinforcing the tragic, failed plotting of Macbeth and his Lady. Ross is the consummate, cunning, conspiratorial courtier, who manages to come out on top—just the kind of courtier that Oxford saw in the court of Queen Elizabeth. The subtle, clever deceit Ross practices is not found in the chronicles of Scotland, and only an insider at court, someone like the 17<sup>th</sup> earl of Oxford, could have created the treacherous Thane of Ross.

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*(Dueling Stylometricians, Cont. from p. 14)*

of evaluating literary merit.

Prior to the debate, Shahan, Elliott, and SAR president Carole Sue Lipman (moderator of the debate) agreed that SAR members present would decide whether they wished to vote on the outcome. This was specified in their formal agreement. At the end, I offered the following motion: "The Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable members and others present at this debate declare that we do not believe that Edward de Vere is an improbable Shakespeare claimant based on the results of the Claremont Shakespeare Clinic."

There was a second to my motion, and other raised hands indicated more seconds were in the offing. Many called out their "ayes." Experienced as both performing musician and public speaker, I am accustomed to observing the responses of an audience. It was clear to me, looking around the group from my vantage point at the end of the table, that the majority of the people present supported the motion. Indeed, both body language and facial expressions conveyed considerable enthusiasm. So, in effect, there was an affirmative vote by both voice and gesture. A formal vote was not taken, however, since the SAR board did not want one.

Afterwards, two Oxfordians said that they were even more favorably disposed toward Oxford.



Dr. Earl Showerman, longtime supporter of the Authorship Studies Conference and former Fellowship Trustee, and Dr. Daniel Wright enjoy a relaxing moment at the 12th Annual Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference at Concordia University, Portland, Ore. Photo: William Boyle.

**"Anonymity serves negative capability....anonymity blunts trauma...anonymity may help the author to enact an unconscious fantasy of temporarily leaving behind his usual sense of self, and merging instead with his fictive narrator. The resulting distance from his usual sense of self, superego, and social role may open up a creative space that frees the author from psychological constraints that would otherwise silence or muffle him. The facilitating role of pseudonymity is likely to be especially salient when the content of the literary work is highly autobiographical in origin, and addresses issues about which the author is in significant conflict. Anonymity liberates authors." - see p. 10.**

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**Shakespeare Matters**

*The Voice of the Shakespeare Fellowship*

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