Shakespeare Matters

"The Voice of the Shakespeare Fellowship"

11:1 "Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments..." Winter 2012

Anonymous, the Movie: What Went Wrong?

by Bill Boyle

[Editor's Note: see also review on p. 4]

Watching the buildup in 2011 to the film *Anonymous* was interesting. Before it opened, many Oxfordians were concerned that the story would focus on the sexual escapades of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth as his putative mother and lover. In other words, the incest angle.

Yet, once the film was out and the reviews were in, we see that this concern was misplaced. The greater shock that *Anonymous* elicited in the mainstream media was that the authorship debate even exists. If anyone doubts that, check out *The New York Times*, which ran four feature pieces on the film (a review by A.O. Scott, an op-ed by James Shapiro, and two feature articles). Outrage that the film was made at all is paramount, while outrage about the incest angle barely makes a peep. *The Times* coverage was typical of mainstream reaction.

Obligatory wisecracks about illegitimate children and incest were included in reviews, but only within a broader list of other "shocked" reactions to the crazy notion that Shakespeare wasn't Shakespeare — that *Richard II* was performed before the Rebellion, not *Richard III*; that Christopher Marlowe died in 1593, not later when we see him dead in the street; that *Midsummer's Night*

(Continued on page 34)

Seventh Annual Joint Conference Held – *Anonymous* Screened

by Alex McNeil

The seventh annual Joint Conference of the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society took place from October 13 to 16 in Washington, DC. Two events were special highlights – a sneak preview of *Anonymous* and a private tour of the Folger Shakespeare Library. About 75 persons were able to attend at least some of the regular sessions, which took place at the Washington Court Hotel, located on New Jersey Avenue near Union Station. At least two persons came all the way from England.

First Day – Thursday, October 13

Marty Hyatt was the first presenter as the Conference kicked off on Thursday afternoon. In "Tombs, Womb and Doom in the Sonnets," Hyatt noted that death imagery occurs more than 100 times in the sonnets, about twice as often as birth imagery. He also noted that by coincidence, October 13 is the feast day of Edward the Confessor; Hyatt believes that Shakespeare may have had Edward in mind when he wrote sonnet 55. The shrine of Edward the Confessor has been restored several times over the centuries, first by Henry III, when he restored much of Westminster Abbey. Henry VIII later broke up the shrine, but Mary I restored it. The elaborate tile floors, originally installed during Henry III's reign, have recently been restored.

Alan Green covered a lot of ground during his presentation, "I Shakespeare, Unanimous? . . . or Anonymous? (The Holy Trinity Solution)." Green first pointed out a number of numerological oddities, such as the first record of Shakspere of Stratford is dated April 26 (or 4-2-6), the official death date of Edward de Vere is June 24 (6-2-4), and the "MOAI" riddle in *Twelfth Night* is found on page 264 of the First Folio (curiously, the very next page of the folio is numbered 273, not 265). Green focused extensively on the typography of Shakspere's doggerel epitaph and the Stratford

(Continued on page 23)

Letters

To the Editor:

In an October 13, 2011, *New York Review of Books* article by Robert Pogue Harrison on Harold Bloom's new book, *Anatomy of Influence*, Harrison noted his concurrence with Bloom on a key point:

I (Harrison) agree with Bloom when he writes:

> We need a more precise word than *detachment* for Shakespeare's stance in plays and sonnets, but I am never quite sure what it might be. *Indifference* is wrong. Shakespeare cares more for Falstaff than most scholars do, yet he allows his rich singularity to die broken by betrayed love. *Remove* comes closer, since **Shakespeare is the major dealer in ellipsis among all the great writers**.
>
> While he delved deeply and imaginatively into the world of the characters he created, **Shakespeare himself—the author and individual in his personal perspectives—absents himself from his plays, and to a large extent from his *Sonnets* as well**. In this regard he differs from Dante, whose individual self remains the ultimate protagonist of the *Comedy*. **It is precisely by removing himself from his work** that Shakespeare most resembles the elliptical, Godot-like God of the modern era who **withdraws from the scene of history**, **leaving us to wonder about his nature, motives, and purposes**. (Italics in original; bold type added for emphasis; at p. 42 of the hard copy edition, NYRB, 10/13/11.)

Harrison's stated perspective, in agreement with Bloom, illustrates the type of mental contortions in which orthodox critics must engage to analyze the "mysterious" Mr. Shakespeare's personal relationship with the canon. The stark contrast with Dante as the "ultimate protagonist" is particularly noteworthy.

Has "Shake-speare" absented himself "to a large extent from his *Sonnets*?" I would hardly think that many of your readers would agree.

Patrick McCarthy
Pleasanton, CA

To the Editor:

If I were going to title this letter, I would title it "Who are you going to believe, me or your lying eyes?" I have recently been reinvigorated in the Authorship Question due to seeing a preview of the upcoming movie *Anonymous* (at the theater, no less) and a job change that has allowed me much more free time to pursue outside interests. As a result, I've just recently read over your many issues of *Shakespeare Matters*, and I just had to comment on Mr. John Rollett's "solution" to the enigmatic dedication to SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS (*The Oxfordian* II 1999).

I thought Mr. Rollett's reasoning sound with respect to the dedication being a cryptogram, the periods and hyphens indicating full stops and suggesting that we count the words (or letters as the case may be) between the full stops, and even that the way the text is laid out suggests the numbers to use in the word count to break the cipher. What I didn't get was that he saw the dedication as presented in three blocks, with a 6-2-4 delineation among the blocks. Huh? It doesn't look like a 6-2-4 schematic to my eyes. Furthermore, applying a 6-2-4 word count scheme throughout the entire dedication gives you this unpromising line:

THESE. SONNETS. ALL. BY. EVER.
THE. FORTH. T.

Now, if we cut off these results at the word EVER (which I believe all Oxfordians agree refers to E. Vere or Edward de Vere), as Mr. Rollett did in his article, we get a nice result:

THESE. SONNETS. ALL.
BY. EVER.

(Continued on p. 27)

Shakespeare Matters
Published quarterly by the
The Shakespeare Fellowship
Please address correspondence to:

Editorial Offices
P.O. Box 66083
Auburndale, MA 02466

Editor:
Alex McNeil

Design Editor:
Roger Stritmatter

Contributing Editors:
Mark Anderson, Lynne Kositsky,
Howard Schumann,
Dr. Felicia Londre,
William Boyle, Richard Whalen

Phone (Auburndale, MA): (617) 244-9825
email: newsletter@ShakespeareFellowship.org

Subscriptions to *Shakespeare Matters* are $50 per year ($25 for online issues only). Family or institution subscriptions are $75 per year. Patrons of the Fellowship are $100 and up. Please send subscription requests to:

The Shakespeare Fellowship
P.O. Box 66083,
Auburndale, MA 02466

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.

Shakespeare Matters welcomes articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters and news items. Contributions should be reasonably concise and, when appropriate, validated by peer review. The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Fellowship as a literary and educational organization.

From the President

Quips Upon Questions.....

The worldwide release of Roland Emmerich's *Anonymous* in 2011 provoked an unprecedented level of interest in the Shakespeare authorship question and the role of Edward de Vere. Shortly before the North American premiere, I had a long conversation about the film with the director of dramaturgy at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, at which time I gave him a copy of Kevin Gilvary's *Dating Shakespeare's Plays*.

Later that day, I debated Liz Eckhart, my favorite former Shakespeare teacher from Southern Oregon University, before her undergraduate class, which proved to be a very lively session. The day *Anonymous* opened nationwide, I had the privilege to speak as a guest on *The Patt Morrison Show*, broadcast over NPR's southern California affiliate, KPCC. A link to the podcast of this program has been posted under "News" on the Shakespeare Fellowship website.

Patt's show included an informal debate with Claremont College Theatre Arts Professor Arthur Horowitz. Patt brought up a number of excellent points, including the fact that highly respected actors and jurists were now questioning the Shakespeare attribution. In a followup email I invited Professor Horowitz to attend my presentation of "*Hamlet, Macbeth* and the *Oresteia*" at the LA Shakespeare Roundtable in November. Because of these positive experiences, and despite the hostile op-ed pieces in the *New York Times* and other media outlets, my hope remains that *Anonymous* will promote authorship studies and lead to a more informed discourse between interested parties.

In the dedication to *Quips Upon Questions* (1600), Robert Armin, shortly thereafter a comic actor with the Lord Chamberlain's Men, wrote 'on Tuesday I take my journey (to wait on the right honorable good my Lord my Master whom I serve) to Hackney.'

In November the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition posted "Exposing an Industry in Denial," the collaborative rebuttal to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's anti-*Anonymous* campaign, "60 Minutes with Shakespeare." [See article elsewhere in this issue.]. The complete rebuttal document is on the SAC website (www.doubtaboutwill.org) and is definitely worth reviewing. I was privileged to help craft the response to the SBT commentary that related to Oxford's literary and theatrical connections (Question 49). Here is a passage of that rebuttal concerning the recently recognized importance of the connection between the actor Robert Armin and the Earl of Oxford:

> In the dedication to *Quips Upon Questions* (1600), Robert Armin, shortly thereafter a comic actor with the Lord Chamberlain's Men, wrote 'on Tuesday I take my journey (to wait on the right honorable good my Lord my Master whom I serve) to Hackney.' The Earl of Oxford lived in Hackney at the time, and it seems Armin was a member of Oxford's acting company, Oxford's Men, in late 1599. Many orthodox scholars think "Shakespeare" wrote comic roles with Armin in mind, including that of Touchstone in *As You Like It*, said to have been written around 1599.

So here is a report of an actor visiting Oxford very close to the time orthodox scholars say Shakespeare was writing a play that included a role tailored to that specific actor. That Oxford still took an active interest in theatre is clear from a letter of March 1602 from the Privy Council to the Lord Mayor of London. Oxford's Servants and the Earl of Worcester's men formed a company. The Queen, "at the suit of the Earl of Oxford" gave her assent to assign The Boar's Head as a permanent venue to the new company.

Finally, there has been a change of plans for the 2012 joint conference of The Shakespeare Fellowship and The Shakespeare Oxford Society. Plans to meet in September in Carmel had to be canceled due to the remodeling of the La Playa Hotel, where we have held our group luncheons and award banquets. The joint conference committee is making arrangements to meet in Pasadena, CA, in October, and soon we will be posting the dates and location for the conference, as well as a call for papers.

— Earl Showerman

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

Shakespeare Authorship Coalition Launches Rebuttal to SBT's "60 Minutes with Shakespeare"

Alarmed by the threat to orthodoxy posed by the film *Anonymous*, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust organized "60 Minutes with Shakespeare," a web-based effort intended to reassure the world that Will Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon really is one and the same as the author Shakespeare. SBT officials Stanley Wells and Paul Edmondson hand-picked five dozen experts to answer sixty preselected questions about the Bard's credentials and the misguided motives of those who would doubt his authorship.

Shortly after "60 Minues with Shakespeare" appeared (the site was launched several weeks before the film's premiere), Shakespeare Authorship Coalition chairman John Shahan decided to fight back. In the space of just a few weeks, Shahan was able to get representatives of a dozen non-Stratfordian organizations to collaborate on a rebuttal. The finished document, "Exposing an Industry in Denial: Authorship Doubters Respond to '60 Minutes with Shakespeare,'" was made available in November. Each of the sixty SBT claims is convincingly rebutted.

The rebuttal was officially announced at a public event in Los Angeles, and was introduced by actor (and Shakespeare Fellowship Honorary Trustee) Michael York, who lambasted Wells and Edmondson for suggesting that the authorship issue is "merely another conspiracy theory" and for referring to doubters as "anti-Shakespeareans." Shahan followed up: "The SBT made a mistake in coming down from their ivory tower to attack us. This rebuttal document makes it clear that the best of our scholars are far superior to theirs." Also in attendance was Hilary Roe Metternich, daughter of the late Richard Roe, whose groundbreaking book, *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels* (see review, p. 13) had just been published. Metternich observed that the clues to actual locations corresponding to those in the Shakespeare plays set in Italy "were right there. . . . My father found the locations of nearly every scene in all ten plays, locations missed by orthodox scholars for over 400 years."

In putting together the rebuttal, Shahan was able to get contributions from Baconians and Marlovians, as well as Oxfordians. Several members of the Shakespeare Fellowship Board of Trustees contributed, including Bonner Miller Cutting, Alex McNeil, Thomas Regnier and Earl Showerman.

The full text of the rebuttal, "Exposing an Industry in Denial," may be found online at the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition web site, www.doubtaboutwill.org. It presents the rebuttals side-by-side with the SBT answers, so that the reader can easily compare the responses. It also contains three appendices: Five Key Questions the SBT Did Not Ask and Cannot Answer; Six Common Myths About the Works and Authorship Doubters; and a letter (originally written in 2010) from Shahan to Wells challenging the SBT to come up with its own declaration in favor of the Stratford man.

Anonymous Reviewed by Howard Schumann

[See also review analysis on p. 1]

"I, once gone, to all the world must die." – William Shakespeare, Sonnet #81

Actor George Dillon has said, "The purpose of drama is to challenge people and to make people see things slightly differently." The challenge is laid down in stunning fashion by German director Roland Emmerich in his latest work, *Anonymous*, one of the best films of the year. Focusing on two of the most important events of the Elizabethan age --the Essex Rebellion of 1601 and the succession to the throne of Queen Elizabeth I -- the film supports the premise that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, a prominent aristocrat and court insider, was the real author of the works attributed to William Shakespeare.

Described as a "political thriller," *Anonymous* creates an atmosphere of foreboding and intrigue that, like many films of the genre, begins with a jumble of names, images, and flashbacks that challenge us to sort it all out. We are not certain of anything, but Emmerich invites us, in the words of Diane Ackerman, "to groom our curiosity like a high-spirited thoroughbred, climb aboard, and gallop over the thick, sunstruck hills." Steering us through the maze of Tudor history, the film makes credible the startling events of the time, providing an authentic recreation of medieval London with its crowded theaters and raucous audiences, cluttered streets, and court royalty decked out in fine jewels.

Though some may point out historical inaccuracies, Emmerich, citing *Shakespeare in Love* as an example, says that

the film contains an "emotional truth" rather than a literal one because "the drama is the primary concern." He need not have had concern on that aspect. Through Emmerich's direction, the writing of John Orloff, the cinematography of Anna Foerster, and the superlative performance of an all-British cast including Oscar-worthy performances by Vanessa Redgrave as Queen Elizabeth I and Rhys Ifans as Oxford, *Anonymous* succeeds both as an authentic drama and a plausible explanation for many of the problems surrounding the authorship question. While the film may lack a certain depth of characterization, it more than makes up for it with style, spectacle, and an involving story.

To some, the film may be skating on narrative thin ice. Emmerich, however, told an interviewer that "if we provoke, let's provoke all the way," and provoke he does. According to *Anonymous*, de Vere, in addition to being Shakespeare, was also the illegitimate son of the Queen and, in 1573, the father of a son with her, who was raised as Henry Wriothesley, the 3rd Earl of Southampton (Xavier Samuel). Emmerich handles the subject

Described as a "political thriller," *Anonymous* creates an atmosphere of foreboding and intrigue that, like many films of the genre, begins with a jumble of names, images, and flashbacks that challenge us to sort it all out. We are not certain of anything, but Emmerich invites us, in the words of Diane Ackerman, "to groom our curiosity like a high-spirited thoroughbred, climb aboard, and gallop over the thick, sunstruck hills."

of incest with great taste, with neither the "Virgin Queen" nor Oxford knowing the truth until close to the end of their lives. The film begins with a brief prologue by actor Sir Derek Jacobi, then quickly takes us to 16th century London, with the arrest of playwright Ben Jonson (Sebastian Armento) in the middle of a theatrical performance.

Though he is soon released, Jonson is taken to the Tower and accused of sedition and slandering the State by the mere act of authoring a play, the mark of a totalitarian government with a growing disdain for the arts. The film then flashes back – sometimes five years, sometimes forty, as we become acquainted with the young Earl of Oxford (Jamie Campbell Bower), educated by private tutors with access to a vast library in the home of William Cecil (David Thewlis), where he was brought up as a ward of the court after his father's death. We also witness his marriage to a teenage Anne Cecil (Amy Kwolek), daughter of William, a marriage that never produced any lasting satisfaction for either party.

Moving forward, we learn that Oxford is forced to hide his identity because of the biting satire of his plays that lampoon some of the more prominent members of the court, and also as a result of a political arrangement that becomes clearer later. His initial choice to front for him is the same Ben Jonson, but Jonson refuses, passing the mantle to Will Shakespeare (Rafe Spall), an actor for the Lord Chamberlain's Men who seizes the opportunity. In a superbly comic performance, Spall portrays Will as an illiterate money-grubber who can barely speak coherently but is willing to sell his name to Oxford at a premium cost. The heart of the plot, however, focuses on the attempt to seize power from Cecil's son Robert, an episode known to history as The Essex Rebellion of 1601.

This insurrection, led by Robert Devereaux, the Second Earl of Essex (Sam Reid), results in his beheading and the imprisonment of Southampton, who is sent to the Tower awaiting certain death. Oxford's attempt to persuade Elizabeth to save their son results in a political deal that explains why Oxford was never able to reveal his authorship of the Shakespeare canon. While some critics may proclaim the movie a moment of singularity that indicates the end of the world as we know it (even before 2012), *Anonymous* may have the opposite effect, opening the subject to a wider audience who may be able to view Shakespeare and his times from a new perspective.

In Robert Heinlein's "Stranger in a Strange Land," Jubal said we're prisoners of our early indoctrinations, "for it is hard, very nearly impossible, to shake off one's earliest training." If my intuition is correct, the prison gates will soon be swinging wide open, and the shaking will begin in earnest. As Victor Hugo said, "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come."

GRADE: A-

[Howard Schumann is a freelance writer and film critic who lives in Vancouver, BC]

Emmerich and Orloff Named Honorary SF Trustees

Recognizing their efforts in creating the movie *Anonymous*, the Board of Trustees of the Shakespeare Fellowship has named director Roland Emmerich and writer John Orloff as Honorary Lifetime Trustees.

Roland Emmerich

Roland Emmerich's films, which include *2012*, *The Day After Tomorrow*, *The Patriot* and *Independence Day*, have grossed

(Continued on p. 6)

(News, cont from p. 5)

***Anonymous* Director Emmerich.**

more than $3 billion worldwide. With the support of Sony Pictures Entertainment, in 2011 Emmerich produced and directed *Anonymous*, bringing the story of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare to a global audience for the first time. In addition, Emmerich has supported the authorship documentary film, *Last Will & Testament* (First Folio Pictures), directed by Lisa Wilson.

In the introductory essay to the Newmarket Pictorial Moviebook edition of *Anonymous: William Shakespeare Revealed*, Emmerich said that creating *Anonymous* was "the single greatest filmmaking experience of my life." He admitted knowing little about the authorship question when he encountered John Orloff's original script, but he was attracted to the idea and optioned the screenplay. Noting that it "had a great emotional heart," Emmerich wanted his film to be more like a Shakespearean tragedy and to represent that the pen is mightier than the sword.

Emmerich also wrote that, in filming the movie, "The only thing I was afraid of as a director was to put all those plays onto the stage we built for the film." He constructed a full replica of The Rose, which later became The Globe, and staged key scenes from several Shakespeare plays that delight the senses while revealing contemporary political context. "It was an amazing feeling just to walk on this set," Emmerich stated, "because one instantly understands why the magic of the public theater was so transforming in the sixteenth century. It was the only public word at the time, delivered to the people without too much censorship. That's where allegory triumphed, symbolically expressing deeper, often moral or political, meanings of things."

John Orloff II

Screenwriter John Orloff worked tirelessly for fifteen years to bring the story of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare to the screen. For the last eight of those years he collaborated with Roland Emmerich to make *Anonymous*. Orloff became interested in the authorship question after watching the PBS *Frontline* documentary on the topic. He wrote a first draft, called *The Soul of the Age*, in the late 1990s as a romance, which Roland Emmerich bought in 2001. The relationships of the three central characters in *The Soul of the Age* – Ben Jonson, Edward de Vere and Will Shakspere – remained the heart of the film, although in Emmerich's vision the tone changed from romance to tragedy, the title changed to *Anonymous*, and the overriding issue became the struggle to determine who would succeed Queen Elizabeth to the throne.

Prior to *Anonymous*, Orloff is best known as a writer for two episodes of the HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers* (for which he received a Christopher Award and an Emmy nomination for outstanding writing) and for his script for the film *A Mighty Heart* (which earned him an Independent Spirit Award for best first screenplay).

Orloff has become an articulate spokesman for the Shakespeare Authorship Question. For example, responding in the *Huffington Post* to James Shapiro's criticism of the film in *The New York Times*, Orloff wrote: "Mr. Shapiro need not defend William Shakespeare the man, but professional Shakespearean scholarship itself. Because once one begins to ask the tough questions, Shakespearean scholarship is revealed to be the very thing Shapiro claims to despise most: guesswork, assumption and conjecture. Unlike Mr. Shapiro, I am not afraid of the next generation exploring the Shakespearean Authorship Question and coming to its own conclusion – whatever that may be."

***Anonymous* Screenwriter Orloff.**

As Honorary Lifetime Trustees, Messrs. Emmerich and Orloff join actors Michael York and Derek Jacobi, who were previously recognized for their outspoken advocacy of the case for de Vere as Shakespeare.

Elisabeth Sears (1921-2011)

[Editor's note: Both the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society asked one of Betty Sears' closest Oxfordian friends, William Boyle, to write an obituary for her. It is published in the newsletters of both organizations.]

Elisabeth (Betty) Sears, a longtime Oxfordian, author, and lecturer, passed away on November 20, 2011, after a lengthy illness, at the age of 90. She had been active in Oxfordian organizations for the last third of her life, serving as a trustee of the Shakespeare Oxford Society for many years, and as its President from 1989 to 1993.

Sears was born on April 22, 1921, and raised in Wayland, Massachusetts. She was a graduate of the Concord (MA)

Elizabeth Sears with Shakespearean actor/author Michael York.

Academy and Castleton State College (VT). She earned an MA in English from Middlebury College and did further work in Renaissance literature at the Bread Loaf School of English in Middlebury. In her working life Betty's experiences ranged from a stint at MIT during World War II working on radar research (and also serving as a coast watcher for the Civil Defense) to teaching English and coaching women's tennis at Dartmouth College in the 1980s.

Her son Joseph Laderoute recalled that one of Betty's favorite stories was about the day she danced with a young John F. Kennedy at a Concord Academy event in the 1930s. She also spoke proudly of her Bread Loaf experience in the 1980s, and about one of her teachers there, Dr. A. Bartlett Giamatti (later President of Yale University and the Commissioner of Baseball). Betty loved to talk of her conversations with Giamatti about the Shakespeare authorship question and how she had at least engaged his interest (though he never became an Oxfordian).

Sears was a regular at Oxfordian conferences for over 20 years, delivering and publishing a number of important papers, especially on her specialties: Shakespeare and music, and the Sonnets. She also published several books: *Oxford's Revenge* in 1989 (with Stephanie Caruana), and *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* in 1991 (2nd ed.,2003). *Tudor Rose* influenced a number of Oxfordians over the next twenty years, including actor Michael York, who in the summer of 2001 participated in several authorship events put together by Sears for The Renaissance Festival in Killington, Vermont. In the second edition of *Tudor Rose* both Charlton Ogburn, Jr., and William Plumer Fowler paid tribute to the book's contribution to the Oxfordian cause.

Friend and colleague Hank Whittemore, recalling Sears, commented:

> Betty was a pioneer in the Oxfordian field, a fiercely independent thinker and passionate defender of her ideas. I'll always miss her. In my view her book *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* will always be a landmark. Betty was the first to set forth the Earl of Oxford's identity as "Shakespeare" in the context of the historical end game involving Southampton's imprisonment in the Tower for the Essex Rebellion and Robert Cecil's control of the succession of King James. It's a pity that she was not able to see this thesis placed up on the big screen, right at the center of the movie *Anonymous*."

Sears also worked closely with fellow Oxfordians in the Boston area on projects to promote the cause. She and Charles Boyle founded and managed the Oxford Day Banquets in Boston, which thrived for fifteen years, beginning in 1988, with many Oxfordians traveling from other states to attend. Over the last ten years of her life Betty set about to realize her lifelong dream of establishing an Oxford/Shakespeare library by working with William Boyle to found the New England Shakespeare Oxford Library in Boston, with a core collection comprised of many hundreds of Betty's books and personal correspondence files.

Sears is survived by seven children (Clara Knapp, Esther Loman, Evelyn Belden, Kathy Wood, Joseph Laderoute, Mary Bang, and Peter Whelpton) and more than twenty grandchildren and great grandchildren. The Sears family has announced that there will be a special memorial service for Sears and her siblings (all now deceased), in Wayland, MA, later this year. Friends and family will be notified of the exact date. Donations in memory of Elisabeth Sears can be made at the New England Shakespeare Oxford Library website (www.shakespeareoxfordlibrary.org).

Waugaman to Deliver Authorship Lecture

Dr. Richard Waugaman, a Fellowship member and regular contributor to both *Shakespeare Matters* and *Brief Chronicles,* will deliver that 2012 Frieda Fromm-Reichmann Lecture at the Chevy Chase Women's Club, Friday, March 2, 2012, from 7– 9 pm. The title of Waugaman's lecture will be "A Refugee from Chestnut Lodge Receives Asylum at the Folger Shakespeare Library: New Discoveries about the Authorship of Shakespeare's Works."

Members $30, Non-Members $50. Active military duty and students, free. The lecture carries 1.5 CME/CE credits from the Washington Center for Psychoanalysis.

Waugaman is clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Georgetown University School of Medicine, a Training & Supervising Analyst, Emeritus at the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute, and regular reader at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Forty of his more than 100 publications are on Shakespeare and the psychology of pseudonymity. The full texts of most of those publications are available at www.oxfreudian.com.

(Continued on p. 8)

(News, cont. from p. 7)

Oxfordian Podcasts Now Available

Seattle-based Oxfordian Jennifer Newton has launched an authorship podcast called The Shakespeare Underground. It's available through iTunes (a free download from their iTunes Store) and on www.theshakespeareunderground.com. The format is interview-based, featuring one speaker per episode talking on a particular theme which illuminates our understanding of the works, the author, or the era. The podcasts showcase careful, mature scholarship that is well-grounded in evidence, and which has been excluded from mainstream venues because it doesn't presume the authorship of William Shaksper of Stratford, and therefore isn't constrained by the limitations of his timeline, resources, or experiences. Two episodes have been released to date: Bonner Millller Cutting on Shaksper's Last Will and Testament, and Tom Regnier on the Law in Hamlet. Next up will be an interview with Earl Showerman, discussing Shakespeare's use of political allegory and allusions to the French Court.

Each episode is intended to be accessible to listeners with limited or no prior knowledge of the authorship debate; Newton expects the series will be entertaining for both longtime authorship students and anyone with a general interest in Shakespeare and the period. While The Shakespeare Underground won't promote any particular candidate, many of the speakers will come from the Oxfordian community.

Newton hopes that the podcast series will provide another venue for this important research, and an access point for people who may not otherwise encounter the insights and discoveries coming out of the authorship community. "What I like about this format, besides it being hands-free, eyes-free, and totally mobile, is that podcasts are an easy way to sample a potential interest."

2011 SF/SOS Joint Conference- Member Survey

[The following survey was distributed at the 2011 joint conference. The results are discussed in the article at page 29 of this issue].

This survey is intended to measure the opinions of members on a number of specific topics concerning the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Each statement is followed by a 1-through-9 scale. 1, 2 and 3 indicate *disagreement* with the statement ("1" being strongest disagreement), while 7, 8 and 9 indicate *agreement* with the statement ("9" being strongest agreement). 4, 5 and 6 indicate more uncertainty.

Circle the number after each statement that best indicates your position. Please respond *based on your personal beliefs or views* on the topics.

Disagree>>>>>Agree

AUTHORSHIP

1a. Edward de Vere is the principal author of the Shakespeare Canon. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

1b. Someone else (not de Vere or Shakspere of Stratford) is the principal author of the Shakespeare Canon.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2. The Canon was written by several authors under de Vere's general "supervision."
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

3. William Shakspere of Stratford wrote no literary works.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

4. Shakspere of Stratford served as a literary "front man" for the true author(s).
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

5. De Vere's authorship role was widely known in his literary community.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

6. De Vere's authorship role was widely known in Queen Elizabeth's court.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7a. De Vere himself did not wish his authorship role to be known even after his death.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7b. De Vere's posthumous literary anonymity was arranged by his children and by Pembroke and Montgomery, with help from Ben Jonson. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7c. De Vere's literary anonymity was imposed by the State.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

EDWARD DE VERE, 17TH EARL OF OXFORD

8a. He was the natural son of the 16th Earl and Margery Golding.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

8b. He was the natural son of Princess (later Queen) Elizabeth.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

9. The 16th Earl died of natural causes in 1562.

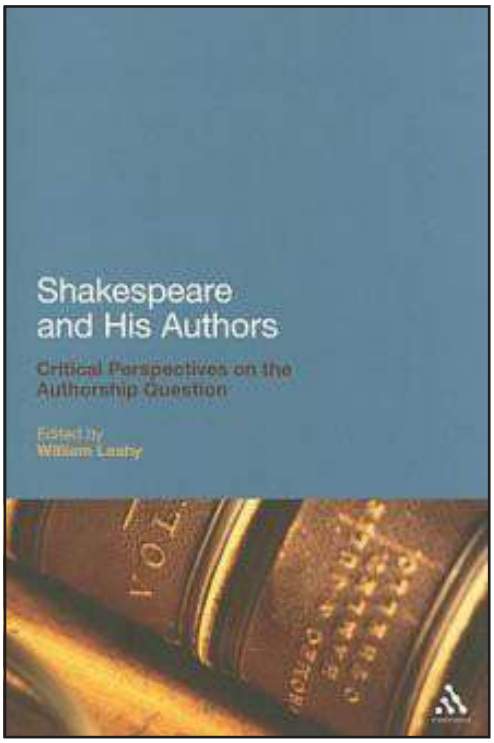
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(Continued on p. 28)

Shakespeare and His Authors: Critical Perspectives on the Authorship Question

William Leahy (ed.),
New York: Continuum, 2010.
Reviewed by Richard M. Waugaman

William Leahy created an MA program in Shakespeare Authorship Studies at Brunel University, so he is eminently qualified to serve as editor of this book. The "critical perspectives" of the subtitle generally follow the OED's first definition of "critical"— "fault-finding, censorious"—when applied to most of the contributors' positions on those who dare to question the authorship of Shakespeare's works. This reflects Leahy's all-too-modest goals; he says he wants merely to legitimize the authorship debate for academia, "not in any way... to suggest that someone other than Shakespeare wrote the plays attributed to him" (6). Like a journalist who wants to maintain the pretext of impartiality, he allows six contributors to spit in his face by implying the authorship question is not worthy of serious consideration. Yet this is the very blind spot that has stymied effective scholarship on the establishment of connections between the canon and its author.



The book consists of eight chapters written by as many authors, plus two interviews by Leahy of the current and former artistic directors of the Globe Theatre. To me, the most interesting sections of the book were the interview with Mark Rylance and the chapters by W.D. Rubinstein, S.G.L. Schruijer and Leahy himself.

Leahy begins his introduction with an apt quip by Mark Twain: "It is not what we don't know that troubles us, it is what we know but isn't so" (1). Leahy uses Twain to challenge the "taboo" in the Shakespearean community against discussing alternative theories of authorship. He lists only two prominent Shakespeareans who have addressed the topic at length: Samuel Schoenbaum and Jonathan Bate (James Shapiro can now be added to this short list). Leahy highlights the common misconception that Shakespeare's authorship was not challenged until the 1850s, noting the deep ambiguities in the reference to "Shake-scene" in the 1592 *Groats-worth of Wit*, and cites Diana Price's contention that "Shake-scene" might be "an untrustworthy actor who is also a moneylender" (4). Leahy concludes that *Groats-worth* "is clearly stating that this actor 'Shake-scene' is stealing the writing of his colleagues and putting his own name to it" (5).

Andrew Bennett's chapter explores the profound influence that our ignorance of Shakespeare's life has had on our idealization of his works. He makes the bold but plausible statement that our conception "even of Literature itself" is fundamentally influenced by how little we really know about Shakespeare. The death of the author follows naturally from an absence of knowledge about him (although an anonymous scholar quipped that "For a million dollar advance, the author exists!") (24). Greenblatt and other biographers of Shakespeare since Malone, Bennett observes, "present a curious combination of a determined and often rather obsessive concentration on empirical and archival research, and at the same time an equally determined use of the imagination to fill in the gaps in historical information" (13). This is Shakespeare as a Rorschach card—an ambiguous stimulus onto which we unwittingly project aspects of our own mind. As Coleridge put it, "It is easy to clothe Imaginary Beings with our own Thoughts & feelings" (93).

Willy Maley quotes an insightful remark by a former staff member at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Richmond Crinkley: "As one who found himself a contented agnostic Stratfordian at the Folger, I was enormously surprised at what can only be described as the viciousness towards anti-Stratfordian sentiments expressed by so many otherwise rational and courteous scholars. In its extreme forms the hatred of unorthodoxy was like some bizarre mutant racism" (33).

Nicholas Royle's reprinted 1990 paper on the so-called "Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy" dismisses the authorship question by citing the long list of claimants to the canon. Royle cites Schoenbaum's non sequitur of accusing authorship heretics of snobbism while maintaining that they lack proper academic credentials. He also quotes Schoenbaum's observation that "something there is that doesn't love an anonymous play... But all [authorship attributions] remain hypotheses. Despite the safeguards devised, a subjective element resides in all attribution work..." (63).

(Continued on p. 10)

(Leahy, cont. from p. 9)

Sean Gaston breezily dismisses the "recent pathology of questioning Shakespeare's authorship" (96). In contrast to Rubinstein's criticism of academic Shakespeareans' lack of proper historical methodology (see below), Gaston contrasts "patient academic [Stratfordian] *research*" with "the avid [non-Stratfordian] *search* for the hitherto concealed key to all mythologies" (98). Through copious use of projection, anti-Oxfordians convince themselves that they approach the authorship question with the cold detachment of the serious scientist, whereas authorship heretics are the only ones who have preconceptions and emotional investment in their authorship opinions.

What of all the recent books on early modern anonymity and pseudonymity? Without citing any of them, Gaston dismisses "this obsession with finding the true name" (100) of pseudonymous early modern authors, as though it is inconceivable that the name "Shakespeare" was a pseudonym. Deductive reasoning from an unquestioned premise should have given way to the Renaissance discovery of inductive reasoning based on an unbiased examination of the evidence. Gaston quotes Gabriel Marquez just before speculating that Shakespeare foiled our quest by destroying his private papers. Ironically, Marquez is one of countless fiction writers whose life experiences have multiple and intriguing connections with their literary works.

Dominic Dromgoole....complains about "literary theory that is so deliberately obtuse that one really wonders who it is for.... The conscious use of such esoteric language seemed to revel in shutting out the less educated" (151). His Shakespeare is a "greedy bastard" whose "entrepreneurial energy [was] transformed into a desire to make plays" (152). Like other anti-Oxfordian contributors, Dromgoole sees an author who "wanted to be elusive" (154), but not so elusive that he used a pseudonym and front man.

Graham Holderness offers such aperçus as "The Author is dead; long live the reader" (106). Uncritically, he explains that the influence of Barthes, Foucault, and Lacan caused the lack of interest in Shakespeare's life in the 1980s. Holderness tries to offer up Schoenbaum's *Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* as a "speculation-free biography of Shakespeare" (108). He forgets that Schoenbaum includes those legends that support his authorship theory, while dismissing all others. Admitting defeat, Holderness avers that "In defence of the method we could say that the documented facts of Shakespeare's life are so sparse that it is impossible to avoid filling the gaps they leave with invention" (112). As one of the non-Stratfordians routinely accused of an incapacity to evaluate evidence, I assume there is a double standard as to permissible "invention."

In Dominic Dromgoole's interview with Leahy, he complains about "literary theory that is so deliberately obtuse that one really wonders who it is for.... The conscious use of such esoteric language seemed to revel in shutting out the less educated" (151). His Shakespeare is a "greedy bastard" whose "entrepreneurial energy [was] transformed into a desire to make plays" (152). Like other anti-Oxfordian contributors, Dromgoole sees an author who "wanted to be elusive" (154), but not so elusive that he used a pseudonym and front man. Dromgoole does grant that "To shut [the authorship question] out and say it is wrong to even think about it—which is what you get from Stratford to some extent—is a shame, because whether you agree with it or disagree, it is a form of historical inquiry; it does throw fresh light on the period, a fresh light on the plays and it is worthwhile just for that" (154).

William D. Rubinstein, a professor of history, believes he is the first historian to write on the authorship question. "[S]ince the question of who wrote Shakespeare's works is surely an historical one... [t]his strange reality [that other historians have not researched Shakespeare's identity] goes far in explaining why Shakespeare studies have taken the direction they have... and why the Shakespeare authorship question has been the grand taboo of academic Shakespeare scholars" (41). Although most of the material he cites is well known to Oxfordians, one can hope that some of his fellow historians will join him in studying Shakespeare with rigorous historical methodology. Rubinstein cautions that when Shakespeareans dismiss non-Stratfordians as "mere amateurs," they should recall that Malone, Halliwell-Phillipps and Chambers were all "amateurs."

"University hegemony" of Shakespeare scholarship has solidified in English departments only in the last sixty years. For all its gains in scholarly standards, Rubinstein believes this hegemony has served us poorly in certain respects. Historians are trained to begin with the evidence and follow it wherever it leads. "Clashes of opinion about the past, even the most fundamental facts of past life, comprise the very heart of historical debate.... In a university History department, it would not be considered *outré* to suggest that someone else wrote Shakespeare's works, provided that evidence for this viewpoint could be cogently presented" (43).

Rubinstein then contrasts these scholarly standards in history with Alan Nelson's admission that an Oxfordian would have difficulty being hired or promoted in an English department. Rubinstein speculates that English departments, facing dismaying pressure against the humanities in many quarters, are reacting defensively to any challenge to authorship orthodoxy. Admitting even the possibility of error might "undermine the very profes-

sional status of English Literature academics..." (45). In truth, shedding past blind spots will only enhance the status of English departments. Rubinstein reminds us that Shakespeare is the only significant Elizabethan author who lacks any "contemporary sources which unequivocally state that he was a writer... [even though] he is probably the most intensively studied and researched human being in history" (45-46).

Rubinstein is troubled by the lack of fit between the works and their alleged author. "Orthodox biographers of Shakespeare have long been puzzled by this complete failure for the facts of Shakespeare's life to account for or explain the surprisingly clear evolutionary pattern of his works, and have, basically, long since given up trying to do so" (51). As a result, "Shakespeare is probably the only person in history of whom reputable publishers will regularly bring out long biographies whose claims are unsupported by any real evidence whatsoever" (54). He singles out René Weis's 2007 biography as "absolutely typical of the near-fiction which orthodox biographers of Shakespeare must produce in the absence of facts..." (57). He takes Weis to task for stating that Shakespeare had a library in New Place, whereas Shakespeare's will mentions no books; by contrast, the will of his son-in-law John Hall refers to Hall's "study of books" (55). (Ironically, Weis has been criticized for assuming Shakespeare was lame, while we have documentation of de Vere's lameness.)

Sandra Schruijer approaches the controversy as a Professor of Organization Sciences at the University of Utrecht, and as a social psychologist who is an authority on group and organizational conflict and resolution. In the authorship question, she has her work cut out for her. She proposes not to take sides, but to examine "the psychological dynamics that create and maintain the intensity of the Shakespeare authorship debate" which she calls a "minefield" (125). As bitter as this controversy may be, Schruijer reassures us that it is little different from controversies in other academic fields. Schruijer concludes, "Unfortunately, a confrontation with diversity may result in feelings of threat. Task conflict can easily result in relational conflict where proving one's point at the expense of others... becomes the goal rather than gaining a deeper insight.... In science, many examples of task conflict that have eroded into relational ones can be found. Relational conflicts go together with negative stereotyping and win-lose dynamics" (127). She compares the treatment of non-Stratfordians with the abuse of whistle-blowers in the workplace.

Just as a common external enemy may promote national cohesion, any group can unite by defining itself in opposition to some external threat. Ron Rosenbaum's book *The Shakespeare Wars* makes it painfully clear that Stratfordians need a common enemy, to distract from their sometimes ferocious internal disputes. Non-Stratfordians are labeled as "*anti*-Stratfordians" in order to underline their perceived threats to traditional Shakespeareans.

In his fascinating interview, Mark Rylance emphasizes that his initial interest was not in the authorship question per se, but in its implications for interpreting the characters that he played, especially Hamlet. "Aspects of the text, which were previously just decoration or theatrical filler in a Stratfordian interpretation, became clues to underlying meaning... these plays were a passionate revelation of a secret personal history, not just a commercial theatre writer's imagination. The potential for truthful human nature in the plays was greater and therefore the responsibility to be truthful in one's service of the plays greater. The humility of the author's mask was also thought provoking" (143). Lines Rylance once dismissed as badly written now make him realize he simply did not understand them. Further, a play's characters "were not

In his fascinating interview, Mark Rylance emphasizes that his initial interest was not in the authorship question per se, but in its implications for interpreting the characters that he played, especially Hamlet. "Aspects of the text, which were previously just decoration or theatrical filler in a Stratfordian interpretation, became clues to underlying meaning... these plays were a passionate revelation of a secret personal history, not just a commercial theatre writer's imagination. The potential for truthful human nature in the plays was greater and therefore the responsibility to be truthful in one's service of the plays greater. The humility of the author's mask was also thought provoking" (143).

fantasy characters; they were drawn from real people around the author's life. They demonstrate huge knowledge and close observation, as well as imagination" (144). Note that Rylance does not fall into the trap of James Shapiro's false dichotomy between life experience and imagination. (It was Shapiro who complained that a non-Stratfordian like Rylance was unqualified to be Director of the Globe, where Dromgoole succeeded Rylance.) Rebutting the accusation that it would have been impossible to keep de Vere's authorship secret, Rylance cites the now well-known fact that the media colluded not to reveal President Kennedy's affairs during his lifetime.

In sum, Leahy's book helps open the door to a fresh re-examination of legitimate and pivotal questions about Shake-

(Continued on p. 12)

(Leahy, cont. from p. 11)

speare's real identity.

Author's note—

Some readers may be interested in the publication history of this review. A mainstream Shakespeare publication asked for volunteers to review books they recently received. I wrote, "I'd be happy to review [Leahy's book], if you'll accept a review by an Oxfreudian." I provided a link with my website, so there could be no doubt as to my authorship opinion. They promptly responded, "We would love to have you write a review for us!'" I submitted my review. Some weeks later came the disconcerting reply, "It usually takes several months to consider a piece for review, as we're a little backlogged."

Alarmed, I wrote back, "When a journal invites someone to review a book for that journal, the review does not have to undergo full-scale peer review.... I would appreciate an explanation. Is this your usual response to book reviewers?"....

The next day he replied, "I regret to advise you that we will not be publishing your review... [Our periodical] does not publish reviews of works espousing the Oxfordian (or anti-Stratfordian) hypothesis....Nor do we publish pieces that argue that the Oxfordian (or anti-Stratfordian) hypothesis deserves more attention or more impartial evaluation or more credence, which, I think, fairly characterizes your own comments on Leahy. We take this position because we are persuaded that the evidence (primarily the will, the monument, and the Folio) demonstrates conclusively [sic] that William Shakespeare of Stratford wrote the works traditionally associated with his name...."

Alarmed, I wrote back, "When a journal invites someone to review a book for that journal, the review does not have to undergo full-scale peer review.... I would appreciate an explanation. Is this your usual response to book reviewers?"

In a further effort to establish my Shakespearean credentials, I also sent the editor the newly released data on most-read articles in the prestigious journal *Notes & Queries* for August 2011. Of all their articles for the past century, the fourth most-read article for that month was my 2009 article on a new literary source for Shakespeare's works, based on the 14 psalms de Vere annotated with marginal pointing hands.

The next day he replied, "I regret to advise you that we will not be publishing your review... [Our periodical] does not publish reviews of works espousing the Oxfordian (or anti-Stratfordian) hypothesis, which fairly characterizes Professor Leahy's book. Nor do we publish pieces that argue that the Oxfordian (or anti-Stratfordian) hypothesis deserves more attention or more impartial evaluation or more credence, which, I think, fairly characterizes your own comments on Leahy. We take this position because we are persuaded that the evidence (primarily the will, the monument, and the Folio) demonstrates conclusively [sic] that William Shakespeare of Stratford wrote the works traditionally associated with his name. I do find, however, that in our dealing with you, we have made some blunders, which seem to have resulted in our treating you with less courtesy and consideration than I would have wished. The Leahy book should not have been sent out for review, and once you identified yourself as an 'Oxfreudian,' your offer to review Leahy should have been politely refused. I can only apologize for our unfortunate errors and the displeasure we may have caused you."

I replied:

> What to say? I've heard that "no serious scholar questions Shakespeare's authorship," with "serious scholar" being defined as someone who has published on Shakespeare in the mainstream literature. But I assume the definition is subject to change.
>
> I'm fascinated by the history of ideas, in science, the humanities, etc.... I've recently learned about the decades it took the theory of continental drift to be accepted by geologists; the rejection of Bose's discovery of the subatomic particles now named for him until Einstein endorsed his ideas; and Einstein's lifelong rejection of crucial aspects of quantum theory, that were convincingly documented and accepted only after Einstein's death.
>
> Premature certainty about authorship can lead to automatic dismissal of contradictory evidence, that isn't even recognized as legitimate evidence. Inevitably, this vitiates the use of inductive reasoning, building a theory from the ground up. Instead, absolute certainty that the case is closed re-creates the pre-Renaissance use of deductive reasoning, from unquestioned premises (the works of Aristotle; the teachings of the Church; etc.). I realize you won't recognize yourself or other Shakespeareans in this description, but I hope you will understand that the situation looks different to me... I'll close with a comment about the recent scholarship by Marcy North, Starner &

"Realities on the Ground"
The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels

by Richard Paul Roe (Harper Perennial, 2011).

Reviewed by Bonner Miller Cutting

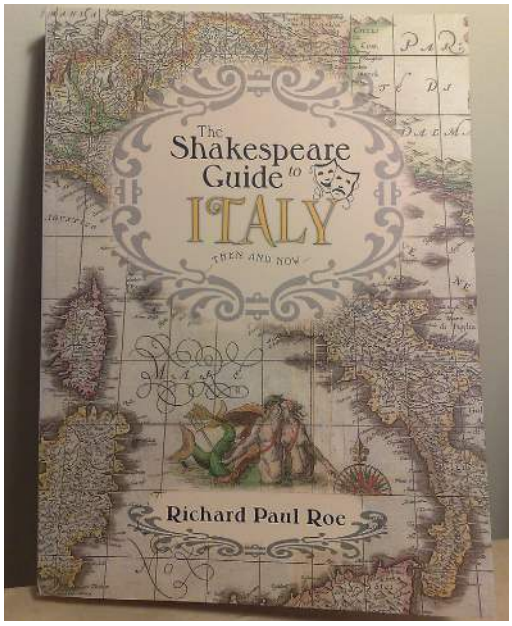
For decades, it was whispered at authorship conferences that Richard Roe was making frequent trips to Italy to track down the Italian references in the eight or so Shakespearean plays set there. What no one expected was a finished product so illuminating in its command of things Italian and so engaging in its presentation. But before proceeding further, I should call attention to the reviews by Virginia Renner in *Brief Chronicles vol. III*, by William S. Niederkorn in *The Brooklyn Rail* ("Beyond the Previously Known Bard") and by John Christian Plummer in Mark Anderson's "Shakespeare by Another Name" page on Facebook.com ("How Did A Man Who Didn't Go to Italy Go to Italy?"). From the latter two titles alone, the point is readily made that *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* – ostensibly a travel guide – takes the authorship question to a place where mainstream academia does not travel.

In the book's foreword, Roe's daughter Hilary Roe Metternich describes her father's search across Italy as a look at "realities on the ground." These realities are, of course, at odds with the orthodox conception of an author who, according to Plummer, "invented a fanciful version of Italy filled with myriad factual errors."

As the reviews by Renner, Niederkorn and Plummer, among others, are favorable, it might be instructive to take a look at Dick Roe's own biography to fully appreciate what went into the making of this remarkable book. Hilary notes that her father had an unusual "basket of qualities" that led him to pursue the Shakespeare Authorship Question after he retired from a successful law practice.

As an undergrad at UC Berkeley, he studied English literature and European history. In World War II he was stationed in Europe as a pilot in the Air Force. During this time, he continued his studies of European culture and history, though, to be sure, under adverse circumstances. Roe's qualities of perseverance and endurance were further developed after the war by a struggle with polio and many months spent in an "iron lung."

It's no surprise that he graduated



summa cum laude from law school. His legal expertise shows in *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* as he presents evidence collected systematically and arguments grounded in data and information. Moreover, he has a talent for putting words on paper in a way that a great attorney presents a case to a jury.

Describing his methodology, Roe once said that he read through the Shakespeare plays with a highlighter, marking all the topical references, and then went about checking them out in his travels. In reading the book, one suspects that much more was involved than some trips to Italy and a highlighter. He interviewed distinguished archivists, hired local guides and professional translators, and researched the historical information at museums, libraries, and public record offices. Most important of all, he studied the plays themselves intensely in order to bring a command of their content to his inquiries.

An example of Dick Roe's "basket of qualities" working in tandem can be found in his chapter on *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Roe describes a spur of the moment side trip to the small town of Sabbioneta, twenty-five miles from Mantua. The received wisdom holds that *MND* is set in Athens, and perhaps it's only of passing interest that Sabbioneta is known as "Little Athens." But a remark by the tour guide caught his attention. The main gate into the town was called "il Quercia dei Duca." Wondering what "quercia" meant, he was told it was "oak." This arched entrance gate was known as "The Duke's Oak." As Roe describes it, he almost collapsed as he checked his trusty, dog-eared *Dream* and reread the line: "At the Duke's oak we meet" (1.2.110). It is here that Peter Quince instructs the actors to meet to rehearse Pyramus and Thisbe, the play within the play. Roe's conclusion that *MND* is set in Sabbioneta (Italy's "Little Athens") rather than Greece is reinforced by additional elements in the play as discussed in chapter eight of his book. Countless English professors and their students have read the play, but would any of them even recall this line? If they traveled to Italy, would they go to

(Continued on p. 33)

Anonymity in Early Modern England: "What's In A Name?"

Janet Wright Starner and Barbara Howard Traister (eds.)
Ashgate, 2011.

Reviewed by Richard M. Waugaman

This intriguing and provocative book originated in a 2004 Shakespeare Society of America seminar. It joins other recent works that enlarge our understanding of the crucial role that anonymous authorship played in early modern England. The implications for the Shakespeare authorship question are immense, so Oxfordians will want to acquaint themselves with this literature. Orthodox scholars have such unshakeable preconceptions that they are often blind to the subversive implications of their own discoveries. Mainstream literature on anonymity is a rich if inadvertent source of evidence in favor of de Vere's authorship of the canon. There is a special pleasure in watching orthodox scholars bounce off the wall of their misguided authorship theory, sometimes caroming uncontrollably toward our position.

The editors' introduction acknowledges the prior work on anonymity by Harold Love, Robert Griffin, Marcy North, and John Mullan. Those works documented the paradox that most early modern English literature was anonymous, but scholars have nevertheless gravitated toward attributed texts, making them less conversant with the conventions of anonymous authorship (and thus projecting onto our Renaissance forebears our own assumptions about authorship attribution). Mullan dealt mostly with once anonymous texts whose authorship has since been established. *Anonymity in Early Modern England*, by contrast, attempts to grapple with the reader's response to a text that resists attribution.

Part 1 deals with "Anonymous Manuscript Poetry." Marcy North contributes a chapter on anonymous epitaphs and libels. She has been one of the most eloquent voices in encouraging us to enlarge our view of the author's choice of anonymity, rather than resort to simplistic explanations of the author's motives or rush to what may be a false attribution. In an earlier paper, she acknowledged that early manuscript copies of Shakespeare's sonnets were often anonymous, even where other poems in the same commonplace book were attributed to an author. This finding is consistent with de Vere's friends respecting his wish for anonymity.

He observes that "attribution studies more often function as a field commanded by a brave but arguably insular band of scholar-enthusiasts quixotically bent on breaching the walls of an established canon that may occasionally bend but seldom opens its gates" (83). No, he is not explicitly referring to non-Stratfordians. The final section of the book, "The Consequences of Anonymity and Attribution," will be of most interest to Oxfordians. Specifically, Bruce Danner's chapter, "The Anonymous Shakespeare: Heresy, Authorship, and the Anxiety of Orthodoxy." Yes, we are the heretics of whom he is writing.

Part 2 addresses "Anonymous Printed Plays and Pamphlets." In "What Wrote *Woodstock*," Thomas Cartelli concludes (unsatisfyingly) that an anonymous "author function" did. He observes that "attribution studies more often function as a field commanded by a brave but arguably insular band of scholar-enthusiasts quixotically bent on breaching the walls of an established canon that may occasionally bend but seldom opens its gates" (83). No, he is not explicitly referring to non-Stratfordians. The final section of the book, "The Consequences of Anonymity and Attribution," will be of most interest to Oxfordians. Specifically, Bruce Danner's chapter, "The Anonymous Shakespeare: Heresy, Authorship, and the Anxiety of Orthodoxy." Yes, we are the heretics of whom he is writing. Here is the editors' description of his chapter:

> Bruce Danner [of St. Lawrence University] claims anonymity for the plays attributed to Shakespeare because he views "the construction of Shakespeare as a vague, colossal abstraction so capacious as to become undefineable" (215). Arguing that heterodox opinions [again, that's us] often prove valuable to pushing orthodoxy into more carefully reasoned and supported positions, he explores the often contradictory and ill-supported dismissals of the [non-] Stratfordians by Shakespeare scholars. (9-10)

What are we to make of this? The canon is now by *Anonymous?* Is Danner serious? Well, yes and no. His explicit goal seems to be to confront Stratfordians with the weakness of their response to our critique. He begins with an eloquent epigraph by Carl Sagan:

> The reasoned criticism of a prevailing belief is a service to the proponents of that belief; if they are incapable of defending it, they are well advised to abandon it... Any substantive objection [to the 'reasoned criticism' above] is permissible and encouraged; the only exception being that ad hominem attacks on the personality or motives of the author are excluded. (143)

What's left to the anti-Oxfordians if such ad hominem attacks are to be excluded? If Danner has his way, not much. Like an Old Testament prophet, Danner eloquently rebukes his people for their evil ways: "the Shakespearean profession itself is the author of anti-Stratfordianism. In its vision of Shakespeare as author, professional scholars can neither portray nor theorize the figure beyond the sphere of anonymity" (156). Danner has an explanation of why orthodox scholars persist in their irrational attitudes toward the author—"perhaps because resisting [the eulogistic construction of Shakespeare] would imperil the status that we currently enjoy" (156).

One of Danner's first lines of attack is against the foundation stone of orthodoxy, the First Folio. Without it, the orthodox case collapses. Danner admits that "the First Folio falsifies a number of key facts" (144); its '"omissions, errors, and outright lies have long been common knowledge" (147). Further, he points out that "only a very few scholars have come to terms with the status of [*Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*] as a forgery" (144). Further, "it is surprising to learn that [non-Stratfordian] interpretations [of *Groatsworth*] have turned out to be more reasonable and accurate than those of many orthodox biographers" (152). He excoriates Stephen Greenblatt for his specious and contradictory discussion of *Groatsworth*, finding that he "ventures into novel avenues of myth-making that undermine his position in creative new ways" (155) and that "Greenblatt's views look less like theories than desperate overreaching" (156). Danner still has not finished with the best-selling Harvard academician: "Not only has Greenblatt undercut his argument with internal contradiction, he has made it difficult for non-specialist readers to track down the chain of evidence for themselves and render their own decisions on the issue" (156). But Danner then clarifies that Greenblatt is just the tip of the Stratfordian iceberg: "In their efforts to discover a Shakespearean presence in resistant or inconclusive evidence, orthodox scholars have fashioned theories that resemble their own worst caricatures of [non-]Stratfordianism" (156).

One of Danner's first lines of attack is against the foundation stone of orthodoxy, the First Folio. Without it, the orthodox case collapses. Danner admits that "the First Folio falsifies a number of key facts" (144); its '"omissions, errors, and outright lies have long been common knowledge" (147). Further, he points out that "only a very few scholars have come to terms with the status of [Greene's Groatsworth of Wit] as a forgery" (144). Further, "it is surprising to learn that [non-Stratfordian] interpretations [of Groatsworth] have turned out to be more reasonable and accurate than those of many orthodox biographers" (152).

Danner has performed a heroic service in his jeremiad against orthodoxy. We can forgive him if he occasionally lapses into his own ad hominem dismissal of non-Stratfordians as purveyors of "irrational fictions" (145) and as those "who remain little more than sincere enthusiasts of Shakespeare and the Renaissance" (157).

Danner cites current scholarly interest in formerly oppressed groups such as women and minorities—the "other." He thus underscores the irony that only groups that are now accepted are accorded this respectful treatment, whereas authorship heretics represent an "other" that is still an acceptable target for denigration and caricature. He also places authorship heresy in the context of Foucault's well-known critique of traditional views of the author. Verbing a proper name, Danner credits us with "out-Foucalding Foucault" in undermining the legendary author's function beyond what Foucault intended. He gives Gary Taylor credit for seeming "willing to uncover a logic behind [non-] Stratfordian doubt" (148), but Danner finds that Taylor then retreats from a meaningful engagement with non-Stratfordians' evidence, the better to pathologize us as victims of "mass paranoia" (150). Danner chastises Taylor for his misleading claim that Mark Twain, Henry James, and Walt Whitman were Baconians, when they were simply non-Stratfordians. Danner writes of these famous authors:

> The overall impression of these representative advocates of heterodox opinion is neither univocal nor paranoid. On the contrary, no individual crusades for a cause so much as puzzles over inadequate facts. On one point they all agree—that the portrait of Shakespeare as represented by his biographers leaves too many unanswered questions. (151)

Again and again, Danner returns to the disavowed anxiety lurking behind orthodox ridicule of non-Stratfordians. "Like [Marjorie] Garber and [Leah] Marcus, Taylor projects the figure of heresy upon his subject in part as a defensive mechanism against the anxieties that inform his own practice" (151). Earlier, he says his goal is "to examine scholarly accounts of heretical discourse that expose profound anxieties about the nature of Shakespearean authorship" (144). His final sentence ends with a reference to "the wellspring of our own deepest fears" about the orthodox picture of Shakespeare (157). These fears seem

(Continued on p. 33)

Shakespeare and Venice in the 21st Century: A Review of Recent Publications

by Earl Showerman

Italian Culture in the Drama of Shakespeare & his Contemporaries: Rewriting, Remaking, Refashioning, ed. Michele Marrapodi (Ashgate, 2007)

Visions of Venice in Shakespeare, ed. Laura Tosi and Shaul Bassi (Ashgate, 2011)

Shakespeare and Venice, by Graham Holderness (Ashgate, 2010)

Shakespeare in Venice: Exploring the City with Shylock and Othello, by Shaul Bassi and Alberto Tosso Fei (Elzeviro, 2007)

> Italy with its public and private life, its laws and customs, its ceremonial and other characteristics, pulsates with every line of our dramatist, while the atmosphere of many scenes is Italian in the truest sense of the word. We cannot but wonder how Shakespeare obtained such accurate information, and we have no hesitation in affirming that on at least one occasion he must have visited Italy.
>
> —Ernesto Grillo

In his seminal study, *Shakespeare and Italy* (1949), Professor Ernesto Grillo wrote that the English drama of love owed "four-fifths" of its plots, ideas, techniques and inspiration to Italian drama. Forty years later, in *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time* (1989), Louise George Clubb, U.C. Berkeley Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature, noted that Shakespeare's comedies were clearly "permeated with Cinquecento theatrical structures." Clubb referred to these structures as "theatergrams," and as indisputable proof of a remarkable Anglo-Italian, cross-cultural contamination of literary sources, genres, and dramaturgy.

> …in addition to the mere fusion of borrowed plots, this demanded the interchange and transformation of units, figures, relationships, actions, topoi, and framing patterns, gradually building a combinatory of theatergrams that were at once streamlined structures for svelte play making and elements of high specific density, weighty with significance from previous incarnations.[1]

Professor Michele Marrapodi of the University of Palermo, General Editor of Ashgate Publications' Anglo-Italian Renaissance Studies Series, has more recently described this phenomenon as the most significant example of the appropriation of an alien culture among the literary art forms of Europe. Clearly, the relationship between Shakespeare and the Italian writers and dramatists is a topic of considerable and enduring intellectual interest among Renaissance scholars.

How did Shakespeare find his way to the untranslated Italian sources, which were never published in England during the Elizabethan era, and how did he integrate the conventions of Italian theatre without having actually visited Italy? The playwright's remarkable familiarity with Italian literature and culture has never been supported by traditional source studies in the manner of E.K. Chambers or Geoffrey Bullough. Over the past 30 years, perhaps in response to this conundrum, new historicist criticism on Shakespeare's Italy has employed a strategy that, in no uncertain terms, diminishes the importance of autonomous literary texts and histories as sources. New historicism self-consciously enlists Shakespeare to support their theory of a synchronic, cultural process that seamlessly transmits text and meaning across national borders. Modern historicist scholars are not troubled by untranslated sources, but embrace the idea that half-hidden, cultural transactions can be used to explain how Shakespeare and other playwrights adapted Italian narrative and dramatic literature. In addition, new historicism undermines the notion of authorial intentionality and replaces it with a depersonalized idea of "textual circulation." These inherently vague notions actually reverse the normal relationship between text and background, separate the author from the text, and challenge the very principles of classical philology. Twenty years ago Brian Vickers accused new historicist scholars of indulging in a "cultural fallacy."

In "New Historicism: Disaffected Subjects" in *Appropriating Shakespeare: Contemporary Critical Quarrels* (1993), Vickers notes that historicist analyses are preoccupied with the symbiotic relationship between subversion and containment, with polarization and political power. In this model, literature is interpreted more as reflective cultural ideologies than demonstrating any subjective sentiment on the part of the author. Historicists are fascinated by obscure or bizarre cultural texts, quite often bringing marginal material to the center of their arguments. This is what Vickers' derisively dubbed "New Ancecdotalism."

"Venetia, Venetia, Chi non ti vede non ti pretia" (*Love's Labours Lost* 4.2.93-94).

In *Will of the World* (2005), Stephen Greenblatt, first among new historicist critics, elevates a strange anecdote about a famous public hanging in 1594 to explain the scenes of mockery in *The Merchant of Venice*. In "Laughter at the Scaffold," Greenblatt boldly conjectures that Shakespeare must have witnessed the execution of the former Jew, Rodrigo Lopez, who was convicted of treason, and that the bizarre behavior of the mob on hearing Lopez's last words informed the playwright's ambivalent treatment of Shylock. The Harvard professor reports that when Lopez proclaimed his loyalty to Queen Elizabeth and his love of Jesus Christ, the mob broke out into inappropriate laughter. Greenblatt argues that "the mocking voices of Salerio, Solanio, and Graziano are very close to what the playwright would have heard at the foot of the scaffold on which Lopez was hanged. *The Merchant of Venice* found a way to give the spectators something of what the crowd at the execution enjoyed, but without the blood and gore."[2] Greenblatt's highly suspect, anecdotal speculation on the origins of the mocking treatment of Shylock stands in marked contrast to the rather solid arguments based on documentary history posed by William Farina and myself in the summer issue of *Shakespeare Matters*.

Twenty years after Professor Clubb's outstanding study of Shakespeare and the Italian drama, the quest to examine the extent of Anglo-Italian literary connections continues with a cluster of new mainstream publications, three focusing on Shakespeare and Venice. This report provides evidence that, as regards Shakespeare's Venice, modern historicist criticism settles for elegantly worded, broad generalizations that are based on vague notions of the mysterious process of "intertextuality," with a particular emphasis on the concept of "otherness" as reflective of the early modern fascination with all things foreign and exotic. New historicist criticism attributes "cultural circulation" as a sufficient reason to reconcile the rich subtlety of Shakespeare's Venice with a London-based author who arguably never visited the Veneto. In contrast, authorship oriented research seeks to identify specific literary sources, topicalities and geographies which are consistent with an author who knew Venice intimately.

Historically, there has always been a reluctance to explore these associations. In *Shylock: A Legend and its Legacy*, John Gross states, "…a work of art must be taken on its own terms, and nobody needs to know much about Venice itself in order to appreciate Shakespeare's Venice." Leo Saligar similarly asserted that Shakespeare used Venice as "a refracted projection of London," and Murray Levith also argued that, "Italy serves in part for

(Continued on p. 18)

(Venice, cont. from p. 17)

Shakespeare's England – the metropolitan virtues and vices of Italian places are those of the Queen's and King's cities." In *Shakespeare and Italy: the City and the Stage* (2001), Jack D'Amico goes even further to explain how truly nonspecific are the many Italian settings for his plays: "To create urban settings of Venice, Verona, or Padua, Shakespeare drew on characteristics of the parishes and wards of London shared by the Italian commune."

Even Professor Brian Pullen, the scholar whose studies of the Venetian Inquisition archives have clearly identified Gaspar Ribeiro as the likely model for Shakespeare's Shylock, accepts a theory of literary and cultural transmission that imagines a playwright learning about Venice from casual contacts:

> There is no need to suppose that Shakespeare must have been in Venice himself during the hidden years of his life…Stories of usurious loans, of conflict between Christian and Jew, conversions to Christianity and lapses into Judaism could very well have been repeated to him by sailors and travelers in London. These disparate fragments of information, lodging in the mind of someone endowed with an infinite curiosity, a tenacious memory, and an insatiable appetite for news, might well have been blended and sublimated into a work of art derived both from literature and from life.[3]

As we consider the recent publications about Shakespeare and Venice, it will become obvious that modern editors and critics are not too concerned with specific literary sources, but repeatedly emphasize new historicist principles, especially the tension between transgression and authority, treating Venice more like an idealized, imaginary, landscape of "otherness" than a city with historic and geographic topicalities. This approach ultimately results in a reversal of the normal relationship between a given text and its sources, in what amounts to a "textualizing" of history. To these mainstream Renaissance scholars, literary texts have miraculously become the chronicles of the time. Literary texts, once looked upon as sources, are now to be considered instruments of a synchronic, cultural exchange between Italy and England. Thus, modern criticism of Shakespeare's Venetian plays usurps conventional philology, and, in the process, depersonalizes the author by substituting the notions of "cultural circulation,"

As we consider the recent publications about Shakespeare and Venice, it will become obvious that modern editors and critics are not too concerned with specific literary sources, but repeatedly emphasize new historicist principles, especially the tension between transgression and authority, treating Venice more like an idealized, imaginary, landscape of "otherness" than a city with historic and geographic topicalities. This approach ultimately results in a reversal of the normal relationship between a given text and its sources, in what amounts to a "textualizing" of history.

"transgression," and "otherness" for subjective intentionality. The inherent, repeatable weaknesses of this approach will in time become obvious to the reader.

In his chapter "Seven types of Intertextuality" in *Shakespeare, Italy, and Intertextuality*, Loyola University Classics Professor Robert Miola defines the various ways that literary works relate as intertexts. To Miola, "intertextuality" encompasses the widest possible range of textual interactions, including those of sources and influences. He first identifies revision, translation, and quotation as forms of intertextuality, and then moves on to consider the question of sources. Sources may reflect a borrowed plot, character, idea, language, or rhetorical style. Other intertextual categories include genres, conventions and configurations. Finally, Miola describes "paralogues," which are related texts, such as commentaries, letters, and derivative publications. It is in the arena of paralogues that new criticism tends to blur the line between text and source.

Paralogues are texts that illuminate the intellectual, social, theological, or political meanings in other texts. Unlike texts or even traditions, paralogues move horizontally and analogically in discourses rather than in vertical lineation in the author's mind and intention. Today, critics can adduce any contemporary text in conjunction with another, without bothering at all about verbal echo, or even imprecise lines of filiation.[4]

Professor Miola acknowledges that discussion of paralogues departs from past critical practices and represents both new freedoms and new perils. Rather prophetically, Miola includes the following warning: Critics need to avoid "rampant and irresponsible association, facile cultural generalization, and anecdotal impressionistic historicizing."

In *Italian Culture in the Drama of Shakespeare & his Contemporaries: Rewriting, Remaking, Refashioning* (2007), the first of the Ashgate Anglo-Italian Renaissance Series to be reviewed here, editor Michele Marrapodi argues that a "new wave has invested not so much the various borrowings, analogies, and influences in themselves but the ways in which the early modern English dramatists adapted their Italian material intertextually, drawing from oblique, quite unprecedented... areas of differing cultural production or discourse." Marrapodi unapologetically refers to this as a "Darwinian theory of literary heredity by common ancestry."

From the traditional idea of a given source or analog, a written text directly affecting the author in one way or another, we have moved on to a larger process

of cultural influence, mostly operating unconsciously, which has implied the existence of a "deep" ultimate source, the archetypal or seminal legacy reached indirectly via the mediation of a countless number of subsequent models.[5]

In his chapter "Seven types of intertextuality" in *Shakespeare, Italy, and Intertextuality*, Loyola University Classics Professor Robert Miola defines the various ways that literary works relate as intertexts. To Miola, "intertextuality" encompasses the widest possible range of textual interactions, including those of sources and influences. He first identifies revision, translation, and quotation as forms of intertextuality, and then moves on to consider the question of sources. Sources may reflect a borrowed plot, character, idea, language, or rhetorical style. Other intertextual categories include genres, conventions and configurations.

Professor Marrapodi refers to many of the significant "narremes, theatergrams, and cultural transactions" from Italian literature that Shakespeare seems to have adapted for his romantic comedies, including elements common with "Commedia in its threefold expression as erudita, grave, and all' improviso." In his introductory chapter, he promises "to delve into the intertextual legacy of dramatic discourse, to consider the history of modern theatre as a diachronic process of transtextuality, moving across genres and epochs despite national divides."[6]

Marrapodi postulates a dynamic of textual connections that goes beyond retrievable sources and influences, and suggests there exists an unconscious, encoded "diachronic process" that challenges the long-established written tradition. The professor imagines a "migration of ideas, a circulation of non-literary discourses and cultural transactions embedded in the synchronic process of cultural exchange." In other words, scholars need not concern themselves with traditional source studies because parallel developments in dramatic literature are to be expected between countries belonging to the same culture and epoch. Mysteriously, "linguistic and non-linguistic cultural forces are absorbed." Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian literature and dramatic traditions is primary proof of this phenomenon.

Marrapodi's recently edited volume, however, does have a number articles that would interest Oxfordians, especially Jason Lawrence's "'The story is extant, and writ in very choice Italian': Dramatizations of Cinthio." Lawrence argues for Shakespeare's indebtedness to passages from John Florio's dialogue manuals, *Florio's First Fruits* (1578) and *Second Fruits* (1591), and suggests that the playwright clearly had a keen interest in learning Italian. Lawrence challenges those who would "question the author's ability to acquire even a reading knowledge of the language." Interestingly, Lawrence identifies a very real problem regarding the Italian sources for *Measure for Measure* by acknowledging that Shakespeare somehow acquired an untranslated Italian edition of Cinthio's *Epitia*, which was published in Venice in 1583. He concludes that Shakespeare was not only able to read Italian, but was familiar with both *Epitia* and the *Hecatommithi* of Cinthio, as well as Ariosto, all untranslated Italian sources.

Another contributor to Marrapodi's Ashgate edition, Keir Elam, Professor of English Drama at the University of Bologna, argues that John Florio's *Second Fruits* (1591) was almost all Shakespeare needed to understand Italy and the Italians. In "'At the cubiculo': Shakespeare's Problems with Italian Language and Culture," Elam notes that Florio's characters "converse freely on letters, dress, speech, gender relations, food and drink,

Professor Marrapodi refers to many of the significant "narremes, theatergrams, and cultural transactions" from Italian literature that Shakespeare seems to have adapted for his romantic comedies, including elements common with "Commedia in its threefold expression as erudita, grave, and all' improviso." In his introductory chapter, he promises "to delve into the intertextual legacy of dramatic discourse, to consider the history of modern theatre as a diachronic process of transtextuality, moving across genres and epochs despite national divides."

play-going, hunting, fencing, etc.," and further suggests that Florio was the main sources for Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian folklore and behavior, the "popular idiomatic sayings of the peninsula."

Florio provides not only the venues but some of the actual dialogic material that Shakespeare employs in his representations of Italy in the *Shrew* and in later

(Continued on p. 20)

(Venice, cont. from p. 19)

comedies, thereby rendering superfluous any mere physical journey to the peninsula. Shakespeare's explorations of Italy, its language and culture begin and end within – although they are certainly not limited to – the confines of Florio's texts.[7]

The most recent Ashgate title in this series is *Visions of Venice in Shakespeare* (2011), edited by Laura Tossi and Shaul Bassi, both Associate Professors of English at Ca' Foscari University in Venice. Continuing along the same lines as Ashgate Anglo-Italian Series general editor Michele Marripodi, Tossi and Bassi argue that Venice is to be "construed as the ultimate fictional landscape of otherness," a locale for mediation between residents and travelers, a symbolic landscape derived from "innumerable written and oral sources, from traveler's reports to maps, from translations of Venetian treaties to possible conversations with Anglo-Italian cultural mediators." Taking the next step in historicizing Shakespeare's texts, they assert:

> Today it appears more fruitful to investigate the Venetian plays as intellectual sites of interacting voices and discourses from the most diverse cultural collocations. We know that sufficient information would have been available to London residents to 'picture' a believable version of Venice on page or stage…. Hence we can safely compare Shakespeare to Lewes Lewkenor, the translator of Gasparo *Contarini's Commonwealth* (1599).[8]

Tossi and Bassi note that the question of whether Shakespeare ever traveled to Italy has been debated "endlessly," and that "it has been an especially favorite subject to those who like to suppose that someone other than Shakespeare wrote his works." Noting that Shakespeare's contemporaries, Ben Jonson, John Webster and others wrote plays and other works set in Venice without having traveled to there, the editors cite E.H. Sugden who, in his *Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and his Fellow Dramatists* (1925), determined that none of these dramatists showed any personal knowledge of Venice and that the local references were always of a general character. The recent publications of Noemi Magri in *Great Oxford*, and Richard Paul Roe in his *Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011) make such a conclusion highly improbable.

Oxfordians should pay closest attention, however, to the excesses of University of Hertfordshire Professor of English, Graham Holderness, in his monograph, *Shakespeare and Venice* (2010). Sporting historicist colors, Holderness elaborates on the "poetic geography" of Venice, and confidently asserts that the author knew the Veneto "through books and maps and travelers' tales, inhabited textuality, and imaginatively rather than in bodily presence." To him, Venice represents an aesthetic geography encompassing a "diaspora of insulated entities" and providing "a uniquely appropriate context for dramatic explorations of early modern isolation."

Oxfordians should pay closest attention, however, to the excesses of University of Hertfordshire Professor of English, Graham Holderness, in his monograph, *Shakespeare and Venice* (2010). Sporting historicist colors, Holderness elaborates on the "poetic geography" of Venice, and confidently asserts that the author knew the Veneto "through books and maps and travelers' tales, inhabited textuality, and imaginatively rather than in bodily presence." To him, Venice represents an aesthetic geography encompassing a "diaspora of insulated entities" and providing "a uniquely appropriate context for dramatic explorations of early modern isolation."

Referring to *Shakespeare, Jonson, and the Myth of Venice* (1990), Holderness expands on David McPherson's descriptions of four aspects of that myth: "Venice the Rich," "Venice the Wise," "Venice the Just," and "Venezia-citti-galante." To these Holderness adds "Venice the Chaste" and "Venice the Seductive," "Venice the Powerful" and "Venice the Fragile," "Venice the Pure" and "Venice the "Imperfect," and, finally, "Venice the Beautiful, the Evanescent" and "Venice the Decadent." Positing that a "Virtual Venice" would have been available to writers all across Europe due to of the city's pre-existing fame and reputation, Holderness sees Venice as the archetypal borderline city of liminality, of natural oppositions, of "extreme and irreconcilable antimonies." To grasp or possess such a place would be hopeless because of the elusiveness of the myths of the city itself. Holderness holds that it is precisely because Venice can only be presented as vision that its hold on the imagination is so strong.

> This method…might at times look like making things up as we go along; but I trust that it will be perceived rather as legitimate speculation based on a deep immersion in the historical culture Shakespeare shared with Renaissance Venice.

As Diane Middlebrook said of Stephen Greenblatt's partially fanciful biography of Shakespeare, *Will in the World*, if the critic "lets his imagination loose in the fields of his knowledge" then the outcome should be exciting as well as accurate, compelling as well as convincing, and neither irresponsible nor misleading.[9]

While Professor Holderness admits that "we have no idea if Shakespeare could

read Italian," he conveniently asserts that the playwright "obviously knew others who could." Echoing the works of Marrapodi, Tossi and Bassi, he argues that the plays themselves are evidence that "a complex and sophisticated knowledge of Venice was there to be acquired within the cultural environment from which Shakespeare derived his impressions of destinations beyond the sea." Further, he imagines that Shakespeare's Venice was drawn from a deep, archetypal source, a "seminal legacy reached indirectly via the mediation of subsequent models," through the workings of a "diachronic process of transtextuality"; one that moves literature across genres, epochs and national borders. The repetition of these vague concepts by all these editors is a disturbing tendency.

Although Holderness deigns to discuss the sources of *The Merchant of Venice*, he has no problem identifying Venice as a city of strangers and aliens, a "multicultural" center where identity itself was always at risk. In Venice, the "otherness" that should lie outside the body politic was welcomed within, so that the binary opposition between familiar and strange was perpetually liable to breakdown. While Venice stood for the greatest achievements of Western Christian civilization, it also lay very close to the perilous borderline of the infidel Turk. Holderness suggests that the absence of generations in Shakespeare's Venetian plays strengthens the impression that Venice is a world without a past, one in which "present experience and future aspiration flourish in a rootless, dislocated medium of contemporaniety."

Not only does Holderness neglect discussing the primary literary sources of the *Merchant of Venice*, but he also seems intent on diluting what is commonly accepted among many Shakespeare scholars of a likely topical allusion.

Scholars have seized on the of name between Antonio's ship ("my wealthy Andrew") and the *San Andres*, beached on the shoal in Cadiz Harbor, and captured by the Earl of Essex in 1596. But can anyone doubt that Salerio's preoccupation with shallows, flats and sandbanks is a depiction of the Venetian lagoon?[10]

Professor Holderness unveils further evidence of a Shakespeare prone to using archetypal, symbolic abstractions in identifying the beautiful Desdemona with Venice: "The absolute beauty of Desdemona that takes Othello's breath away is the breathtaking beauty of Venice itself, invariably rediscovered at the end of some uneasy voyage, the beauty that 'did even ravish me', as Coryate puts it, 'both with delight and admiration'. A beauty impossibly poised on the brink of chaos, inexplicably unperturbed by the tempestuous sea that surrounds it."[11] The professor waxes eloquent in his elaborate generalizations, but does he have anything more instructive to offer besides the rehash of Venice as home to binary opposites, "virgin and whore, jewel and mudflat, perfect chrysolite and seedy marketplace"? Not much, and Holderness's sins of omission are as remarkable as his circular arguments regarding liminality and oppositions couched in new historicist vernacular. These richly embellished analyses closely echo those of the Italian editors of the Ashgate series, and become repetitive, abstracted mantras of intertextuality, thinly disguised attempts to separate the poet from the place:

> …I have argued that the complex modern mythology of Venice existed embryonically in the Renaissance, and that Shakespeare absorbed its fullness sufficiently to create from it a drama which in turn contributed to the continuous future developments of Venice and its myths. Shakespeare did not need to travel or reach Venice, or anywhere else in the world, to acquire such knowledge, since he had access to the books, the letters, the reports, the travelers' tales, the maps and pictures that represented Venice as fully as required by the sensitive and intuitive literary imagination.[12]

Shaul Bassi and another co-editor, Alberto Tosso Fei, were once more inclined to consider the possibility that Shakespeare visited Venice when they wrote *Shakespeare in Venice: Exploring the City with Shylock and Othello* (2007). Their small volume of 200+ pages is filled with historic images of city and serves primarily as a Shakespearean traveler's guide to Renaissance Venice. Bassi and Tosso Fei did not presuppose that the poet never visited Venice. In the process, they have compiled a remarkable number of intriguing topicalities particular to the Veneto that raise excellent questions.

Although Holderness deigns to discuss the sources of *The Merchant of Venice*, he has no problem identifying Venice as a city of strangers and aliens, a "multicultural" center where identity itself was always at risk. In Venice, the "otherness" that should lie outside the body politic was welcomed within, so that the binary opposition between familiar and strange was perpetually liable to breakdown. While Venice stood for the greatest achievements of Western Christian civilization, it also lay very close to the perilous borderline of the infidel Turk. Holderness suggests that the absence of generations in Shakespeare's Venetian plays strengthens the impression that Venice is a world without a past, one in which "present experience and future aspiration flourish in a rootless, dislocated medium of contemporaniety."

(Continued on p. 22)

(Venice, cont. from p. 21)

Were *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello* inspired by a real trip to Venice, or did William Shakespeare only imagine the city from a distance when he wrote his two Venetian masterpieces? Even though scholars believe he never set foot in Italy, as one strolls around Venice today, the temptation is strong to believe the opposite:[13]

Noting that the calli and campi of Venice appear today very much as they did during the Renaissance, the authors imagine hidden corners that seem to whisper "Shakespeare was here." They start by identifying a number of local monuments, including statues of St. George, famous foreign military leaders, and the Moor of Venice. Their 40 chapters are all brief, but they take particular note of Shakespeare's references to gondolas and the common ferry "traject," to the unique Venetian custom of offering pigeons as a gift, and to Carnival with its "varnished faces." Their volume explains in detail the history of the Gobbo di Rialto statue, and describes the Italian political satires that were written in the late 16th century under the pseudonym of "Gobbo." Francis Yates' work on Francesco Giorgio's De harmonia mundi is cited, along with other Shakespeare-themed local narratives.

Most importantly, Bassi and Tosso Fei offer detailed accounts of the research of Professor Brian Pullen on the Venetian trials of Gaspar Ribeiro, the Marrano moneylender who is arguably the model for Shylock, and of Giorgio Moretto, a possible tragic model for Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*.[14] Further, they include the fact that two of the Christian gatekeepers of the Ghetto in 1589 were named Gobbo, a father and son pair, just as in Shakespeare. Bassi and Tosso Fei's detailed references to Pullen's research in the Venetian Inquisition archives is a singular phenomenon among mainstream editors, as neither Marrapodi, Holderness, Tossi, nor any of their twenty-plus co-contributors in the Ashgate Anglo-Italian Renaissance series refer to either of these fascinating cases. Alberto Tosso Fei has recently been interviewed by Cheryl Eagan-Donovan for her documentary project, *Nothing Is Truer than Truth*, in which he asserted that Shakespeare "left us a brilliant image of Renaissance Venice." Eagan-Donovan's project is scheduled for release in 2012 and focuses on Oxford's Italian connections, which will no doubt prove to be immensely valuable because of the obvious intensifying interest in Shakespeare's Venice.

In contrast to the scholars contributing to the Ashgate Anglo-Italian Renaissance Series, recent Oxfordian publications provide a striking contrast in their adherence to the principle of classical philology, searching out specific sources, allusions, references and topicalities. Richard Roe's *Shakespeare Guide to Italy* could become the definitive narrative of original discovery as regards the geography of Italy as subtly woven into the text of Shakespeare's dramas. Richard Whalen's recent contribution to *Brief Chronicles III*, "Commedia dell'Arte in *Othello*, a Satiric Comedy Ending in Tragedy," offers another superb example of Oxfordian historical analysis, one that challenges the facile conclusions of the literati who have made Shakespeare's Venice a commonplace for alienation. Further, Ramon Jiménez's article, "The Date of *The Merchant of Venice*: The Evidence for 1578" in the current issue of *The Oxfordian* lays out numerous, topical literary references that raise a serious question as to the date of composition of this drama.

Richard Roe's *Shakespeare Guide to Italy* could become the definitive narrative of original discovery as regards the geography of Italy as subtly woven into the text of Shakespeare's dramas. Richard Whalen's recent contribution to *Brief Chronicles III*, "Commedia dell'Arte in *Othello*, a Satiric Comedy Ending in Tragedy," offers another superb example of Oxfordian historical analysis, one that challenges the facile conclusions of the literati who have made Shakespeare's Venice a commonplace for alienation.

Modern mainstream Shakespeare criticism, here exemplified by the Ashgate Anglo-Italian Renaissance Series, disdains the pieties of conventional source studies. Focusing on the themes of subversion and containment, and boldly textualizing history into polar opposites, new historicist analyses of Shakespeare's Venice leads to a belief in idealized, imaginary structures and relationships, created with dazzling rhetoric, but containing little actual substance. Shakespeare's Venice to these scholars is a dreamy place of abstract oppositions, of archetypal dualities, and serves to demonstrate the mysterious workings of transcontinental intertextuality.

To Oxfordians, whose candidate was known as the "Italianate Earl," a man well versed in Italian language, history, and arts, who once lived in Venice, the literary, historical, geographic and artistic connections between Shakespeare and the citti-galante are signposts verifying the authenticity of our endeavors.

Endnotes

[1] Louise George Clubb, *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 6.

[2] Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World* (New York: Norton, 2005), 279.

[3] Brian Pullen, "Shakespeare's Shylock: Evidence from Venice," from *The Jews of Italy: Memory and Identity*, Cooperman and Garvin, editors (University of Maryland Press, 2000), 203.

[4] Robert Miola, "Seven types of Intertextuality" in *Shakespeare Italy and Intertextuality* ed. Michele Marripodi (Manchester: University Press, 2004)

23.

[5] Michele Marrapodi, *Italian Culture in the Drama of Shakespeare & his Contemporaries* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 1.

[6] Marrapodi, 2.

[7] Keir Elam, "'At the cubiculo': Shakespeare's Problems with Italian Language and Culture," in Marrapodi, 100.

[8] Laura Tossi and Shaul Bassi, *Visions of Venice in Shakespeare* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2011).

[9] Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare and Venice* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 17.

[10] Holderness, 60.

[11] Holderness, 96.

[12] Holderness, 136.

[13] Shaul Bassi and Alberto Tosso Fei, *Shakespeare in Venice: Exploring the City with Shylock and Othello* (Treviso:Elzeviro, 2007), from the book jacket.

[14] See Earl Showerman, "Shakespeare's Shylock and the Strange case of Gaspar Ribeiro" and William Farina, "Origins of Shylock's Venice: Mermaid Tavern of H.K.U." in *Shakespeare Matters* 10:3 (2011).

Renew Your Membership!

If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2012, please do so! You can do it in five minutes online, no hassle with stamps or mailing. Just go to www.shakespearefellowship.org. click on the "Shopping Cart" link and then the "Membership" link and take three minutes to fill out the form and submit your credit card transaction. All transactions are of course encrypted! Or fill out the form on p. 35 and send it by mail.

Renew today - don't miss any exciting issues of *Shakespeare Matters.*

(Conference, cont. from p. 1)

Monument to Shakespeare, noting the frequent use of the letters "TH" tied together to form a triple Greek *tau*, a symbol with Masonic meaning. He also illustrated several "VER" and "WRIOTHESLEY" clues found in letter grids made from the Monument inscription. The full story is told in his new book, *I Shakespeare, Unanimous or Anonymous?*

Shakespeare Fellowship President Earl Showerman was next. In "Shakespeare's Greater Greek: *Macbeth* and the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus," Showerman once again showed that Shakespeare had far more than a passing acquaintance with the ancient Greek playwrights. He pointed out the parallels between Lady Macbeth and Clytemnestra, between Macbeth's three Weird Sisters and a Greek chorus, and the references to sleeplessness and night terrors. He also focused on the word "trammel," referring to a net or shroud-like body wrap, which occurs in both works. Showerman's full-length article on this topic is in Volume III of our annual academic journal, *Brief Chronicles*.

Ren Draya was the last presenter of the day. In "Singer and Song: Music of *Twelfth Night,*" she noted that children of the nobility generally received musical training, that a number of music books were dedicated to Oxford, and that music is either mentioned or actually included in every Shakespeare play. *Twelfth Night*, however, is the only play which opens and closes with musical allusions. Draya observed that the song Feste sings, "Come Away," with its melancholy tone, is an odd choice for the clown.

Thursday evening most attendees made their way, by public transportation and by taxi, to a cinema in Georgetown for the sneak preview of *Anonymous*. Some were seeing the film for a second, or even a third, time. Security was tight, as filmgoers were required to check their cell phones and PDAs. The preview also open to the public, so the theater was fairly crowded. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive. [See "Panel Discussion" later in this article, and reviews of the film, elsewhere in this issue.]

Second Day – Friday, October 14

Heward Wilkinson was the first speaker. A psychotherapist from London, he urged the development of an Oxfordian equivalent of mainstream Shakespeare literary criticism. He criticized those who

Ren Draya was the last presenter of the day. In "Singer and Song: Music of *Twelfth Night*," she noted that children of the nobility generally received musical training, that a number of music books were dedicated to Oxford, and that music is either mentioned or actually included in every Shakespeare play. *Twelfth Night*, however, is the only play which opens and closes with musical allusions. Draya observed that the song Feste sings, "Come Away," with its melancholy tone, is an odd choice for the clown.

comb the Shakespeare canon solely to find congruences with Oxford's life story, but also labeled James Shapiro's opposite approach (refusing to look for any life parallels) as "vacuous." Instead, Wilkinson urged that readers not only recognize the connections in the works to the author's life, but also be equally faithful to the creative process. Wilkinson also observed that seeing Oxford as the true author enables us to see that he lived on the edge of madness at the end of his life, as well as to see his "mercuriality" and habitual use of multiple meanings. [The full text

(Continued on p. 24)

(Conference, cont. from p. 23)

of Wilkinson's remarks may be found at hewardwilkinson.co.uk/blog.]

Tom Townsend spoke on "Oxfordian Connections in *Romeo and Juliet*." [The presentation was co-authored by Townsend and Tom Hunter, but sadly, as reported in our last issue, Tom Hunter passed away early in October.] Their research leads to dating the play to the early 1580s. First, the several references to the earthquake "eleven years hence" are assumed by orthodox scholars to refer to a London earthquake of 1580, thus suggesting a composition date in the 1590s. However, as Townsend pointed out, the 1580 London quake did little damage, measuring an estimated 5.7 on the Richter scale with an epicenter 100 miles away in France. However, a far more serious earthquake rocked Verona in 1570; estimated at 6.9, with an epicenter only 35 miles away, it caused great damage and killed many. De Vere, who visited Verona a few years later, would certainly have seen and heard about its terrible effects. Second, Townsend stated that *Romeo and Juliet* contains many examples of euphuism, a literary style that was in vogue in the early 1580s but had become passé a decade later.

Ramon Jiménez delivered a shortened version of his article from *The Oxfordian*, which suggests an early composition date for *The Merchant of Venice*. [The traditional date is between 1594 and 1598.] Jiménez postulates that the play dates from 1578. Gosson referred in 1579 to a play called *The Jew*, noting the greediness of "worldly choosers" and the "bloody minds" of usurers. Jiménez stated that one part of Anthony Munday's *Zelauto* (1580) includes several similar characters and a similar plot, as does a 1581 work by Alexandre van den Busche (translated in 1596 as *The Orator*) and, of course, Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, believed to have been written in 1589.

Roger Stritmatter read from the introduction to his just-completed book, noting in particular Shakespeare's preoccupation with words, including his many references to words as words and to wordplay. He pointed out the connection between one of the annotated verses in de Vere's copy of the Geneva Bible, from Wisdom 1.11 ("There is no word so secret that [it] shall be naught") and sonnet 76, line 7 ("That every word doth almost tell my name").

After lunch most participants walked over to the Folger Shakespeare Library for a private tour. The group was shown into the Board Room, where the Folger staff had assembled two collections of books, one about the authorship question and the other devoted to Oxford himself, including books connected to him (such as *Paradise of Dainty Devices* and *The Art of English Poesie*), a deed signed by Oxford and, of course, his annotated 1569 Geneva Bible which was the subject of Roger Stritmatter's PhD dissertation. The group also was escorted to the Founders Room, where it got to see the famous (or perhaps infamous) Ashbourne portrait close up. The Folger staff also guided the group through the Library's public exhibition area, where the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible is being commemorated.

Halstead further suggested that the author Shakespeare may have been trained by persons who themselves were progenitors of what is now known as Biblical criticism. Barbara Burris began her remarks expressing satisfaction that the Folger Library has modified its position on the identity of the Ashbourne portrait. Ten years ago it held unequivocally that the sitter was London mayor Hugh Hamersley, but it now maintains that it "may" be Hamersley, Shakespeare or Oxford.

Back at the hotel, Ron Halstead offered a response to Professor James Shapiro's remarks on Biblical criticism in *Contested Will*. Halstead submitted that Shapiro misread Strauss' *Life of Jesus* and provided a "curious" history of modern Biblical criticism. Halstead further suggested that the author Shakespeare may have been trained by persons who themselves were progenitors of what is now known as Biblical criticism.

Barbara Burris began her remarks expressing satisfaction that the Folger Library has modified its position on the identity of the Ashbourne portrait. Ten years ago it held unequivocally that the sitter was London mayor Hugh Hamersley, but it now maintains that it "may" be Hamersley, Shakespeare or Oxford. Burris spoke extensively on the relationship between the Janssen "Shakespeare" portrait (restored by the Folger in 1988) and the so-called "Cobbe" portrait; the latter painting was "discovered" in 2009 at a private residence, and was almost immediately proclaimed by Stanley Wells of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust to be an authentic picture of Shakespeare. Burris demonstrated convincingly that the Cobbe portrait is a copy of the Janssen portrait.

Michael Dunn was unable to attend the Conference, so the audience missed what would have been an entertaining performance as Sherlock Holmes, looking into "Shakespeare Code-Cracking."

On Friday evening, conference goers dispersed; some headed for nearby restaurants, some holed up at the hotel bar, while others reassembled near the downstairs conference area, where they were entertained by Alan Green on the piano (who knew that Green was a rock star, having hit the Billboard pop charts in 1981 [as Arlan Day] with "I Surrender" on the Pasha label?).

Third Day – Saturday, October 15

In "She Will Not Be a Mother," Bonner Miller Cutting examined whether Princess Elizabeth could have been pregnant (at age 15) in 1548. Cutting noted that Elizabeth was living with Katherine Parr, widow of Henry VIII, who had married Thomas Seymour; that Seymour was a notorious wom-

anizer; that Parr and Seymour were seen cutting off Elizabeth's clothes (the incident was explained as a "tickling," but Cutting suggested that Parr may have trying to see or feel a pregnancy); that Elizabeth was abruptly dispatched to Cheshunt, the estate of Sir Anthony Denny, a confidant of King Henry; that she made no public appearances for more than six months (and was thus conspicuously absent at the christening of Parr's daughter and Parr's funeral a few days later); and that early in 1549 she expressed her willingness to appear before the Privy Council. Finding that the Princess could indeed have been pregnant, Cutting concluded that (even if she a bore a child that survived infancy) the child was unlikely to have been raised as Edward de Vere, because of the 18-month age gap between the possible royal child and de Vere's announced birth date, and the "chaotic" state of John de Vere's household at the time. [Cutting's article on this subject may be found in *Brief Chronicles III*).

Richard Whalen served as moderator for a panel discussion of the movie *Anonymous*; the panel included Mark Anderson, Bonner Miller Cutting, Alan Green and Roger Stritmatter. Anderson, who had interviewed screenwriter John Orloff, reported that Orloff's project was in development for 15 years and that the "Prince Tudor" aspects of the story were added later on, suggested primarily by director Roland Emmerich.

Anderson, who has completed an updated version of his 2005 book, *Shakespeare By Another Name*, was the luncheon speaker. Characterizing the Prince Tudor theories as "The Elephant in the Room," Anderson offered food for thought to both sides of the PT debate. Was Elizabeth Vere the biological daughter of Edward? If Edward were the Queen's son, how would he have known? Even if he were not the Queen's son and had not fathered a child with her, might he have believed nonetheless that there were royal heirs at court? Can Shakespeare's works be read as the imaginings of an insider who didn't have the answers? As Anderson put it, "He doesn't know, and that's why he puts it in verse and drama."

Frank Davis led off the afternoon session, reporting on his trip to England (accompanied by Derran Charlton) in search of more information on the tantalizing report from 1732 by Francis Peck that he might publish a "pleasant conceit" by Oxford, "discontented at the rising of a mean gentleman" at court; from the description, many Oxfordians have assumed that the "conceit" is *Twelfth Night* (or a precursor version). No such work was ever published, and no traces of it have been found. Based on his research, Davis concluded that Peck may never actually have had the "conceit" in his possession, that whatever Peck did have could have been acquired after his death by several different persons, that the work could have been destroyed by fire in 1816, or that – perchance! – it could still be found at Belvoir Castle.

Katherine Chiljan, whose book *Shakespeare Suppressed* has just been published, discussed *Willobie His Avisa*, the first literary work to mention a Shakespeare work. She found that the characters "H.W." and "W.S." are easily identified as Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and the writer William Shakespeare because of the dedications to Wriothesley from Shakespeare just months earlier. She believes that *Willobie* was written by Matthew Roydon, who soon regretted satirizing Shakespeare in it. Chiljan found that the author of Willobie based the work on real events, and that it is likely that "Avisa" is a woman whose name began with the letter "A" – Anne Vavasor.

Katherine Chiljan, whose book *Shakespeare Suppressed* has just been published, discussed *Willobie His Avisa,* the first literary work to mention a Shakespeare work. She found that the characters "H.W." and "W.S." are easily identified as Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and the writer William Shakespeare because of the dedications to Wriothesley from Shakespeare just months earlier. She believes that *Willobie* was written by Matthew Roydon, who soon regretted satirizing Shakespeare in it. Chiljan found that the author of *Willobie* based the work on real events, and that it is likely that "Avisa" is a woman whose name began with the letter "A" – Anne Vavasor.

Albert Burgstahler followed with a discussion of ciphers in the Shakespeare canon. Using a 14-column equidistant letter sequence Cardano grille on sonnet 76, he was able to find "DEVERE" and "MYNAME" abutting one another. He also showed numerous examples of "E-O" and "E-O-X" monograms formed by intersecting diagonal alignments of the letters "v-e-r-e" in the original printed editions of the works.

In "Acting & Authorship – Why It Matters," Gerit Quealy showed how knowledge of the author's true identity can inspire a wealth of character and speech choices when directing a Shakespeare play. Accompanied by two actors, Kate Konigisor and Michael Lewis, she offered excerpts from *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Henry V,* which, when enacted in two different ways, convey vastly different senses of meaning.

Rick Waugaman, a Washington-based psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, offered some insight into the longevity of the traditional view that Shakspere of Stratford is the author Shakespeare. His professional respect for Sigmund Freud (who was convinced by John Thomas Looney's 1920 book on Oxford) led Waugaman into the authorship issue, and he was immedi-

(Continued on p. 26)

(Conference, cont. from p. 25)

ately surprised by the intensity and bitterness expressed by many anti-Oxfordians. He described the Stratfordian establishment as having created an "intermediate mental state," in which they project a fear of loss of reputation onto Oxfordians. Stratfordians, he noted, have generally ignored recent scholarship showing the prevalence of anonymous and pseudonymous literary works in the Elizabethan era. Waugaman also observed how the tone of ad hominem attacks on authorship doubters has changed over the last century, from religion-based ("heretical," used by Sidney Lee) to psychological ("paranoid," used by Samuel Schoenbaum) to anti-governmental ("conspiracy theorists," used by James Shapiro and many others).

Cheryl Eagan-Donovan concluded the day's presentations by showing excerpts from her documentary film, N*othing Truer Than Truth*, which is nearing completion. Eagan-Donovan completed filming in the spring of 2011 in Venice, where she was able to conduct interviews with some local Shakespearean experts.

Fourth Day – Sunday, October 16

Ron Hess was the first presenter, arguing that Sir Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset (1536-1608), may have been Oxford's literary mentor. Sackville was one of very few noblemen whose literary works were ever printed under his own name. He helped prepare *A Mirror for Magistrates* in the late 1550s, and wrote an excellent Induction poem for it. He also wrote the dedication to Hovey's 1560 translation of *The Courtier;* the dedication uses a sonnet rhyme scheme. In 1571 both Oxford and Sackville wrote dedications to Clerke's translation of *The Courtier*.

Tom Regnier then discussed the status of the laws of succession during the Elizabethan era. He focused on the 1571 treason statute, which contained the words "natural issue," rather than "lawful issue." This language change is cited by some Oxfordians as a change in the succession law, but it was not; it only defined what is a treasonable offense (i.e., speaking or writing about royal successors other than the "natural issue" of the Queen). The 1571 statute did not alter the 1558 Act of Succession, which recognized Elizabeth and any heirs "lawfully begotten."

Richard Whalen examined several pre-1920 allusions that Oxford may have been Shakespeare. He cited first an 18th century song, "Sweet Willie O" (attributed to someone named Dibden), which includes the line "None ever was like Willie O." The song employs the word "ever" three times, and the words "wherever" and "whenever," all within a twenty-line structure. Second, Whalen noted the Wentworth will of 1696 mentioning a portrait of Oxford, but a family inventory made in 1782 mentions a Shakespeare portrait, but no Oxford painting (though the inventory lists pictures of Oxford's son and grandson). Third, an 1827 novel, *De Vere,Or the Man of Independence*, is a 3-volume work by Robert P. Ward, who published it anonymously. Ward was a political insider who wrote many novels with political plots. Quotations from Shakespeare are found at the beginning of most chapters. The principal character is Mortimer de Vere, a descendant of Edward.

Peter Dickson gave a preview of his new book, *Bardgate: Shake-speare and the Royalists Who Stole the Bard*. Dickson is a critic of the single-author theory, and is an advocate of the claims of members of the Stanley family as royal heirs. He noted that the 1622 quarto of *Othello* was published by Thomas Walkley, who had connections to the Stanleys. Examining why 17 Shakespeare plays remained unpublished after 1603, Dickson believes that "Grand Possessors" did exist and were associated with Oxford and his son-in-law Derby.

Alex McNeil announced the preliminary results of the survey that had been distributed to all Conference attendees (see separate article this issue).

Kevin Gilvary was presented with the Oxfordian of the Year Award for his work in editing the new book, *Dating Shakespeare's Plays*. Accepting the award, Gilvary paid special tribute to Christopher Dams, who started the Dating Project over a decade ago and who stressed the importance of using documentary evidence, and to Eddi Jolly, Elizabeth Imlay and the late Philip Johnson for their help in editing the project. He highlighted major contributions from researchers on both sides of the Atlantic and expressed the wish that such collaboration would continue into the future.

The final event was the luncheon banquet. Roger Stritmatter, PhD, was presented with a special award acknowledging his many contributions to the Oxfordian cause over the years. Kevin Gilvary was presented with the Oxfordian of the Year Award for his work in editing the new book, *Dating Shakespeare's Plays*. Accepting the award, Gilvary paid special tribute to Christopher Dams, who started the Dating Project over a decade ago and who stressed the importance of using documentary evidence, and to Eddi Jolly, Elizabeth Imlay and the late Philip Johnson for their help in editing the project. He highlighted major contributions from researchers on both sides of the Atlantic and expressed the wish that such collaboration would continue into the future.

Plans are now being made for the 2012 Joint Conference, which will be held October 18-21 in Pasadena, CA. Further details will be announced soon.

(Letter, cont. from p. 2)

But that's not applying the code breaker rationally throughout the dedication, which even Mr. Rollett says is necessary to be a viable solution.

All of the subsequent articles and Letters to the Editor on this subject seem to accept without question that the 6-2-4 schematic is absolute and have tried to come up with, to my mind, rather laborious rationalizations as to what "THE FORTH T" might mean.

I propose that Mr. Rollett and the rest have all had some "lying eyes" in accepting a 6-2-4 schematic. To my eyes, the dedication clearly provides a 5-1-1-1-4 schematic. Well, I thought, maybe I have the lying eyes, so I put it to an admittedly very unscientific test. At a recent family gathering, I printed out the dedication (Figure 1, p. 28), and presented it to my mother and my sister (neither of whom have any interest in this topic whatsoever) and asked them what sort of schematic they thought the grouping of the lines made. My mom said she thought it was five lines, then three separate lines, then four lines. My sister agreed. So, maybe my eyes weren't lying.

Then I thought I would try to recreate the dedication to see which grouping made more sense, 6-2-4 or 5-1-1-1-4. In Figure 2 (p. 28), (using Times New Roman font) I recreated what I thought a 6-2-4 schematic should look like: the first six lines have 0 points separating them; the next two lines have 6 points separating them from the previous and following lines, but 0 points separating them from each other; and then the last four lines have 0 points separating them. This recreation produces a 6-2-4 "blocking" of lines and should look like the dedication, if Mr. Rollett's interpretation is correct. Except it doesn't resemble the schematic of the dedication to my eyes.

To my eyes, only the first five lines have 0 points separating them, then the sixth through eighth lines have 6 points separating them from the previous and following lines, and from each other — singling them out — then the last four lines again have 0 points separating them, as recreated in Figure 3 (p. 28). Construing the configuration in this way gives you a 5-1-1-1-4 "code-breaker," not at 6-2-4 one.

Applying a 5-1-1-1-4 schematic to the dedication according to Mr. Rollett's original hypothesis produces the following inverted sentence:

OF. THESE. INSUING. SONNETS. ALL. PROMISED. BY. OUR.
EVER. THE. SETTING. FORTH. T.T.

Although not glib, this sentence is not gibberish (as long as we all agree that EVER = E. VERE = EDWARD DE VERE). It suggests that 1) all of the sonnets were from OUR EVER; 2) the Poet "promised" to give these sonnets to Thomas Thorpe (or someone) to publish (i.e., "set forth"); and 3) that the sonnets were "set forth" according the Poet's "wishes." This last point is made clear when you see the three middle lines as separate lines, which my eyes cannot help but see, and which gives the feeling that they were meant to be highlighted. In fact, they are the first lines I see when I look at the dedication:

BY.
OUR. EVER-LIVING. POET.
WISHETH.

It doesn't take much of a stretch of the imagination to read these lines as meaning "By our Ever-Living Poet's Wishes."

So with this interpretation, we have "the setting forth" (i.e., publishing) of sonnets "promised" by "OUR EVER" and set forth according to his "wishes."

And just to add a few more observations, I note that there was a contemporary poet/playwright and sometime publisher who used the phrase "the setting forth" to mean "publishing" in his prefatory letter to *Cardanus Comforte*:

> Thus earnestly desiring you in this one request of mine (as I would yield to you in a great many) not to repugn the setting forth of your own proper studies, I bid you farewell.
>
> By your loving and assured friend, E. Oxenford

And then, of course, there's the First Folio itself, in which the page listing the names of the principal actors is titled:

The Workes of William Shakespeare,
containing all his Comedies, Histories, and
Tragedies: Truely set forth, according to their first
O R I G I N A L L .

I therefore humbly propose that, while Mr. Rollett was definitely on to something in his article, he was led astray by his "lying eyes," and rather than a 6-2-4 schematic, the structure of the dedication to SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS give us a 5-1-1-1-4 schematic, resulting not only in a code breaker that makes perfect sense on its face, but also in highlighting the middle three lines – lines that strongly suggest the sonnets were published according to the Poet's wishes.

Sincerely,
Deanna R. Whitestone, Esq.
Beverly Hills, CA

(Conference cont. from p. 27)

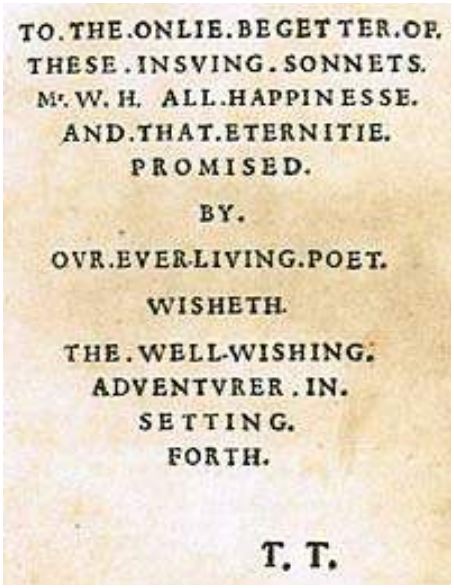

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.
THESE.INSVING.SONNETS.
Mr.W.H. ALL.HAPPINESSE.
AND.THAT.ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.
BY.
OVR.EVER-LIVING.POET.
WISHETH.
THE.WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTVRER.IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.
T. T.

Figure One.

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.
THESE.INSUING.SONNETS.
Mr.W.H. ALL.HAPPINESSE.
AND.THAT.ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.
BY.
OUR.EVER.LIVING.POET.
WISHETH.
THE.WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTURER.IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.
T.T.

Figure Two.

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.
THESE.INSUING.SONNETS.
Mr.W.H. ALL.HAPPINESSE.
AND.THAT.ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.
BY.
OUR.EVER.LIVING.POET.
WISHETH.
THE.WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTURER.IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.
T.T.

Figure Three.

(Survey, cont. from p. 8)

10. Edward was the biological father of his wife's (Anne Cecil's) first child in1576.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

11. Edward had a sexual relationship with Queen Elizabeth.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

12. The 1000-pound annual grant to him in 1586 was made in connection with his literary activities.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

13. Edward did not die in 1604, but lived on for several more years.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

14. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

15. He wrote many other literary works which are not attributed to him.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

HENRY WRIOSTHELEY, 3RD EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON

16. He was the natural son of the 2nd Earl and his wife.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17a. He was the son of Queen Elizabeth.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17b. He was the son of Edward de Vere.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17c. He was the son of Edward de Vere and the Queen.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17d. He was the object of Edward de Vere's homosexual infatuation, not his son.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. The dedications to him in *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* were for political reasons as much as, if not more than, literary reasons. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

19. He is the "Mr. W. H." to whom the Sonnets are dedicated.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

20. De Vere played a key role in sparing Southampton's life after the latter's conviction for the Essex Rebellion.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

THE SONNETS

21. The Sonnets are published more or less (or entirely) in correct order.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

22. The Sonnet Dedication is some sort of anagram or word puzzle.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

23. The "Fair Youth" is Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

24a. The "Dark Lady" is Queen Elizabeth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

24b. The "Dark Lady" is Emilia Bassanio.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

24c. The "Dark Lady" is Elizabeth Trentham, Oxford's second wife.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

24d. The "Dark Lady" is someone else.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

25a. The principal story of the Sonnets is concerned with homosexual love and romance among real persons.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

25b. The principal story of the *Sonnets* is concerned with heterosexual love and romance among real persons.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

25c. The principal story of the Sonnets is concerned with both homosexual and heterosexual love and romance among real persons.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

26. The principal story of the Sonnets is about politics and succession.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

27. The Sonnets are just literary works and aren't "about" anything.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

28. We don't yet know what the Sonnets are about. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

MISCELLANEOUS

29. The illustration on the title page of *Minerva Brittana* (the hand behind the curtain) is an allusion to the authorship issue.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

30. The publication of the Folio was organized by de Vere's children and Pembroke and Montgomery, with Ben Jonson's assistance.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

31. Many academics privately harbor doubt about the case for Shakspere of Stratford as author, but won't publicly admit it.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Survey Says (2011)

by Alex McNeil

[Note: This article is being published in both the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter and *Shakespeare Matters*.]

At the 2011 SF/SOS Joint Conference a survey was distributed, soliciting respondents' views on numerous aspects of the Authorship Question. A similar survey was conducted at the 2008 Joint Conference in White Plains (the survey appears on page 8 of this issue).

The survey asked respondents to indicate, on a nine-point scale, their level of agreement or disagreement with each of 43 statements, arranged within topics of Authorship, Edward de Vere, Henry Wriothesley, the Sonnets, and "Miscellaneous." A response of 7, 8 or 9 to a statement indicated agreement with it, a response of 1, 2 or 3 indicated disagreement, and a response of 4, 5 or 6 indicated uncertainty. Fifty-one persons participated; this was a significant increase from 2008, when only about thirty surveys were returned.

The results are reported here more or less by "degree of conviction;" in other words, I'll discuss first those statements that elicited the strongest consensuses of agreement or disagreement, and conclude with those that show the least. [A further note – the numerical score reported here is a "weighted median." The median is the point in the scale where one-half of the responses are above it and one-half are below it. It is a different measurement from the mean, which is calculated by adding together the values of all the responses and dividing that total by the number of responses.[1] In those cases where the mean differs from the median by a value of 1 or more, I have also reported the mean.]

Areas of Greatest Agreement

This group includes statements where the weighted median was 8.0 or greater, or 2.0 or less. Not surprisingly, at a conference attended by an overwhelming majority of Oxfordians, the statement with the strongest consensus was that Edward de Vere is the principal author of the Shakespeare canon. The median was 9; only two persons indicated uncertainty and no one disagreed. The consensus was almost as strong that Shakspere of Stratford wrote no literary works (median: 9); only two persons expressed uncertainty, though two disagreed. There was consensus of disagreement that someone other than de Vere or Shakspere is the principal author (median: 1), although one person strongly agreed. There was also strong disagreement with the statement that the Sonnets are merely literary works (median: 1); five people were uncertain and only one expressed agreement.

Strong consensuses (though not quite as strong as those above) were also reported with respect to ten other statements:

- That the Folio was organized by de Vere's children and the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, with Ben Jonson's help (median: 8.5, nine uncertain, one disagreed).
- That Shakspere of Stratford was a literary "front man" (median: 8.3, five uncertain, seven disagreed).[2]
- That de Vere wrote many other literary works not attributed to him (median: 8.3, twelve uncertain, one disagreed).
- That de Vere's authorship role was well known in Court (median: 8, eight uncertain, six disagreed).
- That de Vere was the natural son of the 16th Earl and his wife (median: 8, nine uncertain, seven disagreed).[3]
- That the 1586 grant of 1000 pounds yearly was in connection with de Vere's literary activities (median: 8, twelve uncertain, four disagreed).
- That the Fair Youth of the Sonnets is Henry Wriothesley (median: 8, six uncertain, three disagreed).
- Disagreeing that de Vere was the natural son of Princess Elizabeth (median:

(Continued on p. 30)

(Survey Says, cont. from p. 29)

1.8, six uncertain, eight agreed).[4]

- Disagreeing that Henry Wriothesley was the object of de Vere's homosexual infatuation (median: 1.8, ten uncertain, ten agreed).[5]
- That the Dark Lady of the Sonnets is Emilia Bassanio (median: 2.0, seventeen uncertain, two agreed).[6]

Strong consensuses (though not quite as strong as those above) were also reported with respect to ten other statements:

- **That the Folio was organized by de Vere's children and the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, with Ben Jonson's help (median: 8.5, nine uncertain, one disagreed).**
- **That Shakspere of Stratford was a literary "front man" (median: 8.3, five uncertain, seven disagreed).[2]**
- **That de Vere wrote many other literary works not attributed to him (median: 8.3, twelve uncertain, one disagreed).**
- **That de Vere's authorship role was well known in Court (median: 8, eight uncertain, six disagreed).**

Areas of Significant Consensus

The next level of consensus was indicated by median responses between 7.0 and 7.9, or between 2.1 and 3.0. In general, while a clear majority of respondents expressed agreement (or disagreement) with a statement, a greater degree of uncertainty was reported than for the first group of statements discussed above. This second group included a dozen items:

- That de Vere played a key role in sparing Southampton's life after his conviction for the Essex Rebellion (median 7.7, twelve uncertain, two disagreed).
- That de Vere's authorship role was widely known in the literary community (median: 7.6, eleven uncertain, five disagreed).
- That the title page illustration in *Minerva Britanna* alludes to the authorship question (median: 7.6, sixteen uncertain, no one disagreed).
- That the Sonnets are published more or less (or entirely) in correct order (median: 7.5, seventeen uncertain, three disagreed).
- That many academics privately harbor doubt about Shakspere of Stratford as the true author (median: 7.5, fourteen uncertain, four disagreed).
- That de Vere had a sexual relationship with Queen Elizabeth (median: 7.4, ten uncertain, twelve disagreed).
- That de Vere's posthumous literary anonymity was arranged by his children and by Pembroke and Montgomery, with help from Jonson (median: 7.3, thirteen uncertain, three disagreed).
- That the Sonnet dedication page is some type of anagram or word puzzle (median: 7.1, fifteen uncertain, eight disagreed).
- That Henry Wriothesley is the "Mr. W.H." to whom the Sonnets are dedicated (median: 7.0, fourteen uncertain, nine disagreed).
- That de Vere's literary anonymity was state-imposed (median: 7.0, eleven uncertain, nine disagreed).
- Disagreeing that the Shakespeare Canon is the work of several authors with de Vere's supervision (median: 2.5, eleven uncertain, eight agreed).[7]
- Disagreeing that the Dark Lady of the Sonnets is Elizabeth Trentham (median: 2.8, fifteen uncertain, nine agreed).

Areas Without Consensus

The final group of statements includes those where the weighted median was between 3.1 and 6.9, indicating neither general agreement nor disagreement. The responses to these statements fall into two main groups – widespread uncertainty (e.g., whether de Vere is buried in Westminster Abbey) or opposite views (e.g., Southampton's parentage). Seventeen statements fell within this group.

- **That the Sonnets are published more or less (or entirely) in correct order (median: 7.5, seventeen uncertain, three disagreed).**
- **That many academics privately harbor doubt about Shakspere of Stratford as the true author (median: 7.5, fourteen uncertain, four disagreed).**
- **That de Vere had a sexual relationship with Queen Elizabeth (median: 7.4, ten uncertain, twelve disagreed).**
- **That de Vere's posthumous literary anonymity was arranged by his children and by Pembroke and Montgomery, with help from Jonson (median: 7.3, thirteen uncertain, three disagreed).**

Four of those statements concerned the parentage of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton:

- That he was the natural son of the 2nd Earl and his wife (median: 5.8, eighteen agreed, eighteen disagreed, fourteen uncertain).
- That he was the son of Elizabeth (median: 6.2, twenty agreed, twenty disagreed, eight uncertain).[8]
- That he was the son of de Vere (median: 6.5, twenty-three agreed, seventeen disagreed, nine uncertain).[9]
- That he was the son of de Vere and Elizabeth (median: 6.1, twenty agreed, twenty disagreed, ten uncertain).[10]

Another seven statements also dealt with the Sonnets (in addition to those about which there was greater consensus, discussed in the previous sections):

- That the Dark Lady is Queen Elizabeth (median: 4.6, sixteen disagreed, fourteen agreed, seventeen uncertain).
- That the Dark Lady is someone other than Queen Elizabeth, Emilia Bassanio or Elizabeth Trentham (median: 4.7, sixteen disagreed, ten agreed, twenty-two uncertain).
- That the principal story is one of homosexual love and romance among real persons (median: 4.5, twenty-two disagreed, thirteen agreed, thirteen uncertain).
- That the principal story is one of heterosexual love and romance among real persons (median: 5.7, nineteen agreed, fourteen disagreed, fifteen uncertain).
- That the principal story is one of both heterosexual and homosexual love among real persons (median: 5, seventeen disagreed, seventeen agreed, thirteen uncertain).
- That the principal story is one of politics and succession (median: 6.2, twenty-one agreed, eight disagreed, twenty uncertain).
- That we don't yet know what the Sonnets are about (median: 3.5, twenty-four disagreed, fourteen agreed, ten uncertain).[11]

The final group of six statements concerned various topics:

- That de Vere lived beyond 1604 (median: 3.5, twenty-five disagreed, six agreed, twenty uncertain).
- That de Vere himself did not want his authorship role to be known after his death (median: 4, twenty-two disagreed, ten agreed, seventeen uncertain).
- That the dedications of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* to Southampton were for political reasons at least as much as for literary reasons (median: 6, twenty-three agreed, four disagreed, twenty-two uncertain).

In 12 cases, however, the median shifted by 1.0 or more between the two surveys, indicating matters where opinions appear to be changing:

That the Shakespeare canon was the product of several writers under de Vere's supervision (median down from 4.5 in 2008 to 2.5 in 2011, thus moving from "uncertainty" to "disagreement")....
That Henry Wriothesley was the son of Elizabeth (up from 4.5 to 6.2, still within the "uncertain" range but moving from disagreement toward agreement).

- That de Vere was the biological father of Anne Cecil's first child in 1576 (median: 5.7, nineteen agreed, seven disagreed, twenty-four uncertain).
- That de Vere is buried in Westminster Abbey (median: 5, twelve agreed, eight disagreed, thirty uncertain).
- That the 16th Earl of Oxford died of natural causes in 1562 (median: 5, ten agreed, nine disagreed, thirty-two uncertain).[12]

Analysis

A preliminary question is whether the 51 respondents to this year's survey comprise a "representative sample" of Oxfordians. It is impossible to answer that question with certainty, because we have no real idea how many Oxfordians there are. But I believe that the respondents represent a good cross-section of American Oxfordians[13] for several reasons: (1) almost all of the Conference attendees were from the United States; (2) to the extent that Conference attendees are a self-selecting group, they are persons who are very interested in and knowledgeable about the Shakespeare authorship question; and (3) the responses are generally consistent with those from the 2008 survey.

A second question is whether the sneak preview of the movie *Anonymous* may have had any effect on responses – in particular, whether its pro-Prince Tudor point of view may have influenced anyone. The film was shown on the first night of the Conference, and most responses were returned later. Again, it is impossible to answer with certainty, but I maintain that the film had little if any effect on respondents because the vast majority of Conference attendees were already well informed about those issues and would not have been swayed by the movie.

As noted above, the results of the 2011 survey were generally consistent with those of the 2008 survey. For 25 of the 37 common statements, the difference in the medians was 0.9 or less. Consistency was seen mainly in the areas of de Vere's authorship role, the publication of the First Folio, de Vere's life, and the identity of the Dark Lady. In 12 cases, however, the median shifted by 1.0 or more between the two surveys, indicating matters where opinions appear to be changing:

- That the Shakespeare canon was the product of several writers under de Vere's supervision (median down from 4.5 in 2008 to 2.5 in 2011, thus moving from "uncertainty" to "disagreement").
- That Shakspere of Stratford was

(Continued on p. 32)

(Survey Says, cont. from p. 31)

a literary front man (up from 6.7 to 8.3, moving from uncertainty to agreement).

- That de Vere did not want his authorship role known even after death (up from 2.8 to 4, moving from disagreement to uncertainty).
- That de Vere did not die in 1604 (up from 2.5 to 3.5, moving from disagreement to uncertainty).
- That Henry Wriothesley was the son of Elizabeth (up from 4.5 to 6.2, still within the "uncertain" range but moving from disagreement toward agreement).
- That he was the son of de Vere (up from 4.0 to 6.5, also still within the "uncertain" range but moving from disagreement toward agreement).[14]
- That he was the son of de Vere and Elizabeth (up from 4.3 to 6.1, once again still within "uncertain" but moving from disagreement toward agreement).
- That he is the "Mr. W.H." to whom the Sonnets are dedicated (up from 6 to 7, moving from uncertainty to agreement).
- That the Sonnets are published more or less in correct order (up from 6 to 7.5, moving from uncertainty to agreement).
- That the Dark Lady is Emilia Bassanio (down from 4 to 2, moving from uncertainty to disagreement).
- That we don't yet know what the Sonnets are about (down from 4.6 to 3.5, still within "uncertain" but moving toward disagreement).
- That the title page illustration of *Minerva Britanna* alludes to the authorship issue (up from 6.5 to 7.6, moving from uncertainty to agreement).

A discussion of attitudes about the Prince Tudor theories cannot, and should not, be avoided. For convenience, I'll refer to the Oxford-as-son-of Elizabeth theory as the Seymour PT theory, and to the Southampton-as-son-of-Elizabeth theory as the Southampton PT theory.[1] To say that the theories are highly controversial, even among Oxfordians, is an understatement. As to the Southampton PT theory, the 2011 survey reported an equal split of opinion – twenty (40%) agreeing that he was the son of de Vere and Elizabeth, twenty (40%) opposed, and ten (20%) uncertain, with a weighted median of 6.1. The theory has gained ground since 2008, when the median was 4.3.

In one case, we cannot make an exact comparison between the two surveys. The 2008 survey contained a single statement that the principal story of the Sonnets is one of love and romance, which received a median response of 7.8 (indicating agreement). In 2011 that statement was replaced by three separate statements – that the principal story is (1) of homosexual love and romance; (2) of heterosexual love and romance; and (3) of both homosexual and heterosexual love and romance. The respective medians were 4.5, 5.7 and 5 (all within the "uncertain" range). Thus, it can be said that belief that the principal story of the Sonnets is one of love and romance has shifted from agreement to uncertainty. The idea that the principal story is instead one of politics and succession has gained some ground (up from 5.7 to 6.2), but is still well within the "uncertainty" range.

A discussion of attitudes about the Prince Tudor theories cannot, and should not, be avoided. For convenience, I'll refer to the Oxford-as-son-of Elizabeth theory as the Seymour PT theory, and to the Southampton-as-son-of-Elizabeth theory as the Southampton PT theory.[15] To say that the theories are highly controversial, even among Oxfordians, is an understatement. As to the Southampton PT theory, the 2011 survey reported an equal split of opinion – twenty (40%) agreeing that he was the son of de Vere and Elizabeth, twenty (40%) opposed, and ten (20%) uncertain, with a weighted median of 6.1. The theory has gained ground since 2008, when the median was 4.3. There is no reason to suppose that PT advocates were somehow overrepresented at the 2011 Joint Conference.[16] As for the Seymour PT theory, it remains, at least for now, considerably less popular among respondents. Only eight persons (16%) agreed with the statement that de Vere was the son of Elizabeth, while 38 (75%) disagreed and five were uncertain.[17]

In conclusion, while the survey results show much agreement among American Oxfordians about de Vere's identity and his authorship role, they also show considerable lack of agreement on Southampton's identity, the identity of the Dark Lady, and the meaning of the Sonnets. In some cases lack of agreement is manifested by sharp differences of opinion, while in others it is manifested by uncertainty. Perhaps it can be said that, although most Oxfordians find themselves in agreement about the who, the when, and even the how of the authorship question, they have yet to reach a general consensus on the why.

Endnotes

[1] For example, take a group of six persons with ages of 50, 48, 45, 40, 39 and 2. The mean age of the group is 37.3 (the sum of the six ages, 224, divided by six), but there is no one in the group with that age, and only one person with an age below the mean. The median age of the group is 42.5 (half of the group is older than 42.5, and half is younger). In many situations the median is a more accurate indicator of the "average." Here, because one person's age is an outlier (the two-year-old), a "weighted median" would move the median down slightly from 42.5 closer to 40, but the weighted median is still more accurate than the mean.

[2] The mean was 7.1.

[3] The mean was 6.7.

[4] The mean was 3.0.

[5] The mean was 3.5. This statement shows

the greatest difference between the median and the mean results.

[6] The mean was 3.0.

[7] The mean was 3.5.

[8] The mean was 4.9.

[9] The mean was 5.3.

[10] The mean was 4.9.

[11] That ten persons expressed uncertainty concerning a statement about uncertainty raises epistemological questions far beyond the scope of this report.

[12] This statement elicited the largest number of responses in the "uncertain" range.

[13] There may well be significant differences between American and non-American Oxfordians (particularly European Oxfordians) on many topics, especially on the so-called Prince Tudor theories.

[14] This statement showed the largest shift in medians.

[15] See Bonner Miller Cutting, "She Will Not Be a Mother," *Brief Chronicles vol. III* (2011).

[16] Of the 21 presentations given at the Conference, not one advocated either PT theory.

[17] That statement was not included in the 2008 survey. However, both surveys included the statement that de Vere was the biological son of the 16th Earl and his wife, and responses were consistent (median 7.8 in 2008, median 8 in 2011).

(Roe, cont. from p. 13)

Sabbioneta, and, if so, make this connection between the arched gate and the line in the play?

In his Introduction to *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy,* Concordia University's Daniel Wright points out forcefully how the realities of Roe's book challenge the "fierce partisans of Shakespeare orthodoxy." Wright gives a cogent synopsis of the literature dealing with Shakespeare and Italy, and the orthodox efforts to reconcile the disconnect between the "unconvincing recipient of the honor that has been bestowed on him" with the "intellectual wealth" of the Canon. Nowhere is this disconnect more apparent than in Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian settings and culture. Wright's introduction alone is worth the price of the book.

But there's more. Each chapter has endnotes, and the depth of Roe's scholarship can be found in the comprehensive bibliography, which includes books on Italian history, literature, economics, geography and art. Hardly a page goes by

In his introduction to *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*, Concordia University's Daniel Wright points out forcefully how the realities of Roe's book challenge the "fierce partisans of Shakespeare orthodoxy." Wright gives a cogent synopsis of the literature dealing with Shakespeare and Italy, and the orthodox efforts to reconcile the disconnect between the "unconvincing recipient of the honor that has been bestowed on him" with the "intellectual wealth" of the Canon. Nowhere is this disconnect more apparent than in Shakespeare's knowledge of Italian settings and culture.

without a photo or illustration, and it is a bonus that the publisher, Harper Perennial, retained the color photos from the privately printed first edition. How nice to see that Ariel's yellow sands on the island of Vulcano are truly yellow!

For lovers of Italy, Renaissance cultural history, Shakespeare, and all of the above, this book is a must read. *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* can be ordered through Amazon.com. Additional reviews are posted there and readers are encouraged to leave reviews of their own.

(Anonymity, *cont. from p. 15)*

realistic, not neurotic. Danner lists some of the central problems with the legendary author: Stratfordians have not established the chronology of the plays; they are ignorant as to the author's political, religious, and cultural opinions; they cannot establish the authorial text for the plays. "Such facts provide the foundations of literary study... and yet these are just such definitive issues that the Shakespearean profession cannot resolve" (152).

Danner places Freud close to the center of some Stratfordians' incapacity to muster an *ad rem* response to authorship heresy. Psychoanalysis has been influential in literary criticism, including for some Shakespeareans. Danner singles out Marjorie Garber for scrutiny. He is troubled that she resorts to "*ad hominem* derision" in making tired jokes about Looney's name, rather than address legitimate challenges to orthodoxy. He speculates that Garber is too respectful of Freud to attack his authorship heresy more directly. But Danner will not accept Garber's evasion—"Looney may have possessed a silly name, but he was not stupid" (147). Oxfordians could not have said it better—"the polemical and unreasoned ridicule [of Looney's views] by orthodox voices implied that they were not up to the task of refuting [non-]Stratfordian views" (147). Is Danner projecting when he writes that "Garber hovers on the verge of identification with [non-]Stratfordian thought" (146)?

He just might be. It is difficult to ponder the full implications of Danner's attack on orthodoxy without considering the surmise that he is on the journey toward intellectual freedom himself. If so, his chapter might offer a rare view of a paradigm change in statu nascendi. It is an inspiring sight. An "anonymous" Shakespeare may be a necessary transition that will one day allow Stratfordians to discard their discredited theory.

(*Anonymous *review- Boyle, cont. from p. 1)

Dream could not have been written by a child in the early 1560s, etc. *The Times* treatment of both the film and the authorship issue was a reaction we should have anticipated and been more prepared for. Omitting the incest angle would not have made much difference, in my opinion.

I had the chance to see *Anonymous* twice — at its US premiere in Portland at the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference, and at the SF/SOS Joint Shakespeare Authorship Conference in Washington. It is a good film, but with flaws. After the first viewing I felt that it didn't quite work, that audiences would not "get it." After a second viewing I was much more positive (but still with reservations). Everyone I talked with who had seen the film twice felt the same way: upon a second viewing it was much easier to follow the storyline and the characters.

I have had reservations about this project for a long time, ever since I first learned that Roland Emmerich would be making a film about the Shakespeare authorship. I love movies, and I have seen all Emmerich's previous efforts (even *10,000 BC*!). He is mainly a B-list director. He does not get great performances from his actors and does not demand great scripts. But as we Oxfordians have learned from our perspective about Shakespeare, when an artist becomes passionate about something in his life, his art reflects it. So it is with *Anonymous*. Many critics, even those who reject the authorship issue, acknowledged that this may be Emmerich's best film. Roger Ebert found it a "marvelous historical film, which I believe to be profoundly mistaken."

There is much to admire and appreciate in *Anonymous*. It brings to life the Elizabethan era and depicts London and the Globe Theater as they never have been before — most critics acknowledged the wonderful look and feel of the film. Embracing a 1590s political succession storyline leading up the Essex Rebellion is also significant. It was during this period when the author "Shakespeare" first appeared, and during which most of the good play quartos were first published. Perhaps most importantly, the film gives us an author who writes with a purpose other than to make money. There are several memorable moments when Oxford reveals what he is up to. He says to Essex, "Ten thousand souls listening to the words of one man. The ideas of one man. That's power, Robert," and Essex replies, "Since when did words ever win a kingdom, Edward?" Or the scene in which he is enlisting Ben Jonson's help, and tells him, "All art is political … otherwise it would just be decoration."

Considering all these positive factors, why did *Anonymous* come and go so quickly in theaters? (The film cost about $30 million to make, and millions more to market. It opened in late October on about 200 screens in the US, and stayed three weeks in most locations. Worldwide gross receipts were estimated at about $13 million in early December.) One key factor may have been word of mouth, which is at least as important as favorable reviews or advance hype in determining whether a movie becomes a hit. Plenty of movies with abysmal reviews have been box office hits, and plenty with rave reviews have died or struggled. The vast majority of filmgoers came to *Anonymous* knowing little or nothing of Elizabethan history or the authorship issue. I'm sure they found it hard to follow on a first viewing, especially with its frequent shifts of time. I offer some additional reasons for the lack of positive buzz:

—The biggest mistake in *Anonymous*, to me, was not the decision to include the incest angle, but rather the decision to include it without making it an integral part of the story that both Oxford and Elizabeth knew and acted upon. It could have been left out of the movie altogether. But to drop it in toward the end, while at the same time preserving everyone's "innocence" about it, was a cop-out.

I have had reservations about this project for a long time, ever since I first learned that Roland Emmerich would be making a film about the Shakespeare authorship. I love movies, and I have seen all Emmerich's previous efforts (even *10,000 BC*!). He is mainly a B-list director. He does not get great performances from his actors and does not demand great scripts. But as we Oxfordians have learned from our perspective about Shakespeare, when an artist becomes passionate about something in his life, his art reflects it. So it is with *Anonymous*. Many critics, even those who reject the authorship issue, acknowledged that this may be Emmerich's best film. Roger Ebert found it a "marvelous historical film, which I believe to be profoundly mistaken."

—The second biggest mistake concerns Southampton. By depicting him as the son of Oxford and Elizabeth, the extraordinarily complex political problem (legitimizing him and arranging for him to succeed Elizabeth) needed to fleshed out. What exactly is the goal of the Essex Rebellion? There were no expository scenes in which the key characters discuss among themselves exactly what they are up to. The emphasis is placed upon a personal battle between Oxford and Cecil, at the expense of expounding upon the larger issue of succession.

—The third biggest mistake was in not developing an Oxford/

Shakespeare that the audience can care about and root for. The Oxford of *Anonymous* is not a larger than life character, and his playwriting is portrayed as an eccentric activity that he mainly does in private, chiefly annoying his wife. A good example of this occurs early in the movie, when Southampton explains to Oxford the power of the public theater and the passionate reactions of the audiences. My reaction was, "Are you kidding me?" Where is the Oxford/Shakespeare who had been a seminal force in the development of theater for decades? Where is the Hamlet who calls the plays the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time, and who then tells the actors which lines are to be added to a scene and exactly how to play it? True, Oxford does remark to Jonson that art is political, but we needed to see more of Oxford as a political artist, and arguing about his art with both the Queen and the Cecils.

Directly related to these points was the decision to present *Richard III* rather than *Richard II* as the play staged on the eve of the Essex Rebellion. I assume that decision was made so that the story would concentrate on the battle between Oxford and the Cecils, and not Oxford and the Queen. To put that decision in perspective, I should note recent news stories about two productions of *Richard II* in the UK and the US. In a review of the New York production it is noted that, in response to the penultimate scene where Gloucester tells Richard that if he disinherits everyone around him, then he disinherits himself, the audience could not help thinking of the current financial crisis and the role of the one percent. Imagine a film about Shakespeare that gets an audience to see a 600-year old battle about succession (i.e., rights of inheritance and the duties of those in charge) in the light of today's political battles. They might just get it and love it.

Finally, let's consider the dreaded incest story, and whether it should have been included. I recently saw a movie on TV that I had not heard of, and it was an eye-opener: *Nowhere Boy*, a 2009 biopic about John Lennon. As one who came of age in the 1960s I have vivid recollections of the Beatles' impact of on popular culture. They spearheaded the transformation of rock and roll from outsider status to the cultural mainstream; and, within the group, Lennon's influence was paramount. But few people know how John Lennon became John Lennon. This is what *Nowhere Boy* is about, and it's a revelation. Let me quote from one of the online reviews:

> Because of his accomplishments as a musician and a peace activist and his senseless death, it's easy to put John Lennon on a pedestal. The truth is that Lennon couldn't have written or co-written such captivating songs if his personal life wasn't occasionally torrid. Opening on the 70th anniversary of the singer's birth and the 30th anniversary of his murder, *Nowhere Boy* proves the flesh-and-blood Lennon is infinitely more fascinating than the saint. (Dan Lybarger in *Reel Reviews*)

Aren't there some parallels here? "Leave our saint alone!" some Lennon fans may say. Just as, even more emphatically, we often hear, "Leave our commoner genius actor alone," or "Leave our 'Virgin' Queen alone!"

What is this "torrid" flesh and blood story that *Nowhere Boy* tells us? It's that Lennon's relationship with Julia Lennon, his birth mother — a woman he had been estranged from for almost 10 years and reconnected with as a teenager — is at the heart of his personal story. John was raised by his mother's sister; during his formative years he did not know his mother as the woman who raised him. Based on what friends and biographers have confirmed, the film shows that John's teenage relationship

(Continued on p. 36)

*(*Anonymous ***review - Boyle, cont. from p. 25)***

with Julia sometimes bordered on the relationship of lovers, not parent and child. That is what drew my attention --- how this relationship is portrayed in *Nowhere Boy*. More than once I said to myself, "Well, wait a minute. Julia can't be his mother. Look at how they're carrying on." But she was his mother. It was she who turned him on to rock and roll and taught him to play the guitar. And, as some of John's friends have recollected, Julia would often hang out with John and his friends like she was one of the boys.

All I'm saying is that this should be mighty interesting to Oxfordians, who have been continuously debating whether the Virgin Queen was in fact Edward de Vere's mother, and even more, whether she could have had a child with him. It is shocking. There is no doubt about that. But is it unthinkable? I'd say no. Especially if we consider that the situation between Oxford and Elizabeth may have been similar to Lennon and his mother, i.e., that his "birth" mother was not the woman who raised him.

Nowhere Boy tells us a lot about how John Lennon became John Lennon. That resonated with me because, after thirty years on the Shakespeare authorship beat, I have come to realize that the authorship debate is all about understanding how Shakespeare became Shakespeare. How and why does an artist become an artist? What makes him or her tick?

Charles Beauclerk tried to answer the question in his 2010 book, *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*. He posits that Elizabeth was Edward de Vere's mother, and that the bizarre lifelong circumstances of their relationship lay at the center of both the Elizabethan Age and Shakespeare's greatness. Centuries later it can never be proved, so we are left with a theory that can make sense of a lot of things about Shakespeare, yet is shocking, and to many, unacceptable. But if it is true, it is no wonder that the mother of all coverups was devised to hide it.

So, my conclusion is this: director Roland Emmerich should have had the courage of his convictions in making this film. It might have been better if he had left the illegitimate child and/or incest angle out rather than to include it without integrating it into the story.

Anonymous does not really tell us "how Shakespeare became Shakespeare." If the relationship between Oxford and Elizabeth had been the backbone of the story, then these two characters could have talked about it throughout the film, not just in a single scene near the end. The dialog could have been taken straight from the plays and poems, reinforcing how their lifelong relationship is reflected in the works of Shakespeare.

This in turn would have made clear that the authorship problem (at least as seen from the "Prince Tudor" illegitimate children/incest angle) stemmed from Oxford writing about the Queen and succession. It would also have made clear that Oxford always knew the power of telling a story on stage, and dedicated his life to doing just that, most often directing his story toward the Queen.

Staying with Oxford vs. the Queen would have meant staying with *Richard II* on the eve of the Essex Rebellion. At the panel discussion in Portland, Emmerich defended his decision by stating that using *Richard II* would have gone over his audience's head. I think he underestimated the kind of audience that would respond to a film about Shakespeare and the Shakespeare authorship question.

It wasn't incest that lost the day. It was the reluctance of the screenwriter and the director to go all in as they told their story, and in the end audiences were confused about exactly what had happened and why, and even worse, they had no one to root for or care about. And that, in story-telling, is fatal.

Inside this issue: