



Shakespeare Matters

"The Voice of the Shakespeare Fellowship"

Oxford's Railing Muse

By Michael Delahoyde

In her stand-up comedy show, Brett Butler describes her ex-husband with unsuccessfully suppressed animosity:

I was married really young. Well, I was 19. That's young here but in Georgia I was a spinster. I was too. I was married to a redneck from a place called Bunnykill, Alabama. I kid you not; I am serious. I'm not making this up. O that I were. And maybe I shouldn't say "redneck"; maybe that's simplistic and pejorative. I shall elaborate. I wasn't married to a redneck; I was married

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Fourth Annual Joint Conference: de Vere Bio Series Prepared to Rock Cable TV?

By Howard Schumann

Noted Oxfordian Mark Anderson told a jointly sponsored conference of The Shakespeare Fellowship and The Shakespeare Oxford Society that John Christian Plummer, a freelance director/writer/producer who this year served as director of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, has optioned his book, *Shakespeare By Another Name*. The Conference took place from October 9th to October 12th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, N.Y., and featured presentations by prominent Oxfordians including renowned scholars and educators.

Shakespeare By Another Name holds that Shakespeare's celebrated plays are remarkably autobiographical. According to John Christian Plummer and screenwriter James Biederman,

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Michael Delahoyde, Ph.D., is a clinical Associate Professor of English at Washington State University.



Benedick and Beatrice are not happy with the Grand Poobahs of the Shakespeares-R-Us International.

Benedick and Beatrice's Excellent Adventure

By Benedick

"Please your Majesty," said the Knave, "I didn't write it, and they can't prove that I did; there's no name signed at the end."

"If you didn't sign it," said the King, "that only makes matters worse. You must have meant some mischief, or else you'd have signed your name like an honest man."

— Lewis Carroll

In case you thought that the Liliputians were disorganized, under-equipped, and underfunded, not to mention poorly informed, here is some good news: You ain't seen nothin' yet.

On June 17, 2006, your correspondent emailed the coordinator of programs for the Shakespeares-R-Us World Congress

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Editor's Note: Publication of a pseudonymous article in *Shakespeare Matters* breaks an extended tradition based on the principle that "honest men" (and women) should sign names to their opinions. However, the story recounted here by "Benedick" is so remarkable that a decision was made to suspend this tradition and instead to indulge in the "Shakespearean" premise, "invest me in motley..." In the interest of protecting the idealist from the authoritarian, the names of all characters in this account have naturally been modified.

Letters:

Dear Editor,

The latest *SM* arrived this week and has been a great read. I particularly appreciate your review of the new book on Kenneth Burke and Waugaman's review of Nuttall. I have found Nuttall's Twayne's *Timon* to be especially insightful as regards the Greek sources in that play. Again, like the good doctor says, he backs away from ever stepping over the edge of authorship, but he opened up some pretty wonderful avenues for understanding *Timon*'s 'greater Greek'.

Earl Showerman, MD
Ashland, OR

Dear Editor,

Really good issue. I thought of something about William Farina's discussion of *Coriolanus*.

William Farina connects the "Shakespeare" play *Coriolanus* and Edward de Vere, noting in particular that de Vere, "19-years-old and convalescing at Windsor Castle, purchased a copy of the Amyot *Plutarch's Lives*. This is a documented fact, as the record for the transaction still exists in Lord Burghley's account books."

Since the Amyot translation of Plutarch figures so centrally in the play and canon generally, it is intriguing to consider another documented fact. *The Atlantic* October 1991 issue related that de Vere's great-granddaughter married into the Wentworth family in Yorkshire. That house's ancestral library was sold at Sotheby's in 1948, the lot including the Amyot *Plutarch's Lives*, which was, significantly to me, inscribed by Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Castiglione's 1562 edition of *Il Cortegiano* was another volume in the collection, as were Holinshed's 1587 *Chronicles*, Turberville's 1575 *Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting*, and *Hakluyt's Voyages*.

From this combination of facts, it seems quite plausible that de Vere's personal books were passed down through the family, which evidently included

Southampton, as the keepsakes of a great ancestor. There are indications that greatness is inextricably linked to these books as sources for the production of plays. Holinshed, Plutarch, Castiglione — they reverberate through the Shakespeare works as well.

Tying de Vere to *Coriolanus* or any Shakespeare play is a matter of cumulative deduction, as long as the known facts comply. We needn't apologize that the story is obscure. de Vere seems to have intended that. And the Cecils did what he couldn't. It isn't an unwelcome burden. If logical inquiry works for finding a murderer, it will work identifying a tragic genius of the modern age. Derisions aren't relevant in comparison.

For instance, returning to the book list, it is clear by the very existence of *Coriolanus* that its author accepted Castiglione's imperative that a courtier exercise beneficial influence upon his prince. Castiglione's *Courtier* advises the nobleman to "draw the prince away from every evil design and lead him into the path of virtue." *Coriolanus* is the perfect cautionary tale of the tyrant usurping power. Plutarch thought so. Shakespearean plays characteristically rely upon such traditional

literary authority.

And as Farina indicates, there are striking parallels between de Vere's and *Coriolanus*' origins. The same goes for James I: a father removed, a child left helpless but with motives of revenge in the midst of corrupt antagonists.

Whether the play had topical reference, we do not know in any great detail. But Southampton almost lost his life in 1601 opposing the devious policies of Queen Elizabeth's principal Secretary, Robert Cecil. And *Coriolanus* appeared after the succession of James I. A tracery of historical reality, even one reconstructed after 400 years, resembles bees circling the hive.

William Ray
Willits, CA

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Shakespeare Matters

Published quarterly by the
The Shakespeare Fellowship
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The Shakespeare Fellowship

Subscriptions to *Shakespeare Matters* are \$40 per year (\$20 for online issues only). Family or institution subscriptions are \$45 per year. Patrons of the Fellowship are \$75 and up. Please send subscription requests to:

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

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

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

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

An article by two Oxfordian scholars who argued against the Strachey letter as a supposed source for *The Tempest* have drawn a response by a Stratfordian editor of *The Tempest*. And a third Oxfordian jumped in with a letter offering his own view (below).

In 2007, *The Review of English Studies*, which is published by Oxford University Press, printed a long article with appendices co-authored by the editor of *Shakespeare Matters*, who is a professor at Coppin State University, and Lynne Kositsky, a published novelist of Toronto.

Their article may be the first major, scholarly “Oxfordian” article in a “mainstream” literary journal. *RES* is one of the top three or four most respected journals in Renaissance or Early Modern Studies.

In their article, entitled “Shakespeare and the Voyagers Revisited,” Stritmatter and Kositsky argued the following:

“A two-century critical tradition that the 1609 Bermuda shipwreck literature (Jourdain 1610, “True Declaration” 1610, Strachey 1625) establishes a *terminus a quo* for *The Tempest* is incorrect. Strachey’s “True Repertory,” the only Bermuda pamphlet now thought to have significantly influenced *The Tempest*, was put into its only extant form too late to be used as the play’s source and probably after the play had already been produced in 1611. Strachey, a notorious plagiarist even by early modern standards, borrowed much that his narrative shares with *The Tempest* from earlier sources also accessible to Shakespeare.”

Late last year, the *Shakespeare Quarterly*, published by the Folger Shakespeare Library, printed a response to Stritmatter and Kositsky by Alden Vaughn, professor emeritus of history at Columbia University and co-editor with Virginia Mason Vaughn of the third edition Arden of *The Tempest*.

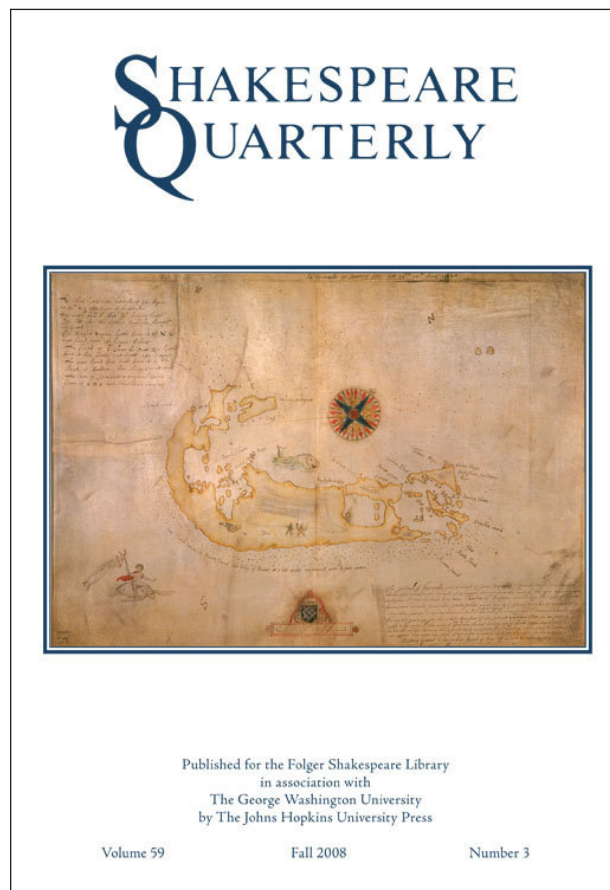
Vaughn argued that Strachey wrote his 24,000-word letter to an unnamed noble woman in London; after having been shipwrecked at Bermuda he arrived in the failing Jamestown outpost in 1610 and completed the manuscript before a ship sailed to London reportedly with the letter—a period of about two months. The letter, he contends, arrived in time for William of Stratford to have seen it in manuscript, which was not printed until 1625. Vaughn also finds “abundant verbal parallels” between the Strachey letter and *The Tempest*.

Upon publication, Vaughn sent a copy of SQ to a friend with a note saying, “Your friend Whalen won’t like this.” Unable to resist the challenge, Whalen crafted the following reply and sent copies to the editors of the two journals:

31 January 2009
Alden Vaughn
Worcester MA

Dear Dr. Vaughn:

You’ve done some extraordinary research and interpretation, especially on Hakluyt and Purchas, and I hope you will not take it amiss if I offer an alternative and more plausible interpretation of the evidence for Strachey’s letter as a suggested source for *The Tempest*.



Alden Vaughan’s fall 2008 SQ cover article heroically but unsuccessfully tries to restore William Strachey’s “True Repertory” (f.p. 1625) to its traditional role as Shakespeare’s *Tempest* source.

(News, cont. from p. 3)

I subscribe the *Shakespeare Quarterly*, read your article and heard from Ed Nanas and Don Nelson, our mutual friends. You presented quite a challenge. If you haven't heard from Roger and Lynne on their *RES* article, or from Arthur Kinney, by now, I'm sure you will. Meanwhile, I will not comment on their work but will try to stand back and comment briefly on several crucial aspects.

In short, I suggest that the thrust of the article is contradicted by the concluding paragraphs, that the final judgment that "Malone and Luce were right" is an unwarranted leap to certainty resting solely on what might be plausible and that an alternative scenario is even more plausible given the historical facts. In this alternative scenario, Strachey wrote the letter after he returned to England and William of Stratford was in no position to have seen it.

First, there is no historical evidence that Strachey wrote the letter before July 15, 1610 (or on that day). No evidence that he signed it or dated it. Since that date does not appear until 1625 in Purchas, it has no contemporary evidentiary value. Purchas (Hakluyt) did not say that date was the date of composition; the wording is ambiguous. The dates of composition are unknown. Nor is there any evidence that Gates carried an unsigned letter that the Company would not like and delivered it to an unnamed noblewoman. It's possible (anything is possible) but not plausible.

Second, it is not plausible that Strachey would have written the letter in Virginia. He had arrived less than two months earlier at remote outpost in ruinous disarray. A shipwreck survivor on a makeshift sailboat, he had no provisions. Nearly three-quarters of the men at Jamestown had recently died of malnutrition and illness, and the remaining sixty were leaderless, under attack by Indians, without provisions, sick and hungry, months away from any harvest and ready to abandon the outpost and go home. It is not likely that in these dire circumstances Strachey or anyone would find paper, pen, ink, a table and the time, energy and incentive to write a 24,000-word letter to an unnamed noble lady, addressing her as such throughout. Possible but not plausible.

Third, it is not plausible that William of Stratford had any opportunity to see Strachey's manuscript letter. There is no evidence that anyone read it, except Hakluyt. (Again, it is remotely possible that William of Stratford saw it. Anything is possible, but it is not plausible.) There is no historical evidence that he had any relationship with nobility or the Company. Moreover, as Jonathan Bate notes in his latest book (2008), "Most biographers prefer to ignore the fact that we cannot formally prove that Shakespeare was in London between autumn 1604 and early summer 1612" (358). If he wasn't in London, he couldn't have seen the manuscript letter until 1612, if he saw it at all.

Fourth, it is equally plausible, even more so, that Strachey, ever ambitious, saw on his return to England in 1611 that he could gain fame, the patronage of a noble lady and perhaps a bit of fortune by writing up his adventures in Bermuda and Jamestown—adventures that would entertain the noble lady and her friends even though his account would displease the Company (your "hard to fathom" on page 258). In London, he could borrow freely from books. It is implausible that such books were also available in destitute Jamestown.

Finally, it is not plausible that the great dramatist had to depend almost slavishly on a letter such as Strachey's in order to write *The Tempest*. Neither for an outline, as you suggest, nor for all the descriptive words and phrases listed by Dave Kathman. For a detailed rebuttal of Kathman's alleged parallels see Oxford-Shakespeare.com/documents and go to the very last item under "StratMyths." The alleged similarities between Strachey and *The Tempest* are almost all demonstrably false and/or very indistinct. Even the ardent Stratfordian scholar Greenblatt concludes that "with the possible exception of some phrases from Strachey's description of the storm and a few scattered details, *The Tempest* does not directly use any of this vivid narrative" (1997). It is not the similarities but the many differences between Strachey and *The Tempest* that are most striking.

Shakespeare didn't need Strachey. His great plays demonstrate incredibly wide-ranging and in-depth reading. He could draw

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on his recall of many reports of storms, shipwrecks and castaways, if indeed he needed them at all to write *The Tempest*. These potential sources (researched by Roger and Lynne, and others) include the Bible (St. Paul's shipwreck at Malta), Virgil's *Aeneid*, accounts by Erasmus (1523), Ariosto (1532), and especially Martyr-Eden (1516-1555) and Beste (1578 on Frobisher); also by Raleigh (1591 at Bermuda), de Ulloa and Tomson (in Hakluyt). These accounts are much closer to *The Tempest* narrative and language than is Strachey, especially, for example, Erasmus, Ariosto, Martyr-Eden,

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Who Was Spenser's E.K.? Another Look at the Evidence

By Mike Hyde

The case for Edward De Vere as the E.K. of Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* of 1579 is made in great detail in seven issues of the *Edward De Vere Newsletter*,¹ compiled and edited by Nina Green. The case can be strengthened with additional facts from the lives and writings of de Vere, Spenser and Gabriel Harvey. Following a review and summary of this evidence, we will present our view of the best explanation for the initials E. K. and their use by de Vere.

E.K. ends his introductory epistle to Gabriel Harvey and to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* "from my lodging at London this 10th of April 1579."² In April 1579 Edmund Spenser was still in Kent, living at the residence of John Young, Bishop of Rochester; Gabriel Harvey was in residence at Cambridge although involved with Leicester's faction at court, supporting the assertion³ that E.K. was not Harvey nor Spenser himself. Harvey and Spenser stayed with Leicester when in London, while de Vere had "lodgings" near Bishopsgate.⁴ As we discuss below, de Vere had returned to London in September 1578 after following the Queen on her summer Progress, and was at court in London throughout 1579.

Furthermore E.K. is clearly referred to as a third person in a letter from Spenser to Harvey dated October 15/16, 1579, when Spenser was in London at Leicester's house and Harvey still in Cambridge:⁵ "Maister E.K. hartily desireth to be commended unto your Worshipp(e.g., Harvey): of whome what accompte he maketh, your selfe shall hereafter perceive, by hys paynefull and

dutifull verses of your selfe."⁶

Spenser's letter is written from Westminster; he has been at court in attendance on the Queen. It is clear both from this letter and from the *Shepherd's Calendar* that E.K. is himself a courtly poet, who has written "paynefull and dutifull" verses about Harvey. E.K. also presents himself as a Chaucerian in his

epistle which begins with a Chaucerian phrase "Uncouth unkiste," as a student of languages (medieval English, Latin, French, Italian) and above all as a defender of archaism in English poetry—attributes which tally with de Vere's education and accomplishments as a scholar/poet/patron in 1579.

E.K. and Harvey are personally linked to Sir Thomas Smith in the glosses to the January and September eclogues, first in acknowledging the

loan of Smith's book on government from Smith's "kinseman" Harvey, which book E.K. says is now in his possession along with other of Sir Thomas' "grave excellent wrytings":⁷

As well interpreteth the worthy Sir Tho. Smith in his booke of gouernment: wherof I haue a perfect copie in wryting, lent me by his kinseman, and my verye singular good freend, M. Gabriel Haruey: as also of some other his most graue & excellent wrytings.⁸

It would appear that E. K. was looking at the unpublished manuscripts of Sir Thomas at the same time he was working on



Colin Cout (Spenser's self-representation) from the January Eclogue of *Shepherde's Calendar*.

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(Conference, cont. from p. 1)

this astonishing (and controversial) new perspective holds tremendous promise for ground-breaking television. Plummer, who has directed over a dozen Shakespeare productions as well as plays by Moliere, Chekhov, Sam Shepard, Carlo Gozzi, and his own original pieces, said that their new television series option of *Shakespeare By Another Name* is “the sort of thing Shakespeare — de Vere — would be proud of.”

“We are using a mass medium to tell an incredibly elevated but at the same time tremendously entertaining story,” declared Plummer. “And at the same time, we’re taking on one of the world’s biggest sacred cows.” He also asserted that “the authorship issue is of vital importance to all theatre artists...knowing the historical context of de Vere’s life and times helps both Shakespeare directors and actors tremendously.”

There were many highlights as the Conference welcomed back Shakespeare Fellowship regulars Dan Wright, Mark Anderson, Paul Altrocchi, Robert Brazil, Thomas Regnier, Bill Boyle, Bonner Cutting, and Earl Showerman. Other speakers included Robin Fox, Dr. Frank Davis, Paul Streitz, Michael Egan, Albert Burgstahler, Betsy Clark, Helen Gordon, Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, Stephanie Hopkins-Hughes, John Hudson, Ron Song Destro, and Derran Charlton. Talks focused on the literary, historical, political, and religious significance of the works of Shakespeare and the mystery of the authorship question. Alex McNeil, President of the Shakespeare Fellowship, noted the strong turnout at the Conference saying, “I was very pleased to see a good turnout this year, especially with the slumping economy.”

The Conference keynote address was given by journalist and author Mark Anderson. In his talk “1604: The Oxfordian Ace in the Hole,” Anderson declared that Oxfordians should stop being on the defensive about the fact that Oxford died in 1604 and go on the offensive. According to Anderson, this was the year that Shakespeare turned silent. It should be emphasized, he asserted, that no plays were written or edited after 1604 and there are no sources for the plays after 1604.

Contrary to Stratfordian claims, events such as the eclipses of the sun and moon mentioned in *King Lear* took place in 1598 as well as 1605, the civil unrest and food riots described in *Coriolanus* occurred in 1596 as well as 1607, and scholarship by Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky has established once and for all that no evidence exists that *The Tempest* must be dated after 1604. Anderson also pointed out that the doctrine of equivocation talked about in *Macbeth* was written about by William Cecil as early as 1584.

Daniel Wright, Ph.D., Professor of English at Concordia University and Direc-

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tor of the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference in Portland, Oregon, led off the Conference with his paper “All My Children: Royal Bastards and Royal Policy.” Shakespeare, according to Dr. Wright, was an “eminently political author,” an informed commentator on the current political scene who mixed historical data with pure fiction to make a moral point. He was not a historian dedicated to reportage, but a poet who engaged in “nobly edifying the reader.” Dr. Wright suggested that the issue of succession is a pattern that is at

the center of all of Shakespeare’s plays. Shakespeare’s extensive preoccupation with issues of legitimacy, bastardy, and succession might well be considered accordingly, as telling reflections of the anxiety and hope that may have attended his personal interest in the subject.

Dr. Wright said that royal bastards were numerous in Shakespeare’s time and were central to the issue of legitimacy and that “the disposition of royal bastards in English history is instructive for us in considering the challenges that may have confronted Elizabeth I and the government of England if the Queen, like so many English monarchs before her, were the parent of at least one unacknowledged royal heir.” The Shakespearean plays ask not “Who will rule?” but “Who is *supposed* to rule?” They argue that bastardy is a virtuous condition, an icon of the royal ideal and should be no barrier to the crown. The bastard of *King John*, for example is a loyal subject, not a usurper, and the suggestion is clear that Queen Elizabeth’s successor should be named and should be a natural heir.

Semi-retired English professor Dr. Helen Gordon spoke on the subject “Comparing the Sonnets to the Life Events of Oxford vs. Shakspeare.” Gordon began her paper by stating that, in her view, Henry Wriothesley was the “fair youth,” Ann Vavasor was the “dark lady,” and the “rival poets” were Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Philip Sidney, and Edmund Spenser. Oxfordians,” she said, “see Shakespeare’s Sonnets as revealing the author’s personal life,” citing several examples while admitting that they are open to many different interpretations.

Sonnet 121 describes the slander of Howard and Arundel against Oxford; in Sonnet 133, Oxford, resentful of imprisonment, agrees to mend his ways and vouches for the purity of his wife. Sonnets 67 and 68 refer to the son of Anne Vavasor, asking whether he was being raised in a proper environment, and Sonnet 25 reflects Oxford’s experience of being dropped from jousting tournaments and has the ring of personal pain. Sonnet 110 reflects the thoughts of a penitent husband asking for forgiveness and swearing not to stray again. According to Gordon, this couplet:

Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,

Even to thy pure and most, most loving breast

fits perfectly the reconciliation of Oxford to his Countess Anne Cecil in 1581 after he had sired a child out of wedlock earlier that year, and after he had been estranged from her due to rumors about her first child. Although Stratfordians think this poem might have expressed Shakspeare's guilt feelings about being away from his wife Anne Hathaway, this does not explain the word "pure" in the last line.

One of the most thought provoking talks was given by Stephanie Hopkins-Hughes, who served as editor-in-chief of *The Oxfordian* for ten years. Her talk focused on the birth of the London stage and the creation of the modern media, providing a context for the Elizabethan and Shakespearean revolution of the late 1500s. The

year 1576, according to Hopkins-Hughes, with the opening of the first commercial year-round theaters in England, was the moment that humans took the first step in the development of modern functional democracy.

Hopkins-Hughes pointed out that before the establishment of Blackfriars and Burbage's theaters in 1576, commercial theater was never an industry and acting was not a profession. One of the catalysts for the development of the theaters was the Protestant Revolution and the end of Catholic holiday celebrations under Edward VI. The two theaters withstood twenty years of attacks by enemies of the *status quo* and, though there is no evidence

that the two founders knew each other, careful planning went into their survival. Burbage's theater was an outdoor venue designed for general public attendance in warmer seasons, whereas Blackfriars was designed for more educated class in the winter.

One of the prominent patrons was the Earl of Sussex who pushed for an

politically incorrect play that, according to Hopkins-Hughes, resulted in Marlowe's assassination in 1593 after its four-year run.

Bonner Miller Cutting, an independent researcher from Houston, continued the conference with a paper titled "Where There's A Will," in which she took a close look at the "Last Will and Testament" of William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon, discovered officially in 1747 by the Reverend Joseph Greene. After examining the historical information concerning this "cherished" document, she delivered an appraisal of the will using other wills of the era for comparison. She concluded that while the will follows the standard format of the time, there is nothing in its three hallowed pages that reveals the slightest glimmer of a



Mark Anderson with Producer John Plummer, freelance producer and director (this year at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival) are planning a television series on de Vere.

alliance between the Queen and the French and looked to acting companies to provide entertainment for the masses. Two other patrons, Charles Howard and Henry Hunsdon, also supported the theaters and it is noted that all three patrons were related to Edward de Vere. Though we know nothing about the early plays, Edward de Vere had just returned from Italy and had moved close to Burbage's, providing the opportunity for him to write plays for the new theater. Hopkins-Hughes points out that a rival theater, The Rose, established by Philip Henslowe in 1587, led to the defection of Marlowe and Edward Alleyn and Marlowe's hit *Tamburlaine*, a

cultivated mind.

There is no mention of books, furniture that would hold books, papers, manuscripts, musical instruments, art works, tapestries, maps, shares of a theatrical company, or theatrical memorabilia. In short there is nothing in his personal effects indicative of intellectual property as there often was in the wills of every day people in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. This conclusion is further amplified by the fact that Shakspeare failed to provide for the education of any members of his family and made no provisions for the Stratford Grammar School (where he presumably

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(Conference, cont. from p. 7)

obtained his education) or any other educational institution, church, hospital or almshouse.

Noting that posterity has held that the bequest of his second best bed to his wife is “notorious,” Cutting showed that it is even worse when examined in context. Shakspeare failed to make provisions for Mrs. Shakspeare’s maintenance, did not appoint her his executrix or his residual legatee, nor did he even address her by name, all standard features found in other wills. If it be true that it is “the mind, not the words, that giveth life to the testa-

One of the complicating factors is that records were not kept of burials in Westminster Abbey until 1607, yet we do know that Francis Vere had a vault there, and was buried adjacent to six coffins. If we can believe Percival Golding’s statement that Edward de Vere is buried in Westminster, Horatio Vere might have buried Edward and his wife in Francis’ vault together with a coffin designated to hold the manuscripts. Recently, using ground penetrating radar, Warwick Rodwell, England’s most respected Church Archeologist, identified the tomb of Edward the Confessor of 1066, opening up the possibility that Francis’ vault may eventually be explored as well. Such investigation, however, is not permitted at present.

ment,” then it is painfully obvious that the mind that gave life to the Shakespeare canon is a mind not found in this document.

Dr. Frank Davis, retired neurosurgeon from Tallahassee, Florida, spoke on the subject “The Diary of Philip Henslowe and its Significance to Oxfordians.” The Henslowe diary lists 282 plays performed during the period 1592-1609. It is a collection of memoranda and notes that records payments to writers, box office takings, and lists of money lent, and is a primary source for information about the theatrical world of Renaissance London. It is also, according to Davis, an important document that reveals

many interesting facts and puzzles which should be of great interest to Oxfordians.

The diary first came to critical attention in 1780 when Edmund Malone requested Henslowe’s papers from the Dulwich library. The next scholar to examine the manuscripts was John Payne Collier, who allegedly inserted forgeries which supported his own theories about Shakespeare. There have been other studies of the diary, including G.F. Warner in 1881 and Foakes in 2002. All in all, Henslowe recorded payments to twenty-seven Elizabethan playwrights, though no payments to writers were recorded until 1597. Though some of the plays listed are *Hamlet*, *Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Henry V*, and *Taming of a Shrew*, there is no mention of William Shakespeare in Henslowe’s diary.

Curiously, an earlier play *Titus and Vespasian* is listed as having run for one year whereas *Titus Andronicus*, which closely resembles the earlier play in title, was performed in December 1593 and registered in 1594. Key points listed by Davis included: the important role of actor/writers in revising old plays, the many plays that were written by more than one author, and the number of shareholders in the company who were also actors. Davis also mentioned the famous publication of *Greene’s Groatsworth* in 1592 that criticized an actor who was trying to write. According to Davis, however, more work is needed to investigate the exact relationship that existed at the time between shareholders, actors, and writers.

The intriguing question, “Does Westminster Abbey Hide Cloistered Authorship Secrets?” was discussed by author Paul Altrocchi, a former Professor of Neurology at Stanford Medical School and author of *Most Greatly Lived*, a biographical novel of Edward de Vere. Altrocchi discussed several possibilities: the manuscripts still exist; they were destroyed by the Cecil family; they were burned in Ben Jonson’s fire; they were accidentally destroyed in other fires; or they were purposefully destroyed. Prof. Altrocchi did not give credence to those possibilities, but explored the notion that the manuscripts may have been buried in Westminster Abbey.

One of the complicating factors is that records were not kept of burials in Westminster Abbey until 1607, yet we do know that Francis Vere had a vault there, and was buried adjacent to six coffins. If we can believe Percival Golding’s statement that Edward de Vere is buried in Westminster, Horatio Vere might have buried Edward and his wife in Francis’ vault together with a coffin designated to hold the manuscripts. Recently, using ground penetrating radar, Warwick Rodwell, England’s most respected Church Archeologist, identified the tomb of Edward the Confessor of 1066, opening up the possibility that Francis’ vault may eventually be explored as well. Such investigation, however, is not permitted at present.

Paul Streitz, author of the self-published book, *Oxford: Son of Queen Elizabeth I*, spoke on the topic “Oxford and the King James Bible.” Streitz proposed that the Earl of Oxford was born in 1548 and died in 1608, and asked some hypothetical (and controversial) questions:

1. Why is there no record of de Vere's birth?
2. Why was there such concern for the child Oxford that he was schooled at the age of 4 ½?
3. Why did John de Vere marry Margery Golding?
4. Why did Robert Cecil marry his daughter to de Vere?
5. Why was Southampton thrown into the tower in 1604?
6. Why was there no funeral elegy in 1604?

Streitz asserted that Oxford did not die in 1604, but was instead abducted by Robert Cecil and held on the Island of Mersea off the English coast. There, Streitz claimed, Oxford wrote *The Tempest*, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, and translated the *King James Bible*. According to Streitz, the translators of the *King James Bible* have never been established with any certainty and attribution of authorship mirrors many of the problems faced by scholars involved with the questions relating to Shakespeare. Notwithstanding copious scholarship on the translation process, including surviving copies of Bibles used by the translators, Streitz contends that only the Earl of Oxford had the literary skill necessary to create the *King James Bible*.

Kennedy Center award-winning playwright, director, actor and professor and founding artistic director of the Oxford Shakespeare Company in New York City, Ron Song Destro, offered some "Tips on Presenting the Oxfordian Lecture." Using his own PowerPoint presentation of the Oxfordian argument, Destro showed how a potentially dry lecture could be turned into a lively depiction of the most prominent Oxfordian tenets: the monument bust that does not look like that of a writer, Shakespeare's record of tax delinquency, his mundane grave inscription, the fact that his daughters were illiterate, hints in the sonnets about the true author, and the fact that Shakespeare was called "'Our English Terence," a reference to a Roman playwright who was widely believed to be a front man for other writers.

As a bonus, the Conference offered a DVD of a BBC production from 1982 of the dark Shakespearean play *Timon of Athens*, an early *Twilight Zone* episode about a ne'er do well author who conjures up Mr. Shakespeare to assist him in his writing, a DVD dramatizing Mark Twain's book "Is Shakespeare Dead"?, and *Dream*, John Hudson's adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Professor Daniel Wright, Professor of English at Concordia University and Director of the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference in Portland, Oregon was named "Oxfordian of the Year." Accepting the award, Wright announced that the 74,000 sq. ft. library facility at Concordia that will contain The Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre is under construction. The Centre will house the resources for scholarly investigation and meetings, annual seminars for in-depth study, and provide stable funding for program leadership and scholarly research. In addition, Wright announced that the Research Centre will allow scholars from all over the world to access the same databases that are available to Concordia faculty and students. He also said that the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt will hang outside the Research Centre as signed by leading academic figures at Concordia.

Dr. Earl Showerman, a graduate of Harvard College and

the University of Michigan Medical School, and practitioner of emergency medicine for over thirty years, continued the with a stimulating talk about the influence of Greek tragedy in *Timon of Athens*, which he called "Shakespeare's Sophoclean Tragedy." Although a play by the title is mentioned as early as 1584, by both William Warner and Robert Greene, *Timon* was not published or performed in Shakespeare's lifetime. It is unlikely that this "Ur Timon" was the academic drama sometimes called the "Old" *Timon* comedy, most likely performed at one of the Inns of Court around 1600, because it includes allusions to other Shakespeare plays from the 1590s.

Timon is based on three primary sources: *Plutarch's Lives*,

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Lucian's satiric dialogue *Timon the Misanthrope*, and Sophocles' as yet untranslated *Oedipus at Colonus*. *Timon* is notable for a number of common elements of Greek tragedy such as choric commentaries, its trilogy structure, the use of messengers, Greek poetic tropes, and the lack of either action or staged violence. The central theme of madness and main character who is an ill-fated, a humiliated hero whose failure to understand himself casts him outside of society seems very much to have been inspired by

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Oedipus at Colonus.

The history of classical drama on the English stage may hold a key to understanding *Timon*'s unique place in the canon in that this tragedy appears to be Shakespeare's one attempt at writing a Renaissance adaptation of Greek tragedy. Finally, an examination of Edward de Vere's personal misfortunes in the early 1580's may suggest a much earlier dating for this intensely personal drama of overspending, heavy debts, banishment, misanthropy, and the threat of revenge.

Lawyer and teacher Thomas Regnier, who has taught a course on Shakespeare and Law at the University of Miami School of Law, spoke about "*Henry V* and the Salic Law." In the second scene of Shakespeare's play, the Archbishop of Canterbury argues for the validity of Henry's claim to the French throne by expounding on the "Salic law." The Archbishop claims that the French were using the ancient Salic law (the law of the Salian Franks) to bar Henry's claim, which derived from his great-great-grandmother Isabella, a French princess who had married Edward II of England. The Archbishop assumes that the Salic law prohibits succession to the throne through a female ancestor. Regnier proposed that the Salic law argument was merely a "straw man" and that, in truth, Henry V's claim to the French throne was barred by a perfectly legal decree of the French Estates-General, which provided that no one could ascend to the throne through a female ancestor. This decree did not depend on the ancient Salic law, which had emanated from a tribe that had long ceased to exist as an identifiable entity. The Archbishop's arguments that the Salic land was in Germany, not France, and that previous French kings had ascended through their female ancestors were shown to be inaccurate, as well as irrelevant to the controlling French decree, which was what actually barred Henry's claim.

Cheryl Eagan-Donovan, a director and independent film producer whose production company, Controversy Films, is currently working on a documentary, *Nothing Is Truer Than Truth*, based on the life of Edward de Vere and Mark Anderson's book *Shakespeare By Another Name*, talked about the personal journey that led to her conviction that Oxford was Shakespeare. Her journey began when she read "*Shakespeare*" *Identified* by J. Thomas Looney. She explained how Looney created a profile of the author from the plays and poetry of Shakespeare, listing specific characteristics that would be required of a candidate for the title.

Looney also found the sonnets to be of special significance, in that "possibly more than any other form of composition, [the sonnet] has been the vehicle for the expression of the most intimate thoughts and feelings of poets." Looney mentioned that "by far the larger and more important set [of Shakespeare's sonnets] embracing no less than one hundred and twenty-six out of total of one hundred and fifty-four, is addressed to a young man, and express a tenderness which is probably without parallel in the recorded expressions of emotional attachment of one man of another." Using Looney and Sobran as guides, Eagan-Donovan looked at different film interpretations of the works of Shakespeare over the last century and showed clips from her documentary project *Nothing Is Truer Than Truth*.

Robin Fox, Professor of Social Theory at Rutgers and author and editor of fifteen books, spoke about "Shakespeare's Education? The Grammar School Question Reconsidered." Prof. Fox asked the question: Did Shakespeare have an education? If so, what was it like? And what relevance did it have to the plays? According to Fox, both Oxfordians and some Stratfordians have denigrated or downplayed the role of the grammar school (Oxfordian criticism is "downright disbelief"), while other Stratfordians have credited the grammar school with all of the learning shown in the plays.

The dispute has been conducted in a historical vacuum

Hesse asserted that there exists "palpable evidence" that Oxford, and almost exclusively Oxford among young students of his time, would have been able to read and even write in Old English (O.E. or Anglo-Saxon), an extinct language not before identified as relevant to the authorship question. Oxford may have also participated personally in the most important literary/legal project of Elizabethan times, the buttressing of a legal basis for supporting the Queen's religious settlement. A byproduct of that project happened to be the discovery of the medieval text of the ancient Beowulf epic, the oldest extant O.E. manuscript in existence, which was discovered by Oxford's tutor in 1563 but then disappeared again for centuries after about 1570.

that failed to see how the grammar schools were part of an intensive (and very successful) state effort to create a new, literate, Protestant, humanist Englishman. Fox examined schools and schoolmasters in the plays, pointing out *Henry VIII* and *2 Henry VI* 4.7, in which the virtues of the grammar school are extolled, and asserted that a well-educated nobleman could definitely have received his education in the grammar school.

W. Ron Hess, the author of a book series *The Dark Side of Shakespeare*, discussed "The Spear-shaker and the Dragon — Oxford, *Beowulf*, and *Hamlet*." Hess declared that when

Stratfordians pretend to show little interest in a matter related to Shakespeare, Oxfordians can be sure it is something that we need to investigate more closely.

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Hess asserted that Oxford learned to read and write Old English from his tutor Lawrence Nowell, the foremost O.E. expert of that time. According to Hess, we may even be able to show that Beowulf did influence Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, something Stratfordians essentially deny or ignore. Although the main sources of *Hamlet* are Saxo’s *Amleth* and Belleforest’s *Hamblet*, they both lack the supernatural element and the intrusion of conscience and guilt present in both *Beowulf* and *Hamlet*. Thus, Oxford could have read it in Cecil’s house, but a denizen of Warwickshire could not have. Moreover, it is possible that we have discovered a sample of Oxford’s handwriting in short margin comments using O.E.

“Why Was Shakespeare So Interested in the Roman-Jewish War?” This question was explored by John Hudson, currently Artistic Director and Dramaturge to The Dark Lady Players, a New York Shakespeare company. The first century Roman-Jewish war, 66-73CE, he declared, was of unusual interest in Elizabethan London—books and pamphlets on it were frequently published, and went on to examine how two plays, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *As You Like It*, made radical allusions to that war and to the gospel characters— by using the common Elizabethan literary device of allegory.

He suggested that the reason Shakespeare plays are preoccupied with taking revenge upon the Romans who fought the Roman-Jewish war is that they are Jewish allegories and could only have been written by England’s only Jewish poet of the time, the first woman in the country to publish a book of original poetry and the long term mistress to Lord Hunsdon, the so-called ‘Dark Lady’ of the Sonnets, Emilia Bassano Lanier (1569-1645). Reference was also made to the 2007-8 allegorical productions of both plays by the Dark Lady Players.

Librarian and long time Oxfordian lecturer William Boyle spoke on “Shakespeare and the Succession Crisis of the 1590s: Some Thoughts and Observations.” Boyle observed that when the name Shakespeare first appeared in print in 1593 England was entering the last ten years of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, though at that time none could know that she would live another ten years. Since she steadfastly refused to settle the succession by naming a successor, these years have been referred to by some as the “succession question,” though in truth some historians of the period have considered her entire reign to be one on-going succession crisis. This crisis came to a head with the Essex Rebel-

lion of 1601, which was immediately preceded by a performance of Shakespeare’s *Richard II*.

Leaving aside any theories of putative royal bastards, there remain some significant historical facts (and some significant publications other than Shakespeare’s) during this period that merit close scrutiny by those involved in the Shakespeare authorship debate. Not the least of these facts is the interconnection among the 3rd Earl of Southampton, the Earl of Essex, Shakespeare, and the succession question. One of the most important documents dealing with the succession, according to Mr. Boyle, may be the fictional *Willobie His Avis*, published in 1594.

The work, according to Boyle, is about Avis’s chastity, which

Robert Brazil, an editor and print designer, has been studying the authorship question for the last 30 years and has been conducting research into the Oxford theory for over 20 years. His topic was “Analyzing Further Writings by Oxford.” Mr. Brazil discussed and read from several poems, introductions, and epistles attached to books with a de Vere connection (dating from 1580 to 1596) that were, in his opinion, almost certainly penned by the 17th Earl himself. These writings are fascinating on their own, but also display a very strong stylistic match both to extant Oxford letters and verses and to passages in the Shakespeare plays...

is assailed by five suitors. Among those who have tried and were rejected is “Henrico Willobego,” or “H.W.” In his disappointment and unrequited love he turns to his friend, W.S., for advice. Boyle pointed out that in Elizabethan times, wooing meant jockeying for succession to the throne, not a romantic quest. He said that in interpreting the poem, the only thing that makes sense is that Oxford is the author, H.W. is Henry Wriothesley, and Avis is Queen Elizabeth, though the author B.N. DeLuna in her book, *The Queen Declined: An Interpretation of ‘Willobie His Avis*, suggests that H.W. is a combination of Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Essex. Boyle pointed out that if Avis is the Queen, W.S. cannot be the actor from Stratford. This conjecture is given

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(Conference, cont. from p. 11)

some credence by the cryptic lines that end the work's final poem "ever or never, I am content."

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In his *Microcosmos* (1603) Davies wrote: "And though the stage doth staine pure gentle blood." Charlton concentrated on Davies prompting reference "Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport," and presented an anonymous Elizabethan portrait – probably representing Edward de Vere – in a most provocative kingly role, the role of Henry IV, the first Lancastrian king, a role, according to Mr. Charlton, possibly performed by Oxford in 1583.

to important Oxford-Shakespeare linkages.

While other researchers have attempted to broaden the Oxford-Shakespeare canon through wholesale appropriation of the works of other famous Elizabethan authors, Brazil took a more cautious approach, focusing on material that was either anonymous or published under single-use pseudonyms. According to Brazil, as more vetted material is carefully added to the accepted canon of writings of the 17th Earl of Oxford, the overall stylistic match to Shakespeare will be vastly improved.

Retired professor of chemistry at the University of Kansas, Albert Burgstahler, spoke on the challenge of the Stratford Monument, presenting an account of British mathematician David L. Roper's discovery and decryption of the 34-column equidistant letter sequencing (ELS) Cardano grille, which he believes is unmistakably embedded in the open cipher text of the Stratford monument inscription. The underlying message avows that the

famous poet and playwright referred to as "Shakspeare" was actually Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Because of its nature, this authentic contemporary cryptographic testimony is claimed to fulfill all the requirements proposed by eminent cryptologists William F. and Elizebeth S. Friedman for a genuine, unequivocal, rigorously verifiable encrypted message that provides an irrefutable, scientific resolution of the authorship debate.

Betsy Clark, an independent Canadian researcher who has been studying the numerological structures of 16th and 17th century English compositions for 14 years, presented a paper titled "The Numerological Structure of Four Dedications and One Title." Clark began with an explanation of her theory of the numerological methodology employed by various English authors, explaining some of the techniques of Hebrew gematria and crediting the German linguist Johannes Reuchlin with the dissemination of these techniques to the larger Christian world.

Clark then exhibited the use of sacred numbers derived from the ancient Hebrew and Greek languages and transposed into English by an examination of three dedications found in Jonson's *Volpone*, and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. One John Benson title was also examined. The final presentation claimed to constitute the numerological unraveling of the dedication of *Shake-speare's Sonnets*, revealing that the 17th Earl of Oxford was the true author of the sonnets.

Matthew Cossolotto, President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, discussed "A Posthumous Publication? Sleuthing Through *Shakespeare's Sonnets* for Authorship Clues." Cossolotto asked the crucial question: Were the Sonnets published posthumously? The presentation focused on what we know for sure about the Sonnets and what this evidence might tell us about the poet's identity. One goal of the talk was to develop a plan for making 2009 "The Year of the Sonnets," using the 400th anniversary of the Sonnets publication as a way to focus attention on the authorship issue.

Michael Egan, scholar, writer, critic, and new editor of *The Oxfordian*, spoke about "Updating the fate of *Richard II Part One*" and also discussed his editorial policy for the newsletter, opening the subject to a lively discussion. Egan thanked the group for the confidence they have shown in his integrity and commitment to truth and called for the newsletter to reflect a broadbased authorship study. Some, however, offered the opinion that the newsletter should only represent the point of view that Oxford was Shakespeare.

Independent researcher Derran Charlton spoke about John Davies (c.1565-1618), poet and writing-master of Hereford, who, in his *Scourge of Folly* (1610) Epigram 159, addressed "To our English Terence, Mr. Will. Shakespeare," wrote: "Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport. Thou had'st bin a companion for a King;" A 'writing-master' was one who taught penmanship and Davies' pupils included Prince Henry during the time that the Prince attended Magdalen College, plus members of very distinguished families, including the Pembroke, Derby, Herbert, Percy, and Egerton families.

In his *Microcosmos* (1603) Davies wrote: "And though the

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(Benedick and Beatrice, cont. from p. 1)

and Executive Secretary of the International Institute for the Advanced Study of Bardology, whose offices are located in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, Merry England, to request that work undertaken, on the sources and date of *The Tempest*, be added to the SRU 2006 program. The 2006 Conference was slated to be held in an exotic location “down under,” where the abundant sunshine and many sandy beaches provide just the right ambience for reclining academicians on conference holiday. Naturally Beatrice and I could think of nothing but joining the fun in the sun.

Elements of our study had previously been presented within the Oxfordian community, but we innocently supposed that orthodox Shakespeareans might also take an interest in our work, the results of which had significant implications for an industry that is historically committed to what we have reason to conclude was a demonstrably erroneous view of *Tempest* sources and chronology. “We have a current article of some fifteen thousand words almost ready to send out for review,” I wrote, “which will, we suspect, transform understanding of the subject by showing that Shakespeare did not depend, and in fact could not have depended, upon William Strachey’s ‘True Reportory’... Shakespeare relied on two much earlier sources, usually overlooked.”

The response was immediate, cordial, and even – the only applicable adjective – enthusiastic: “Thank you very much for your message. It would be wonderful to include your presentation in our programme,” replied Dr. Samuel Heathcliff on June 17. The coordinator requested that we send him a copy of the complete paper by July 15; on June 17 we replied, indicating that we would be happy to send a copy of our paper for review by that date.

Nothing in this correspondence with Heathcliff indicated that acceptance of our paper was contingent on any particular process, “a competitive review,” or anything of that nature – such procedures are not usual for the acceptance of conference papers, which are typically approved through submission of an abstract and with little fanfare or controversy. In fact,

opportunity for conference presentation in the humanities is typically not a terribly competitive or stressful process; many papers which might never receive the sanction of publication are routinely accepted for conference presentation, at conferences all over the globe, on the ground that the exercise affords scholars an opportunity to exchange, debate, and refine ideas in a less formal and rigorous context – to improve them, if necessary or possible, for publication. The heavy academic politics, in other words, are usually left for the publishing gauntlet and the

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anonymous peer review process.

Confident that we had made a positive contact, and that our paper – which to us seemed self-evidently “up to” any conceivable standard for presentation at a professional conference — we turned back to our work.

Having completed another round of revisions and edits, on July 12 we attempted to resume our correspondence with the SRU coordinator. This time, however, rather than a cordial invitation to join scholars down under, the ultimate

reply was a chilly brushoff. It started innocently enough; to our July 12 email, which included a hyperlink to an online version of the 12,000-word version of our article (on the Shakespeare Fellowship site), we received an automated reply: “I will be away from the SRU office... Seminar registration forms arriving from July 9-17th will be acknowledged on Monday 18th July.”

On July 25, having waited without reply for exactly a week after the promised “acknowledgement,” we decided to take matters into our own hands. Beatrice wrote to the coordinator’s boss, Dr. Top-Hat, explaining the entire history of our communication. Top-Hat himself did not reply, but on July 29 Beatrice received the first of many curious communiqués from Dr. J. Gee Joy, a Professor at a major North American research institution:

Dear Beatrice (if I may):

.....I’m sorry about the missed connections, and I’m not quite sure what’s been happening. Because the organizers of the Congress are so far-flung – I’m chair of the RSU executive, Dr. Top-Hat is down under, and Heathcliff is in England – I’ve decided to visit Stratford next month for two weeks in order to straighten out problems like these. Meantime, I’ve already written to Heathcliff himself to find out why he hasn’t responded to any of your messages or forwarded any version of your paper to me....Needless to say, I apologize for the glitch in correspondence.

You see, dear reader, Dr. Joy was in a bit of a pickle; she had been delegated the task of damage control. She had to think fast. Within less than a day, she had figured out “the problem”: “The problem with the lack of communication is that you haven’t been given the rules and regulations for participating in the Congress...” Dr. Joy then explained that our paper would have been submitted to a juried competition to determine if it was eligible for presentation at such a prestigious academic venue as Shakespeares-R-Us.

Little did we know that this was only

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(Beatrice and Benedick, cont. from p. 13)

the overture in what was destined to become an academic version of the popular New York street hustle known as three-card-monte. For the next twelve weeks Dr. Joy played fast and loose with her walnut shells, hoping that we would not notice that the pea kept appearing, under whichever shell was required to keep her marks from winning, or even understanding how the game was being played.

In response to the July 29 email, Beatrice wrote back on the same day, supplying Dr. Joy with copies of Heathcliff's initial email:

Dr. Joy was evidently acquiring invaluable experience in the fine academic art of splitting semantic hairs: "I think the problem must centre on the phrase your 'your full paper.' Heathcliff means a short paper, thirty minutes in length. I'm really sorry about the confusion."

As you can see, there was a definite acceptance rather than mention of any kind of competition. Heathcliff was also asking us to send our full paper, based on our description of it (which of course we did in July although we received no acknowledgement). I first wrote back in June asking for more info on the seminar sessions so that we could make a decision as to where we would fit in best. I also asked about the possibility of financial assistance. The rest, as you know, was silence.

Dr. Joy was evidently acquiring invaluable experience in the fine academic art of splitting semantic hairs to frighten elephants from living rooms:

I think the problem must centre on the phrase your 'your full paper.' Heathcliff means a short paper, thirty minutes in length. I'm really sorry about the confusion. But his alternative suggestion – if you can't submit a short paper within the next couple of weeks – has a lot to recommend it....

We weren't exactly sure what the reference to an "alternative suggestion" meant. The same day, Beatrice replied to Dr. Joy:

I do not think that is where the main confusion lies, although I see your point, but in any case, could you please forward a seminar registration or tell me where I could get one. Our feeling was that our topic wouldn't fit into any of the seminar categories, so we didn't keep the registration, but we'd be glad to take a second look.

By August 2, Dr. Joy replied: "Heathcliff can send you the full seminar registration form by email. Since I alerted him to the problem with your application on Friday, and heard from him immediately, I expect that you'll get the form right away."

Needless to say, we never did get a registration form from Heathcliff — nor, over the next two months, from anyone.

There followed several days of chatty emails between Beatrice and Dr. Joy, in which the latter went out of her way to explain how terribly awfully overwhelmingly busy (and flustered) she was by the pressures of organizing a conference, and Beatrice commiserated with her with stories from conferences she had helped to organize. We sent her by attachment word drafts of two of the *Tempest* papers, the one we had proposed for the conference and a sister essay, for the "contest." Joy sent them to on to the German committee member, Dr. Faustus. The results of the judging, Dr. Joy assured us, "will be circulated mid-to-late September," after she, Heathcliff and Faustus could meet at the Stratford-Upon Birthplace Trust Fund International Headquarters to judge the submissions. By August 10 we had confirmation from Dr. Faustus that technology had triumphed — the two essays had arrived. We buckled down to wait for

the results by "mid-to-late September."

On October 4, Beatrice wrote to Dr. Joy: "Benedick and I were wondering if you'd made a decision yet about papers for the WSC, as we'd heard nothing from you, and were expecting to hear at the latest by the end of September."

Joy's blithe reply was posted on the same day:

On the same day, Joy replied: "I don't know what happened with your correspondence from Stratford. Heathcliff sent the short paper results out towards the end of September. The final decisions were made after I left Stratford, when Faustus went over my suggestions, and Heathcliff hasn't sent me the list that resulted. But I do know that the mail went out, because one person sent me a question about a requested revision. I've forwarded your email to Heathcliff asking him what happened."

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Needless to say, this email did not exactly inspire us with confidence about the contest procedures. Having been told not only that the results definitely had

Then Dr. Joy proceeded to complain to us about the onerous nature of her trip to England, the long hours involved in organizing a conference, before concluding her missive with offering to be a character witness for Heathcliff: “He’s honest and without guile, and he would never deliberately avoid corresponding with you. Neither of us knew you were Oxfordians; Faustus didn’t know either. In any case, it wouldn’t have made a difference.”

We thought this was, as they say in England, a “bit much.” Anyone who knows anything about the authorship question also knows that, ninety-nine percent of the time, it makes all the difference in the world whether a person is identified by orthodox academicians as being “for us” or “agin’ us.”

been mailed out, but also that at least one of the three judges didn’t know what they were, we decided it was time to cut to the chase: “I definitely haven’t heard from him,” replied Beatrice:

Neither has Benedick. We waited

patiently to hear and made no other arrangements for the period, but at this point I can only surmise that Heathcliff has no interest in corresponding with us, as he has never done so, even when you asked him to, in any way after his initial email with its enthusiastic acceptance of our topic. I imagine he found afterwards that we were Liliputians. I’m also assuming from his lack of a response that we are not, or rather no longer, welcome to speak. Perhaps you could let us know if my assumption is incorrect, as it is rather unfair to make us wait longer. I find the entire matter concerning our correspondence with the WSC very sad. You have been very kind, and I thank you for that, but otherwise it has been, to put it mildly, an unfortunate experience.

“At least one traditional expert on *The Tempest*,” added Beatrice, “the editor of one of the latest editions, is extremely interested and rather impressed by our work, so I was hoping that it was of some interest to the academic community at large. Perhaps I was mistaken.”

By October 5, Dr. Joy replied with some good news: “I heard return email from Nick that he’d sent your letter by hard mail and electronically – he doesn’t understand why it hasn’t reached you. He’s going to send both copies again and ask for confirmation that they arrived.”

Then Dr. Joy proceeded to complain to us about the onerous nature of her trip to England, the long hours involved in organizing a conference, before concluding her missive with offering to be a character witness for Heathcliff: “He’s honest and without guile, and he would never deliberately avoid corresponding with you. Neither of us knew you were Liliputians; Faustus didn’t know either. In any case, it wouldn’t have made a difference.”

We thought this was, as they say in England, a “bit much.” Anyone who knows anything about the authorship question also knows that, ninety-nine percent of the time, it makes all the difference in the world whether a person is a Liliputian or a Brobdingnagian. But rather than get caught up in suppositions about character, or what anyone knew or didn’t know

(since the conference organizers seemed so conveniently to know almost nothing about anything almost all of the time) we stuck to the facts, which in this case – so we thought – rather eloquently contradicted Dr. Joy’s breathless enthusiasm for Heathcliff.

“There is nothing from him,” stated

“I am assuming from your answer that we are not, or at least no longer, invited to Australia,” continued Beatrice. “Please correct me if I’m wrong. We are both extremely busy people who have kept those dates clear, and we were excited at the prospect of sharing our research and listening to the research of others. I would appreciate knowing if it is no longer necessary to keep those dates free, and cannot understand why someone won’t state in plain English the decision that has clearly by now been made.”

Beatrice in her August 5 reply, “either to Benedick or to me, and yet it is after 2 p.m. in England of the second day. Perhaps you could ask him to try sending to my hotmail account.”

Beatrice resupplied Dr. Joy with email addresses for both of us, and then she dropped the other shoe: “Since neither of us has ever given Heathcliff our address – I have gone through our entire correspondence with you and with him

(Continued on p. 16)

(Benedick and Beatrice, cont. from p. 15)

[to confirm this]—nor has he ever asked for it, I am at a loss to know how he could possibly have sent either of us a letter by regular mail. In any case, no such letter has arrived.”

Funny how facts always trip up people who are working overtime to delude themselves into thinking that censorship is necessary for scholarship, to protect the “correct” ideas from the “incorrect” ones.

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After writing his, Beatrice had a few further thoughts, so the same day, before receiving a response, she added:

I spoke to you initially because I could not get a response from [Heathcliff]. I know there is no problem with my email address because I had received an enthusiastic response from him originally, plus an automated reply saying he was away from the office and would respond as soon as he returned. He did not do so. Nor did he respond when I asked him if there were any funds available. Nor did he respond when I asked him to confirm he had received our paper. Nor has he responded to your requests to communicate with us. Nor did he forward any version of our papers to you for adjudication. Nor did he resend me the seminar topics when requested he do so.

An early complaint I sent to the WSC about two and a half months ago was rerouted to you. You said you would sort the problem out. Its apparently not sorted although Nick has three

email addresses, two of mine and one of Benedick’s.

On October 7, Dr. Joy wrote in response: “I have forwarded your preferred email address to Heachliff.” Then she got

By this time, Dr. Joy’s originally effusive emails were starting to sound desperately thin and evasive. Gone was the confident chattiness and optimistic belief that if she was just nauseatingly nice enough to us, while simultaneously doing everything she could to scuttle our opportunities to find an audience for our scholarship, we would just go away and leave her alone. Her two sentence reply to Beatrice’s October 7 email read: “I’ve already asked Heathcliff for the whole list of results, not just yours, and he hasn’t compiled it. But I think in view of the bad feeling all of the mechanics have generated, you should probably plan not to come ‘Down Under.’”

down to the serious business of explaining the (wholly unofficial) results of the essay contest:

When Dr. Faustus and I went through the short papers the first time, we both admired the scholarship in yours, but felt it was geared more towards publication in a specialized journal than delivery at an international conference.

I continued to have that impression when I reread the papers, and that was the evaluation I left for Faustus in Stratford. He got there after I left, and didn’t make his judgments until well into the first week of September. Since I haven’t seen the list of acceptances, I can’t tell you what happened.

Yes, dear reader, you read that right. We have not altered any words in the quotation: our work was good enough for publication in a “specialized journal,” but not suitable for an “international conference.”

Beatrice was clearly not in a mood to mince words with Dr. Joy: “I did of course tell you,” her reply begins,

that we would be fashioning power points from the papers. We didn’t intend to give them in the ‘academic paper’ format, but as you know we forwarded them that way because we had so little time. This was partly because Heathcliff didn’t or wouldn’t correspond with us or pass anything on to you after first saying that it would be wonderful to include our presentation in your programme....since he has not replied, I would think it would be a relatively simple matter for you to ask him, since you’ve communicated with him at least twice this week, if we are still speaking at your conference. Failing that, you could ask Dr. Faustus. It appears that everyone else has known the outcome of the ‘competition’ since Professor Faustus made his decision during the first week of September. I cannot understand why his ‘judgment’ concerning the subject of our possible participation has become such a big secret that it is hidden even from us.

By this time, Dr. Joy’s originally effusive emails were starting to sound desperately thin and evasive. Gone was the confident chattiness and optimistic belief that if she was just nauseatingly nice enough to us, while simultaneously doing everything she could to scuttle our opportunities to find an audience for our scholarship, we would just go away and leave her alone. Her two sentence reply

(Continued on p. 17)

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Posted on October 9, two days after Beatrice's email, this reply revealed yet another curious wrinkle in our excellent adventure.

The results of the "contest," although mailed out to all the "contestants," both by international postal courier and by email, in late September, and then resent to us specifically by email a week later, had not yet been compiled on October 9, and were not therefore not available to the judges.

At this point Beatrice was frustrated enough, as you may imagine, that she asked me to review the entire sequence of communication and craft a synoptic response that would place a few of Dr. Joy's numerous liberties with the "simple truth miscalled simplicity" in an appropriate context:

Dear Dr. Joy:

Beatrice has forwarded me a copy of her latest communication to you, and your reply, regarding our June 17 request for a place on the conference schedule of the Shakespeares-R-Us World Congress this coming July for our two papers on the sources of *The Tempest*. Your implication that in view of the 'bad feeling' generated by the 'mechanics' of the application process Beatrice should 'probably not' attend the conference strikes me as unintentionally ironic. A review of the progression of response from your organization to our application reveals that the mechanics of bad feeling (as you call them) are entirely of your organization's construction.

I proceeded to recount, in purposefully excruciating detail, the entire sequence of events. Near the end I offered the following comparison between our experience with the surreal atmosphere of the SRU with the sober professionalism of a related organization:

One might contrast our experience

with your organization and that of the Renaissance Society of Arcadia, to which we applied in early June, shortly before contacting Dr. Heathcliff. On June 13, within two weeks of our abstract submission, we received the following reply: 'We are pleased to inform you that the 2006 RSA Program Committee has accepted your paper 'Erasmus' for presentation at the RSA annual meeting in San Francisco, 23-25 March 2006....Congratulations.' The entire process took less than three

This time we had really fallen down the rabbit hole, into the dark underworld of hard-ball academic politics, where words serve egos, not truth or even inquiry. Gone were first name salutations, chatty friendliness, and feigned ignorance: Dr. Joy stood up straight on her throne and proceeded to lecture me on just how important she and her colleagues, Dr. Faustus and Heathcliffe, really were.

weeks and required only three emails. RSA staff and organizers were courteous, professional, and direct.

In light of the contrasting difficulties we have encountered with our application to the SRU, I am requesting the following from you:

1) A list of the 'rules and regulations' of paper review for the 2006 SRU world Congress, alluded to in your July 29 letter;

2) An explanation of why Dr. Heathcliff did not know, in June, what

these rules and regulations were, and why he did not communicate them directly to us himself as soon as he became aware of the potential problem with our application;

3) An explanation of why, for almost four months, Dr. Heathcliff has failed to do his job by communicating with us using the official email address of the SRU, and has instead used you as his proxy;

4) An account of the criteria used by you and Dr. Faustus for arriving at your recommendations for papers for acceptance at the SRU conference;

5) A list of the papers reviewed by you and the full results of your deliberations; i.e. which papers have been accepted and which refused;

6) A copy of a formal statement from you and Dr. Faustus explaining the basis for your refusal to endorse our participation in the SRU Congress, if that is in fact your position, for a more substantive reason than someone's alleged but unspecified "bad feeling."

These materials, I added,

will doubtless go very to exonerate your organization from any imputation of wrongdoing which might be determined from the above facts. Alternatively, perhaps you, Dr. Faustus, and Dr. Heathcliff, could all be prevailed upon to defend the integrity and values of your organization by affirming Heathcliff's unqualified June 17 acceptance of our proposal to speak at the RSU Congress. Such a decision will not only assure your membership of the opportunity to hear and debate controversial matters in an atmosphere of informed collegiality, but will also send a message to the world that your organization actively solicits a diversity of opinion on controversial subjects, defends academic freedom, and refuses to tolerate the stifling of the free exchange of academic ideas in order to preserve an illusion of unanimity on subjects about which an informed diversity of opinion exists.

(Continued on p. 18)

(Benedick and Beatrice, cont. from p. 17)

This summative statement was copied to Dr. Top-Hat (whose assistant swiftly and courteously responded without commenting on the contents), as well as to the ubiquitous but professorially taciturn Dr. Heathcliff.

This time we had really fallen down the rabbit hole, into the dark underworld of hardball academic politics, where words serve egos – not truth, or even the spirit of inquiry. Gone were first name salutations, chatty friendliness, and the feigned ignorance: Dr. Joy stood up straight on her throne and proceeded to lecture me about just how terribly important she and her colleagues, Dr. Fausus and Heathcliffe, really were:

Mr. Benedick,

The rules and regulations for the RSU Congress are not published in a constitution: they are received by members of the organization and newsletters and other mailings during the course of the five years between Congresses... Heathcliff must have thought you were a member....i.e., he must have thought you knew the panels were already arranged and the only short papers which could still be submitted would be subject to a selection process. We usually choose about four from a submission of a couple of dozen.

Professor Faustus and I made our decision based on our professional expertise not only in Shakespeare Studies, but also in organizing these conferences. We're both senior Shakespeareans, situated in America and Germany. We've both been longtime members of the SRU executive, and we've worked to before not only to select short papers for presentation but also to edit the proceedings of the volumes that result from these congresses....

Here comes the "punchline":

In choosing papers, we use the kinds of criteria that would be used by a specialist journal in the field, and similarly, our deliberations are confi-

dential. We would never publish a list of rejections....

If you'd been a member of the RSU, you would have received the mailing Faustus and I sent out late in August which had several enclosures, including a cover letter that explained why the organization has been having so much difficulty with correspondence. Among other things, our mailing list has been out of date. What we didn't say

**The moral of our tale in academic wonderland?
A dear friend, who happens to be a regular contributor to one of the most respected news outlets in the world, commented:
"The academics involved in the authorship issue are almost all like dead fish going with the stream. You are the live ones, swimming against it. It's a Sisyphean task...but you have to try."**

is that Dr. Heathcliff has been working with an old computer which has been fizzing out....

"Fizzing out?"

Needless to say, I had not asked Dr. Joy to "publish" a list of rejections. But since she could not very well respond to what I had asked, she responded to what I had not asked. It wouldn't do to make it obvious that Beatrice and I were the only "contestants" who didn't win. As for membership, as a member in "good standing" of the American chapter of RSU, I was proof positive that the International's mailing list was not operational. But I was relieved to learn that the reason Dr. Heathcliff was in regular communica-

tion with Dr. Joy but had not been able to compose a one sentence email to Beatrice or me for three months was because his computer – the very computer responsible for compiling records of one of the largest academic conferences in the world – was "fizzing out." And here I had started to take it personally.

Beatrice and I debated at length whether there was any point in perpetuating a correspondence with someone who was writing every other day to Heathcliff still trying to pretend that the reason he could respond to us himself was because his computer – the vital link in a worldwide chain of communications for one of the largest humanities conferences in the 21st century – was broken.

Maybe, we thought, we'll do better with the SRU of Greater Arkadia, the local sibling organization of the World SRU, of which we were both members in good standing – so far as we knew. The Arkadia chapter was holding a conference during the spring of 2007. Maybe it would be receptive. Beatrice hunted up a seminar topic, "Shakespeare and Textuality," which seemed to be an appropriate venue for our paper illustrating that Richard Eden's *De Orbe Novo* – from which Shakespeare derived, among many other new world *Tempest* motifs, the peculiar name, "Setebos," for Caliban's God – was a better *Tempest* source than Strachey's "True Reportory."

The SRU has a peculiar manner of assigning participants to seminars, one that has been perfected since the days when Charles Boyle and other Oxfordians were reportedly welcomed with open arms during the 1990s. Members request to participate in various seminars, and are assigned to them on a first come, first serve basis without submitting abstracts. Only after they have been assigned to a particular seminar are they asked to forward an abstract to the seminar leaders, who are then – apparently – free to allocate places in the seminar only to those participants whose contributions are deemed acceptable, and to toss the careers and feelings of those they don't like to the dogs.

From the point of view of limiting the exchange of unauthorized ideas, the method works like a well-oiled machine.

(Continued on p. 26)

(News, cont. from p. 4)

de Ulloa and Tomson on St. Elmo's fire, a not uncommon phenomenon.

Hunter, Elze, Furness, Kittredge and Kinney are among the leading Shakespeare scholars who have been skeptical of Strachey as the source. Kittredge wrote that "Strachey's account of the wreck, for instance, is in striking contrast to what we find in *The Tempest*....The situation in *The Tempest* is utterly different" (1936). The earlier sources and considered opinions like Kittredge's must be addressed before declaring that "Malone and Luce were right" based solely on what might be plausible. I wish *Shakespeare Quarterly's* peer reviewers had considered more thoroughly the force of the alternative scenario.

This alternative scenario is made glaringly apparent in your article but only at the very end, where it is acknowledged, but only briefly, as a plausibly distinct possibility: "Events in the play and the narrative vary widely at many points, of course [of course!]; in his last solo play, Shakespeare borrowed widely and eclectically, and a thorough rummaging through English and Continental literature might uncover [has uncovered!] earlier possible sources for many, if not most, of *The Tempest's* similarities to 'True Reportory.'" And, in the next, and penultimate, paragraph: "There's much more to *The Tempest's* story line, of course, [of course!] drawn largely from European sources, old and new..." How true! This acknowledgment at the very end of the article undercuts all that precedes. At the very least, it should have been put at the beginning of the article to inform the reader of the challenge to be addressed.

The fundamental and fatal flaw in the article is that it is simply not credible that in order to write *The Tempest* the great dramatist—who read and "borrowed widely and eclectically" and whose many and varied sources and influences for all the plays have been copiously documented—would have needed Strachey to "bundle" them and provide a "basic outline."

I hope you will take these brief comments in the spirit in which they are offered—not to be difficult or contentious but as an attempt to foster fair and open discussion of the evidence. If I can expand

on any of the above, or if you have points that I should have addressed, please let me know. I look forward to having your comments.

All the best,

Richard Whalen

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PS: Ren Draya of Blackburn College and I are deep into an Oxfordian edition of *Othello*, and I have ordered a copy of your wife's book. As you might expect, we're finding many indications that Oxford, who was in Venice for several months and

probably on Cyprus (see, for example, 2.1.1 to 2.1.207), was the dramatist.

Stanley Wells: Once More Into the Breach....

Stanley Wells has engaged Oxfordians and other non-Stratfordians in a new book with a sensational cover and also in a caustic article in an entertainment industry newspaper.

The new book from the eminent scholar and chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is entitled *Is It True What They Say About Shakespeare?* It's a slim, lighthearted volume in Q&A format. The sensational, cartoonish cover shows a baffled "Shakespeare" of the First Folio portrait being pulled in a tug of war by two Elizabethans, probably Marlowe and Oxford, or maybe Bacon.

The authorship controversy gets seven of the eighty-eight short chapters. Wells dismisses the claims for Oxford and five other candidates. His two pages on Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, are on the other hand surprisingly sympathetic. He quotes from the jacket of Robin Williams' 2006 book but does not identify the excerpt as the publisher's promotional copy. Stratfordian readers of Wells' book may think he believes the countess had a significant influence on William of Stratford, which seems unlikely.

— R. Whalen

(Oxford's Muse, cont. from p. 1)

to a sub-literate terracotta-toothed imbecile with violent tendencies. Wait, other words are coming to mind. I was married to a simian, knuckle-draggin', cousin-f***in', dog-sellin', mother-lovin', trailer-dwellin', brainless amoeba on the booger-farm of the

Kent's may be a special tour-de-force, but Elizabethan verbal vitriol is available to all of us for our use. It is not difficult to find a Shakespeare "Insult Kit": a print or online means of constructing from lists of adjectives and nouns appearing in the canon a carefully crafted zinger to send an e-friend or to level at the source of your road rage, as many a beslubbering onion-eyed clotpole has been made to realize. Of course, such trifold derivatives can be lobbed by any weedy rump-fed scut. Shakespeare apparently undertook a mission to raise the mere insult to a fine art of extended railing.

bayou. (That might sound mean, but I assure you my ex-husband does not understand hyphenated references.)

Such a colorful string of invectives in dizzyingly rapid-fire delivery makes for exhilarating entertainment. We seem to be witnessing someone momentarily

possessed, given the gift of tongues and using it to spew venom. The verbal abuse strikes us as a spontaneous and unstoppable burst of long pent-up wrath, all the more impressive in that we know in the back of our minds that the sequence of insults was really crafted and memorized.

Even more impressive perhaps when we realize that such comedy moments stand in a tradition honed by Shakespeare himself. Witness Kent's undermotivated assessment of Oswald in *King Lear* as

A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mungril bitch; one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deni'st the least syllable of thy addition.

(II.ii.15-24)

But Kent himself does soon add several syllables, not forgetting to specify, when time and place serve half a moment later, that Oswald is also a "brazen-fac'd varlet" (II.ii.28) and "whoreson cullionly barber-monger" (II.ii.33).

Kent's may be a special tour-de-force, but Elizabethan verbal vitriol is available to all of us for our use. It is not difficult to find a Shakespeare "Insult Kit": a print or online means of constructing from lists of adjectives and nouns appearing in the canon a carefully crafted zinger to send an e-friend or to level at the source of your road rage, as many a beslubbering onion-eyed clotpole has been made to realize. Of course, such trifold derivatives can be lobbed by any weedy rump-fed scut. Shakespeare apparently undertook a mission to raise the mere insult to a fine art of extended railing.

If the Earl of Oxford did not already replicate Marc Antony in the social sphere, then he must have modeled himself after the Roman captain once having read

Plutarch:

He [Antony] had a noble minde, as well to punish offenders, as to reward well doers: and yet he did exceede more in geuing, then in punishing. Now for his outrageous

We know that Edward de Vere was accused of launching into fits of railing in his private life. Former servants Faunt and Wotton testify to his "raginge deameanore" in 1573. Though panicked and attempting to save his own traitorous neck, Arundel, in his sixth point of accusation against Oxford, specified his "raylinge at Francis Sowthwell for commendinge the Qwenes singeing one night." and, more generally, Arundel claims that "in raylinge of all estates he over runnes him spareinge no woman be she never so virtuous nor any man be he never so honourable, and this beast beinge never restrained from this libertie of raylinge."

manner of railing he commonly vsed, mocking and flouting of euerie man: that was remedied by it selfe. For a man might as boldly exchaunge a mock with him, & he was as well contented to be mocked, as to mock others.

(412)

We know that Edward de Vere was accused of launching into fits of railing in his private life. Former servants Faunt and Wotton testify to his “raginge deameanore” in 1573 (Nelson 96). Though panicked and attempting to save his own traitorous neck, Arundel, in his sixth point of accusation against Oxford, specified his “raylinge at Francis Sowthwell for commendinge the Qwenes singeing one night” (Nelson 207) and, more generally, Arundel claims that “in raylinge of all estates he over runnes him spareinge no woman be she never so virtuous nor any man be he never so honourable, and this beast beinge never restrained from this libertie of raylinge” (Nelson 204).

Not coincidentally, of course, “Shakespeare” appreciated the sublime dramatic beauty of a devastating rail, of vituperative abuse, as evidenced by his tendency to treat railing as a kind of talent, and one invested in characters who seem in dramatic context most favored by the playwright. In *2 Henry VI* the noble Gloucester tries to expose the base motives of those who would have him arrested for treason, but the Cardinal tells Henry, “My liege, his railing is intolerable” (III.i.172). Similarly, everyone agrees that in *King John* the Bastard is the most compelling character and his most memorable speech is that on the subject of Commodity, i.e., expedient self-interest or “Worldliness, compliance, compromise, policy, diplomacy, casuistry, expediency, opportunism” (Goddard 142).

And why rail I on this commodity?
But for because he hath not wooed me yet;
Not that I have the power to clutch my hand
When his fair angels would salute my palm,
But for my hand, as unattempted yet,
Like a poor beggar railleth on the rich.
Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail
And say there is no sin but to be rich;
And being rich, my virtue then shall be
To say there is no vice but beggary.

(II.i.587-596)

This self-conscious commitment to railing, undertaken with *faux* determination on the Bastard’s part but also with the adamant zeal with which one vows to eat more healthily or learn how to play the ukelele indicates that Shakespeare views

the practice of railing not as a sudden loss of emotional control in public but as a cultivated activity and craft.

In *Much Ado About Nothing* Benedick rails against women and marriage, and most certainly represents Shakespeare himself to some extent, as is indicated by Beatrice’s insulting spin on an assessment of his public role: “Why, he is the Prince’s jester, a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy;

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for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him” (II.i.137-142).

This certainly sounds like a summation of Oxford’s situation at Elizabeth’s (the “Prince’s”) court (Ogburn and Ogburn 483), with the “impossible slanders” being his theatrical entertainments (Clark 542). Beatrice also says that if Benedick’s wit is

“not mark’d, or not laugh’d at, [it] strikes him into melancholy, and then there’s a partridge wing sav’d, for the fool will eat no supper that night” (II.i.147-150). The assertion is nearly identical to the professional insult Malvolio levels at another “allowed fool” — Feste in *Twelfth Night*, whom Lady Olivia defends against her dour steward: “There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove” (I.v.94-96). Once again, if railing — or even simply calling someone “a time-pleaser, an affection’d ass” (II.iii.148), or Sir Christopher Hatton an “affected fribble” — is not slander, then what can it be but a sometimes impressive, delightfully cathartic, dramatically entertaining moment? And hence the free venting of the sin of wrath is forgivable. This seems to be the attitude of Lady Olivia, a high-ranking woman used to flattery and sought by suitors but spuriously committed to virginity and who on occasion lapses into the royal “we” (e.g., I.v.218). There can be little doubt it was Queen Elizabeth’s attitude, too.

Other railing characters appear throughout the canon, again always manifesting some key aspect of Shakespeare, who, for example, seems sympathetic to Timon of Athens, a character who spends the better part of his play railing against Athenians and humankind.

Your reeking villainy. Live loath’d and long,
Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
You fools of fortune, trencher friends, time’s flies,
Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-lacks!
Of man and beast the infinite malady
Crust you quite o’er!

(III.vi.93-99)

Indeed, one entire scene in the play consist of nothing but an extended curse:

Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
Obedience fail in children! slaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads! to general filths
Convert o’ the instant, green virginity,
Do ‘t in your parents’ eyes! bankrupts, hold fast;
Rather than render back, out with your knives,

(Continued on p. 22)

(Oxford's Muse. cont. from p.21)

And cut your trusters' throats! bound servants,
steal!
Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,
And pill by law. Maid, to thy master's bed;
Thy mistress is o' the brothel! Son of sixteen,
pluck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains! Piety, and fear,
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
Domestic awe, night-rest, and neighbourhood,
Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,
Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,
Decline to your confounding contraries,
And let confusion live! Plagues, incident to men,
Your potent and infectious fevers heap
On Athens, ripe for stroke! Thou cold sciatica,
Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt
As lamely as their manners. Lust and liberty
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,
And drown themselves in riot! Itches, blains,
Sow all the Athenian bosoms; and their crop
Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath,
at their society, as their friendship, may
merely poison! Nothing I'll bear from thee,
But nakedness, thou detestable town!
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!
Timon will to the woods; where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound--hear me, you good gods all--
The Athenians both within and out that wall!
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low! Amen.

(IV.i.1-41)

Thus Timon asks the gods to make him a better misanthrope, but he's doing just fine already. And what a nice final touch of pious sincerity with the "Amen"!

So don't be a gleeking beef-witted knave: proffer up a sack-spiked egg-nog toast to Edward de Vere the next time you watch Chevy Chase in National Lampoon's *Christmas Vacation* and hear this outburst:

Hey, if any of you are looking for any last-minute gift ideas for me, I have one. I'd like Frank Shirley, my boss, right here tonight. I want him brought from his happy holiday slumber over there on Melody Lane with all the other rich people and I want him brought right here with a big ribbon on his head and I wanna look him straight in the eye and wanna tell him what a cheap lying no-good rotten four-flushing low-life snake-licking dirt-eating inbred overstuffed ignorant blood-sucking dog-kissing brainless dickless hopeless heartless fat-ass bug-eyed stiff-legged spotty-lipped worm-headed

sack of monkey-sh*t he is. Hallelujah, holy sh*t. Where's the Tylenol?

Hey, if any of you are looking for any last-minute gift ideas for me, I have one. I'd like Frank Shirley, my boss, right here tonight. I want him brought from his happy holiday slumber over there on Melody Lane with all the other rich people...and I wanna look him straight in the eye and wanna tell him what a cheap lying no-good rotten four-flushing low-life snake-licking dirt-eating inbred overstuffed ignorant blood-sucking dog-kissing brainless dickless hopeless heartless fat-ass bug-eyed stiff-legged spotty-lipped worm-headed sack of monkey-sh*t he is. Hallelujah, holy sh*t. Where's the Tylenol?

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Thus Timon asks the gods to make him a better misanthrope, but he's doing just fine already. And what a nice final touch of pious sincerity with the "Amen"!

(Spenser's *E.K.*, cont. from p. 1)

the glosses for Spenser and the *Calendar*, with Harvey having been the lender or go-between in both instances. Both Harvey and de Vere had been present at the funeral of Sir Thomas after his death in August 1577, later commemorated in Harvey's Latin eulogy *Musarum Lachrymae* printed in January 1578.⁹ E. K. refers both to "Musarum" and to Harvey's better known Latin oration at Audley End in August 1578, whose Book IV was in large part an extended praise to de Vere (and Sidney, Leicester *et al*):

Harvey's lending of the unpublished manuscripts of Sir Thomas to E. K. also raises the question of how Harvey got them in the first place from Smith's widow, and why he would have handed them to E. K. The explanation which makes sense is that Harvey was seeking patronage, preferment, and publication not only for Sir Thomas and Spenser, but also for himself...

Maister Gabriel Harvey of whose special commendation, as well in Poetrie as Rhetorike and other choyce learning, we have lately had a sufficient tryall in duerse his workes, but specially in his *Musarum Lachrymae*, and his late *Gratulationum Valdinensium* which boke in the progresse at Audley in Essex, he dedicated in writing unto her Highnesse.¹⁰

Edward de Vere grew up in Sir Thomas Smith's household, under his tutelage from at least age ten to twelve,¹¹ he supported Harvey financially at Cam-

bridge at the urging of Sir Thomas' son.¹² He was residing in rooms on Broad Street near Bishopsgate in September 1578 after returning from his attendance on the Queen in her summer Progress.¹³ He had been praised along with Philip Sidney (the eventual dedicatee of *Shepherd's Calendar*) by Harvey in Book IV of *Gratulationum Valdenensium* in August 1578 at Audley End in Essex, specifically referred to in the *SK* gloss above.

De Vere's debut as a courtly poet in *Dainty Devices* in 1576 had used the initials E. O. for Earl of Ox(en)forde. What Nelson terms a "clumsy" but memorable "conceit" of de Vere's appears in both the prefatory poem to Bedingfield's translation of *Cardanus' Comforte* (1573), and in one of the *Dainty* poems, and then reappears in *Shepherd's Calendar*, nearly verbatim but with a graceful twist.¹⁴ Compare E. O.'s "For he that beats the bush the bird not gets" and "And he that beats the bush, the wished bird not gets" with Spenser's more concise "I beate the bush, the birds to them do flye." Clearly, Spenser is both echoing and altering E. O.'s lines, and de Vere himself may be one of the persons secretly represented in the *Calendar*, although there are conflicting scholarly theories as which character represents Oxford—Thenot, Willye, or Cuddy.¹⁵

In short de Vere as a courtier and Harvey/Spenser as university scholars were involved in seeking Court preferment at this time. Harvey's Audley End address to de Vere seems to set the stage for future patronage requests to de Vere, Sidney, and others. The *Shepherd's Calendar* itself is in part a patronage *tour de force*. E. K. himself says that Colin Clout, or the poet of the *Calendar* had moved from the North of England to the South (Kent) on the advice of his friend Hobbinal (Harvey) in order to seek "more preferment."¹⁶

Harvey's lending of the unpublished manuscripts of Sir Thomas to E. K. also raises the question of how Harvey got them in the first place from Smith's widow, and why he would have handed them to E. K. The explanation that makes sense is that Harvey was seeking patronage, preferment, and publication not only for Sir Thomas and Spenser, but also for himself including the "boke on government" and the *Calendar*. *De Republica Anglorum* was not

published until 1583; de Vere is clearly the leading candidate for the role of receiver and publisher of the private manuscript—as suggested by Nina Green.¹⁷ Neither Harvey nor Spenser nor their Cambridge classmate Edward Kirke¹⁸ were in any position financially to accomplish the task of printing and publishing the "boke" of Sir Thomas.

Harvey had half-seriously urged de Vere in *Gratulationem* to put away "bloodless" literary pursuits for arms and military preparations, but appears to have subsequently enlisted de Vere's aid in launching the career of Spenser as a new poet. E.K. returns the favor to his

In short de Vere as a courtier and Harvey/Spenser as university scholars were involved in seeking Court preferment at this time. Harvey's Audley End address to de Vere seems to set the stage for future patronage requests to de Vere, Sidney, and others. The *Shepherd's Calendar* itself is in part a patronage tour de force.

"very special and good friend" Harvey in the postscript to his epistle, urging Harvey to publish his own English verses "which lie hid" in "hateful darkness," probably a reference to Harvey's well-known efforts to introduce the metrics of Latin hexameters into English verse. This was a crucial role for de Vere, who patronized and encouraged many new young writers at this time while he was still in favor with Elizabeth and the English court: Thomas Bedingfield, John Lyly, Anthony Munday and Thomas Watson, among others. If this attribution of de Vere as E. K. is correct, we can add Gabriel Harvey and Edmund Spenser to the list.

Mark Anderson notes that Spenser

(Continued on p. 24)

(Spenser's E.K., cont. from p. 24)

was seeking a post as de Vere's secretary in 1578-1579¹⁸ even though he was still employed by other noble families including Leicester and Sidney/Pembroke. Richard Rambuss argues that the *Calendar* was in part written to show Spenser's worthiness for employment as a private secretary, which indeed is what occurred for Spenser in 1580 with Lord Arthur Grey in Ireland.¹⁹ Harvey's praising of nearly the entire Elizabethan court in *Gratulationum* showed his intentions of gaining patronage, but

In contrast the evidence above strongly links de Vere to Harvey in several intimate ways—personal, financial, literary—prior to the publication of the *Calendar*, and to Spenser as potential patron and publisher, friendly reader and literary defender, fellow poet and fellow Chaucerian. Spenser's October 1579 letter to Harvey quoted above is a product of his short stint in Leicester's household immediately prior to the *Calendar*'s publication in December 1579, when de Vere was very much at Court embroiled in the heated aftermath and personal challenges provoked by his notorious tennis court quarrel with Sidney...

the scandal over the publication of his *Speculum Tuscanismi* in 1580, with its attacks and satires on de Vere and others at Court, ruined his chances, at least in some circles. Yet another of de Vere's young writers and secretaries, Angel Day, author of *The English Secretary* (begun in 1580 but not published with its dedication to de Vere until 1586) outlines the qualifications

required and expected in private secretaries to Elizabethan nobility—most of all the need for extreme privacy and secrecy. All of these qualifications are on display in the interactions between Spenser, Harvey and E.K. in the *Shepherd's Calendar*.

According to Nina Green's analysis, the alternate theory of E. K. as the Cambridge classmate of Harvey and Spenser, Edward Kirke (1553-1616), has not been substantiated by scholars.²⁰ In contrast the evidence above strongly links de Vere to Harvey in several intimate ways—personal, financial, literary—prior to the publication of the *Calendar*, and to Spenser as potential patron and publisher, friendly reader and literary defender, fellow poet and fellow Chaucerian. Spenser's October 1579 letter to Harvey quoted above is a product of his short stint in Leicester's household immediately prior to the *Calendar*'s publication in December 1579, when de Vere was very much at Court embroiled in the heated aftermath and personal challenges provoked by his notorious tennis court quarrel with Sidney, which occurred months after E.K.'s epistle dated 10 April of 1579, sometime in August according to Nelson and others.²¹

There are three later pieces of evidence linking de Vere to Spenser: first the literary homage paid to the Earl of Oxford in a prefatory sonnet to the *The Faery Queen*, not published until 1590 but already in composition with parts in Harvey's hands as early as 1580. Second, Spenser's *Muioptomos* (1590) also alludes to the de Vere-Sidney tennis court quarrel of fall 1579 as having unfortunately occurred "Between two mighty ones of great estate" after being "Stirred up through wrathful nemesis."²² Finally, Spenser's (or Munday's? see below) translation of the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Axiochus*, published in 1592, contained as an addendum the January 1581 oration given by de Vere's page to Elizabeth at the tilting tourney at Whitehall,²³ in which de Vere's performance as "Knight of the Sun Tree" won top honors.²⁴

The use of the initials E. K. in Spenser's letter to Harvey dated October 15/16, 1579, prior to the registry and publication of the *Calendar* on December 5, 1579, appears to be a shorthand way to refer to the court poet and patron who is known

to both Harvey and Spenser. Elsewhere in 1580 Harvey in a letter to Spenser refers to E. K. as "alias you know who." E. K. in the context of the *Calendar* is a stratagem for keeping secret the identity of a higher ranking person who is providing the "patronage of the new poete" as the epistle clearly states.

Evidently Sir Philip Sidney only became the dedicatee of the work months after E. K. had finished his glosses and written his epistle dated in April 1579. The sequence of events and publication dates delineated above—the death and

The use of the initials E. K. in Spenser's letter to Harvey dated October 15/16 1579, prior to the registry and publication of the *Calendar* on 5 December 1579, appears to be a shorthand way to refer to a court poet and patron who is known to both Harvey and Spenser. Elsewhere in 1580 Harvey in a letter to Spenser refers to E. K. as "alias you know who."

funeral of Sir Thomas in August 1577, the publication of Harvey's *Musarum Lachrymae* in January 1578, the Audley End Progress of the Queen in August 1578 with Harvey's address of praise to de Vere and Sidney in *Gratulationum*, and E. K.'s letter dated 10th of April 1579—suggests that Harvey would have recruited de Vere, sent him the manuscripts of Sir Thomas and of Spenser and even poems by himself in the eighteen or so months from fall of 1577 to spring 1579, during which time E. K. worked on his own contributions to the *Calendar*.

Why is de Vere not signed as E. O. in the *Calendar* as he had been in the

Richard Edwards collection of poems in 1576 published as *Dainty Devices*? We agree with the view that the reasons were primarily those of political caution in the supercharged atmosphere of Elizabeth's court during the three years of the French marriage proposal involving the Duc de Alençon between 1578 to 1581, with the tennis-court quarrel of de Vere and Sidney six months later showing just how volatile the issue of Elizabeth's marital status truly was.

We owe to E. K. in his glosses to the *Calendar* the direct identification of Colin Cloute as the poem's authorial persona and Harvey as Hobbinol, as well as his acknowledgement in the epistle that the poet himself had explained to him some of the poem's private allegorical meanings. E. K. is fully engaged as a participant in the games of literary disguise in the *Calendar*, as when he wonders in his October glosse whether Cuddye is the poet himself or some other secret personage. He identifies Leicester by name as the favorite "worthy" of Elizabeth, and flatters Her Majesty as the rightful successor to the Lancastrian line via her father and grandfather, Henry VIII and Henry VII. These disguises insure that only courtly readers with private knowledge of the various persons alluded to would connect accurately the poem's characters with members of Court and Elizabethan society.

E. K. discusses the pseudonyms of Gabriel Harvey such as "Tyrannomastix" and the broad topic of hidden authorship in literature in his glosses to the September eclogue, yet he maintains the mystery of his own initials. We have several hints or suggestions to pursue. E. K. could stand for Edward Knight or Edward King; de Vere was named for King Edward VI, who had sent a gold cup to Hedingham Castle as a birthday gift for the young Earl in 1555.²⁵ As an Earl he was of much higher rank than a mere knight, but "Knight" would still be an allusion to his nobility. Nina Green suggests Edmundus Kedemon, a clever translation of Spenser's name into Greek.²⁶ Then there is the phrase, transliterated from the Greek, "kat eikasmon," which appears in the February glosses, at least a verbal and visual echo of E. K. whatever its provenance.²⁷ Finally, in the *De Republica* of Sir Thomas Smith to which

E. K. refers, there is the sentence "so in Englande the kinges eldest sonne is called *kat exochm* the prince";²⁸ one thinks of de Vere as an eldest son honored at birth by King Edward VI and favored by Elizabeth as her "cousin."

Our best candidate for explaining E. K. is the pseudonym, "Edward Knight." Harvey's phrase "alias you know who" points to a pseudonym, as do E. K.'s own words in the glosses discussing pseudonyms in literature. On 10 October 1579 "E. K. Gentleman" wrote and signed as "Ed. Knight" one of the seven prefatory poems to Anthony Munday's *Mirror of Mutability*

Celeste Turner Wright argued in her short article "Anthony Munday, 'Edward' Spenser, and E. K." that E. K. was the same Edward Knight who mysteriously wrote and published only one book, *Tryall of Truth*, registered 13 November 1579 to Edw. Knight." Wright's analysis suggestively links Anthony Munday, E.K. and the Earl of Oxford as intimates of Spenser's circle in 1579 and connects "E.K." to the literary pseudonym "Edward Knight."

dedicated to Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford. Celeste Turner Wright²⁹ argued in her short article "Anthony Munday, 'Edward' Spenser, and E. K." that E. K. was the same Edward Knight who mysteriously wrote and published only one book, *Tryall of Truth*, registered 13 November 1579 to Edw. Knight.³⁰ Wright's analysis suggestively links Anthony Munday, E.K. and the Earl of Oxford as intimates of Spenser's circle in 1579 and connects "E.K." to the literary pseudonym "Edward Knight" -- without, of course, realizing the possibility that Knight might be Oxford

himself. Wright admits in conclusion that no biographical or other details of this Edward Knight have ever been discovered. She unwittingly aids our case for de Vere as E. K. and Edward Knight by noting that Munday, newly employed in 1579 as de Vere's private secretary, worked in the print shops in the area of London where the *Calendar* was published. She supposes that Munday may have been introduced to Spenser by E.K., may have heard Spenser recite his poetry, or even seen proofs of the *Calendar* in the print shop—speculations which would explain how Munday's *Mutability* contains so many Spenserian echoes and lines and parallels despite being published two months prior to the anonymous *Calendar*—at a time when no one knew of Edmund Spenser as a poet except his private friends.

Turner describes Munday's work in 1579 and 1580 as euphuistic, noting de Vere's hiring of John Lyly as his other private secretary at this time. She quotes fulsome and flowery euphuistic passages from the *Tryall of Truth*. The strongly Calvinist even "Puritanical" tone of *Tryall* is consistent with Munday's role as a persecutor of Catholics, de Vere's swing back to the Protestant side circa 1580, and the Calvinist tracts dedicated to de Vere by his uncle Arthur Golding and others. Turner quotes lines from the *Tryall* that seem to anticipate the *Calendar* — including imagery of Elizabeth as a shepherd Queen next to God, England as a "little shepcoate" and the English people as "simple sheep." Without direct comparison, she claims to find parallels in the fourteen-line rhyming couplet poem of Ed. Knight in the preface to *Mutability* to various of the eclogues of the *Calendar*. Her stated conclusion is that the *Tryall* by Edward Knight flowed from the "same quill" which wrote the glosses to the *Calendar*, even though she cannot identify who Edward Knight really was.

I am convinced that E.K. and Edward Knight are the best explanation for these initials, which are not a big leap from E. O. (Earle of Oxenford). The coincidence of de Vere's secretary Munday publishing his first work under de Vere's patronage just two months prior to the *Calendar*'s appearance, with "E. K. Gentleman" and "E. K." appearing in the prefaces to both

works, is unlikely to be coincidental. The only person of rank in the prefatory poems to *Mutability*, dedicated to de Vere, is E. K. Gentleman, while Munday himself was still employed in the printing industry in a shop in the small area of London where these works came to press in the fall of 1579. This argues strongly for E. K. as the alias “Edward Knight” in all three works, and Munday as go-between to the print shops in his new role as de Vere’s secretary.

However I am not certain of the authorship of *Tryall of Truth*, with its heavy anti-papist Protestant propagandizing. The E.K. Gentleman of the preface to *Mutability* does mention the same “widow’s mite,” or penny offering to Jesus, as does the Edw. Knight of the preface to *Tryall*. But Edward Knight in *Tryall* takes pains to abuse great ones and persons of high rank, and speaks more in the voice of a Puritan preacher than Spenser’s E.K.

It is my hope that researchers working on Anthony Munday, Edmund Spenser, Gabriel Harvey and de Vere himself will be able to do more digging into the available evidence from the lives and writings of these men between 1577-1580, to settle the issue of E. K.’s identification and his contributions to the literary careers of Spenser and Harvey.

- 1 *Edward de Vere Newsletter*, issues 49-55 (March 1993-September 1993).
- 2 *Shepheard’s Calendar*, The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser, William Oram et al., eds., New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1989, 21.
- 3 *EDVN*, 49.
- 4 Nelson, Alan. *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*. Liverpool: The University Press, 82.
- 5 *EDVN*, 49)
- 6 SK
- 7 Oram op. cit., 33.
- 8 Oram op. cit., 33.
- 9 See Alexander Grosart, *The Works of Gabriel Harvey, D.C.L.*, AMS Press 1966 Reprint, I: XXV-XXXV.
- 10 Oram op. cit., 164.
- 11 See Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, *Shakespeare’s Tutors: The Education of Edward de Vere* based on her BA thesis to Concordia University Department of Humanities, 200. Mark Anderson, *Shakespeare By Another Name*, New York: Gotham Books, 2005, 6-11. Alan Nelson, writing from another perspective (*Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*, Liverpool: The University Press, 2003: 25-28), also acknowledges Smith’s formative influence on Oxford.
- 12 Nelson, 45.
- 13 Nelson, 182.
- 14 Oram, op. cit., 171.
- 15 For Oxford as the prototype for “Willy,” see J. Thomas Looney, *Shakespeare Identified*, London: Cecil Palmer, 1920, 338-49. Eva Turner Clarke, on the other hand, identifies Oxford with Cuddy. See her *The Satirical Comedy, Love’s Labours Lost*. New York: William Farquhar Payson, 1933, 134.
- 16 Oram op. cit., 114.
- 17 *EDVN*, 49-55.

18 Anderson, 140.

19 Rambuss, Richard. “The Secretary’s Study: The Secret Designs of the Shepheard’s Calendar,” *ELH* 59:2 (Summer, 1992), 313-335.

20 *EDVN*, 49. Green cites William Oram’s testimony (Oram, op. cit.) that the identification “goes nowhere through lack of information” (6).

21 Nelson op. cit., 195-200; Anderson, 151-52.

22 Oram, 413.

23 Nelson, 262; Anderson 170-71.

24 Anderson 170.

25 Nelson, 20.

26 *EDVN* 49.

27 Oram, 51.

28 The phrase occurs in chapter 18 of Smith’s *De Republica Anglorum* (1583). Accessed online at Constitution.Org, <http://www.constitution.org/eng/repang.htm>, March 28, 2009.

29 “Spirited, pioneering professor emerita Celeste Turner Wright” was the first tenured woman faculty member at the University of California, Davis. When she died in 1999 at the age of 93, the University remembered here as one who left “a legacy that includes the development of the campus’s humanities curriculum, a theater building named after her, a poetry contest she created and countless students who benefited from her academic fervor...”

“Few faculty colleagues,” declared UC Davis Chancellor Larry N. Vanderhoef, “have so fully expressed the history, the values, and the hopes of UC Davis.”

30 Celeste Turner Wright, ‘Anthony Munday, ‘Edward’ Spenser, and E.K.’, *PMLA* 76 (1961), 34-39.

(Benedick and Beatrice, cont. from p. 18)

Once one is assigned to a particular seminar, one is locked into the venue. If the seminar leaders then turn you down, you’re just flat out of luck. The organization, meanwhile, can wash its hands of the entire process. In this case, however, we thought we had an ace in the hole. We had been in touch with one seminar participant, Dr. Marigold Pennyfeather, – like unto her name, a scholar wise beyond booklearning – who we understood was sympathetic to our work and could be counted on to put in a good word for us in case things came to that.

As before, the official organ of what one wry Stratfordian has termed “Shakesperotics” – the science and business of studying the Bard – began with a warm welcome. This was dated October 23, 2006. By December 2, however, the seminar leaders were engaged in the administrative procedure known as the double-step shuffle.

Eventually, Beatrice was officially “warned” not to participate in the seminar. Not only were we off topic, but no one in the seminar, said the organizers, gave a damn about our topic. Later we learned that Dr. Pennyfeather, when she did not receive an advance copy of our essay along with the rest, had queried the organizers. No doubt she was told that the authors weren’t interested anymore and had decided to drop out of the seminar;

(Beatrice and Benedick, cont. from p. 26)

not until after the fact, when the censorship was complete, did we learn that she had inquired after our paper, or she learn anything about the the ring-around-rosie-rag that SRU conference organizers had employed to exhaust our valuable time and attempt to break our spirits.

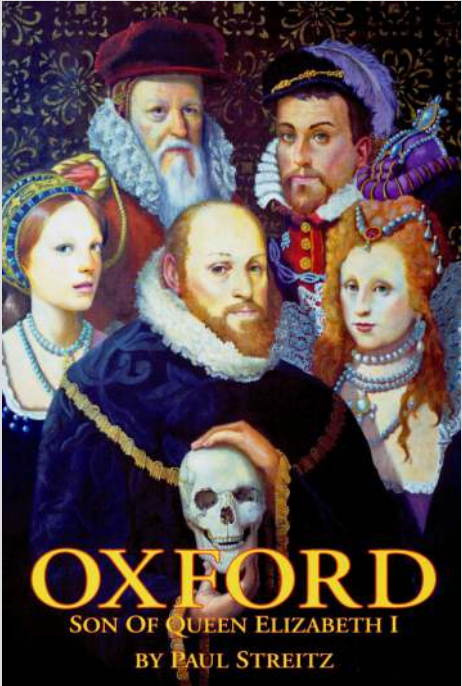
But hope springs eternal. Twice rebuffed, we decided to try the direct route to publication. Since the professionals at the Shakespeares-R-Us World Congress had assured us that our submission would be suitable for publication in a technical journal, even if it was wholly unsuited to presentation at a professional conference as prestigious as their own, we thought we would try our hand at publication. Since one of us regularly publishes with some of the most important book publishers in the world, we thought we would start our inquiry at the top, and mailed a copy to the cutting edge, *au-courant*, *Early Modern Lit-Crit Deconstructed*. The articulate professionalism of our lone reviewer furnished a breathtaking example of the comprehensive intellectual resources required to become a 21st century English Professor at a distinguished mid-Atlantic College, reviewing for a major journal:

OK, well, I'm not happy with this piece...Its not hard to discern that there's an anti-Stratfordian agenda driving this move to knock out the Strachey letter....I don't like the unspoken agenda driving it...

Criticism of *our argument*? None. It was sufficient to call us names and allude to our supposed conspiratorial purposes. Straw man 101.

The moral of our tale in academic wonderland? A dear friend (and shy journalist) commented: "You have to respect the differ-

(Continued on p. 28)



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(Letters, cont. from p. 2)

To the Editor:

That Oxford died too soon to be Shakespeare is a favorite Stratfordian argument that is popping up more often. It was used most recently in Las Vegas (of all places) by Alan Nelson and Bill Rubinstein in a debate with Mark Anderson. (*Shakespeare Matters*, fall 2008)

Both of them should know better, but it's an easy point to score in a debate, and it's a crowd pleaser. "How ridiculous for those Oxfordians!" is the response they seek from an unwary audience.

Mark Anderson responded with three excellent points of evidence showing that all the Shakespeare plays were written before 1604, when Oxford died. But it is equally important, I would suggest, to respond directly to the Stratfordian contention that the composition of a dozen Shakespeare plays can be dated after Oxford died, and so he died too soon to be Shakespeare.

There's no valid evidence that any of the dozen allegedly post-1604 plays had to have been written after 1604. No topical allusions uniquely post-1604. No necessary sources after 1604. All could have been written before 1604, even years before.

Can the Stratfordians dredge up plausible arguments? Sure. Do they survive scrutiny? No (See my article in the 2007

Oxfordian).

None of the Stratfordian arguments are valid. Not the Strachey letter for *The Tempest*, as demonstrated by Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky in the *Review of English Studies*, nor "equivocation" and the Gunpowder Plot for *Macbeth*, as I hope I demonstrated persuasively in *The Oxfordian* of 2003.

These are the two plays the Stratfordians cite most often. Evidence for post-1604 composition of the other ten is either woefully inadequate or nonexistent. Several are simply "assigned" dates after 1604. The Stratfordian dating for the dozen allegedly post-1604 plays is not supported by the evidence.

Richard F. Whalen
Truro, MA

(*Benedick and Beatrice, cont. from p. 27*)

ence between live fish and dead fish. The academics involved in the authorship issue are almost all like dead fish going with the stream. You are the live ones, swimming against it. It's a Sisyphean task trying to win points with them, not to mention getting in to the academic journals, but you have to try, and if you just keep doing good work, you're eventually going to win out."

(*Conference, cont. from p. 12*)

stage doth staine pure gentle blood." Charlton concentrated on Davies prompting reference "Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport," and presented an anonymous Elizabethan portrait – probably representing Edward de Vere – in a most provocative kingly role, the role of Henry IV, the first Lancastrian king, a role, according to Mr. Charlton, possibly performed by Oxford in 1583.

Alex McNeil, President of the Shakespeare Fellowship an Oxfordian since 1992, moderated an open discussion about the aspects of the authorship issue that trouble us the most, what we most recognize as weak areas of the Oxfordian case. He listed three things that are troubling to him: the nature of the relationship between Oxford and William Shakespeare of Stratford, the lack of an Oxfordian will upon his death in 1604, and the purpose for continuing the ruse about Shakespeare's true identity in the First Folio. McNeil also asked the group to define one additional thing they would most like to know about the Oxfordian case. Some wanted to know more about the order of the sonnets. Also mentioned were the circumstances surrounding the arrest of Southampton in 1604, the Crown signature, and whether or not Southampton had a claim to the throne.

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