



# The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

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"Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard"



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"I am for you" *Romeo and Juliet* 3.1.84

Spring 2008

## *Horestes and Hamlet*

by Earl Showerman

The recent posting of the Tudor classical interlude *Horestes* by John Pikeryng at [www.elizabethanauthors.com](http://www.elizabethanauthors.com) is worthy of special attention by readers interested in the authorship question and the origins of *Hamlet*. Robert Brazil and Barboura Flues have succeeded again in making a rare and important Renaissance source easily available to scholars. The marvelous glossary and other appendices linked to *Horestes* are superb, far more detailed than any other source you will find in print and seamlessly connected to the Shakespeare canon.

To the best of my knowledge, it was Betty Sears who many years ago suggested that *Horestes* could represent Oxfordian juvenilia. She based her impression on lectures given 50 years ago at Yale University by visiting Professor Daniel Seltzer, editor of the Malone Society reprint

of this interlude. *Horestes* was first performed at Gray's Inn in 1568, within a year of Edward de Vere's matriculation. According to Sears, Seltzer acknowledged that nothing is known about the alleged author, John Pikeryng, who received no other literary attributions or biographical attention. Betty Sears spoke in personal interviews over time.

*Horestes* mixes Greek and English pageant play motifs with a combination of pagan and Christian references. Sears reports that Seltzer also stated that *Horestes* was the first English play to use soliloquy as a device to inform the audience of the protagonist's thoughts and that he also asserted the next time this device is used was in *Hamlet*. Because of its subject, classical allusions, versification, rhetorical devices, word inventiveness, topicality, music, and the location of its first production, Sears deduced that *Horestes* could very well have been the ideal vehicle for a budding talent like the Earl of Oxford.

While most Tudor interludes were published anonymously and nothing definite is known about the alleged author, John Pikeryng (also spelled as Pikering, Pykeryng, and Pikeryng in various sources), modern editors assume that he was the same man as Sir John Puckering (1544-96) of Lincoln's Inn (1559). Puckering was not known as a playwright but served as Speaker of the House of Commons between

1584 and 1587, and Lord Keeper in Elizabeth's last years (1592-96), and was an ardent Protestant and opponent of Mary Stuart.

An alternative explanation for the name John Pikeryng has been offered by Betty Sears who has suggested that the author's name may be pseudonym by conflation of two names: Sir John Mason and Sir William Piking who were agents of William Cecil's in France charged with obtaining the latest continental editions of books during this period. Mason also received the literary dedication for Jasper Heywood's translation of Seneca's *Thyestes* (1560).

Gray's and the other Inns of Court, in addition to being law schools, were critical to the revolution of English culture in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as centers for translations of the classics and for the creation of literature. In his book, *The Inns of Court and Early English Drama* (1931), A. Wigfall Green notes the indebtedness Renaissance dramatic literature owed to these societies where students studied law, arts, history, languages, music, and mathematics. The protection from censorship afforded by association with the Inns "rendered them an ideal rendezvous for poets, dramatists, and novelists, and many of the juvenilia, as well as many of the masterpieces, of authors were conceived within the four houses" (Green 2).

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## President's Page

By Matthew Cossolotto

### Dear Society Members and Friends:

It's hard to believe my three-year term as president will come to an end at the annual meeting this October. According to the bylaws, all officers can only serve in the same position for a three-year term. Therefore, I will be stepping down as president shortly after this year's annual meeting.

Because this will be the last newsletter published before the annual meeting, I want to take this op-

portunity to say that it has been an honor serving as your president for the past one thousand days. Several noteworthy developments during this period stand out:

- Celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007 and publishing the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Anthology – *Report My Cause Aright* (many thanks to Stephanie Hughes);
- Successfully holding our second and third joint conferences with the Shakespeare Fellow-

(cont'd on p. 12)

## Greetings

The newsletter once again presents some of the more important researchers and writers of the authorship studies. Richard Whalen, for one, gives us his summer reading reports. Earl Showerman schools us in Greek mythology and Oxford's use of it, and Derran Charleton always advances the movement with work presented on his tireless research. Donald Nelson writes of an under valued discovery by Fred Schurink.

Also, presented here are some news items; one of these items reminds us of the upcoming Joint Conference of The Shakespeare Oxford Society and The Shakespeare Fellowship. Note the details below. The lineup of speakers will make you change your plans to attend or make you wish you could. We will have a report for you in the next newsletter. We probably won't report on the discussions, perhaps a debate or two, over dinner or drinks, but such gatherings add a wonderful ambience for the conference.

As always the appeal comes out for the writers, researchers, and teachers out there to share the fruits of your labors. The discoveries are on going, interesting, and exciting; and commu-

nicating them through our conferences and publications is vital.

I wish to add a thought concerning *The Oxfordian*. At the Ann Arbor Conference, I, with others, had some discussions with Dr. Michael Egan at dinner and cocktails. Among the topics was his position in the authorship issue. My impression was not and is not of him as a doctrinaire Stratfordian. Were he, I would not understand his involvement with the Oxfordian conference. He did not come to challenge as Alan Nelson does on occasion. Oxfordians have not "made the case" yet. Dr. Egan, as will we all, will be studying the work submitted, looking for more and more definitive evidence. I am certain that *The Oxfordian* will continue to publish the best articles submitted. It is, therefore, incumbent upon writers to submit the best articles.

This year ends the tenure of Matthew Cossolotto's presidency of The SOS. He has been a visionary, personable, and strong leader; we owe him our gratitude and respect.

Lew Tate, Ed.  
tate3211@bellsouth.net



## News

### Dig reveals The Theatre - Shakespeare's first playhouse

Fiona Hamilton, London Correspondent

Every year hundreds of thousands of visitors make their way to Stratford-upon-Avon and the Globe Theatre, on the Thames, to explore Shakespeare's intriguing past.

Not surprisingly, an unremarkable plot of land on New Inn Broadway, just north of London's medieval City wall, does not rate a mention on the Shakespeare tourist trail, since before now only the most fervent history buffs were aware of the site's significance in the playwright's life.

However, that history can be laid bare after an archaeological dig at the Shoreditch site uncovered the remains of The Theatre - one of the capital's first playhouses — where Shakespeare's works were first performed in the 16th century.

In what the Museum of London Archaeology has described as "one of the most exciting finds of recent years", an excavation last month uncovered a large section of what is believed to be the original brick foundations of the theatre.

#### Times Archive, 1909: Shakespeare in London

Jo Lyon, a senior archaeologist at the museum and the dig's project manager, told *The Times* yesterday that one of London's most enduring secrets had been uncovered.

"Shakespeare is such an enormous part of our cultural heritage and the way we define ourselves. It's a highly significant find," he said.

With it, a history of a significant period of Shakespeare's life has also been unearthed, for the fate of The

Theatre was closely entwined with the playwright's eventual tenure at The Globe.

The Theatre, built in 1576, was home to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company in which Shakespeare first performed as an actor before his writing career flourished.

Located outside the jurisdiction of the City of London, where puritanical magistrates and city leaders frowned on the debauchery of the theatre movement, Shakespeare and other playwrights were free to express themselves. It is believed that some of his earliest works, perhaps *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard III*, were performed there.

However, their occupancy of the site came under threat after a nasty dispute over the lease on the land in 1598.

The story has it that in the dead of night during Christmas that year the actors and playwrights dismantled The Theatre and moved it, piece by piece, to the South Bank of the Thames, where the original Globe Theatre was erected. Historians have long been aware that the open-air playhouse had stood in Shoreditch, but traces of it had proved elusive until now.

An archaeological evaluation report for the borough of Hackney concluded that the remains were of "national, if not international, importance".

Julian Bowsher, a senior archaeologist at the museum, said that there could not be 100 per cent certainty about the remains. However, he said it was very likely, because the bricks form a polygon, which documentary evidence suggests was the shape of the theatre. "It's certainly in the right area and it's certainly very important," he said.

Mr Bowsher said that the find was highly significant, not only because it added to Shakespeare's history but also because it would enable comparisons with other early playhouses.

And as Shakespeare might say, "the wheel has come full circle" — the discovery was made during excavations on the site to prepare it for the construction of a new theatre.

The Tower Theatre Company, which performs a Shakespeare work every year, will design its modern playhouse around the remains of the original. Jeff Kelly, the chairman of the company, said: "We're thrilled. It's an incredible coincidence that we want to build our theatre on the site

### *THIS IS YOUR* NEWSLETTER

The Shakespeare Oxford Society welcomes articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters, and news items of relevance to Shakespeare, Edward de Vere and the Authorship Discussion. *It is the policy of the Shakespeare Oxford Society to require assignment of copyright on any article submitted to the Newsletter.* Please contact the editor with any questions.

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of Shakespeare's first playhouse. It unveils a secret past."

The brick remains have been concreted over for the time being, while further planning works are carried out.

Jack Lohman, the director of the Museum of London, said that the find offered a "tantalising glimpse" into Shakespeare's city.

"The proposed theatre development on this special site seems a fitting way to harness the energy and spirit of a place that is so central to the story of London and Londoners."

### Oxford on NPR

On July 3rd and 4th past National Public Radio's Renee Montagne hosted a two part presentation on the Shakespeare authorship question.

In the first part she raised the issue to her listeners in seven-plus minutes, visiting the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-on-Avon, discussing with her guide the grave of Shakespeare, then she spoke with Professor Daniel Wright who heads the authorship research program at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, and with Diana Price, author of "Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography", who each made the case for doubting Shakespeare's claim. Quoting Mark Twain's 1909 work, "Is Shakespeare Dead?" Ms. Montagne concluded her case for reasonable doubt by interviewing author Stephen Greenblatt, who wrote "Will in the World" and who closed the discussion with a gentle rebuke: "It's certainly a subject that doesn't go away."

On the following broadcast, Ms. Montagne focused her last seven-plus minutes on Edward de Vere, speaking with Mark Rylance, "who has played almost every major Shakespearean role", Charles Beauclerc, once president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and a descendant of the Earl of Oxford, who noted that an Elizabethan nobleman would neither have signed

such written works nor lived ten minutes if he had dared to claim them, then she heard author Mark Anderson, who wrote "Shakespeare by Another Name", point out that the Stratford claimant never left England while Oxford traveled extensively in the exact Italian locations described in the plays, pointing out the detail of knowledge Shakespeare commanded of Italian culture.

Also clearly noted were a few of the biographical parallels between Edward de Vere and Hamlet, including his relationship with Lord Burleigh/Polonius and his private correspondence with his brother-in-law who was ambassador to Denmark, and who provided Oxford with information that the Stratfordian could not have known but which came out in the play, "Hamlet"..

She concluded her broadcast by quoting Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens who told the New York Times that he, and two fellow justices who presided over a 1987 moot court hearing of the Oxford case, had come "definitely to side with Oxford."

While the case was fair in presentation and no more conclusive than any argument, it was dramatic for all Oxfordians. More than 15 minutes of national broadcasting time are now deemed acceptable to bring this issue to a vast general audience, and it was presented without a negative view of the circumstantial case nor derision of the proponents. It indicates that a new level of civility in this discourse has been reached.

- Jaz Sherwood

## OXFORD'S LETTERS

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### **Notice to Members:**

**SOS Annual  
Meeting,  
October 10, 2008**

**The Society's annual  
meeting will be held on  
Friday October 10, 2008,  
8:30-10:15 AM,  
at the  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
in White Plains, NY.**

**For more information  
about the venue, please  
see the 2008 conference  
information on our  
website or contact the  
SOS office via phone  
(914-962-1717) or  
email  
([sosoffice@optonline.net](mailto:sosoffice@optonline.net)).**



## Cambridge University “Implications” of *Polimanteia*

By Derran Charlton

The book *Polimanteia*, dedicated to Robert Devereaux, Earl of Essex, written by “W.C.” (originally misidentified as William Covell, but now proven by the Bodleian Library to have been written by William Clerke, a Fellow of Queens’ College, Cambridge), was published in 1595 at Cambridge by the University Authorities. The second part of this work is addressed to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and to the Inns of Court and is devoted to the praising of their poets (referred to as “England’s Grandchildren.”)

A few of the poets are named in the text, whereas the names of others are printed in the margin, including the curious anomaly: “All praise worthy Lucrecia, Sweet Shak-speare, Eloquent Gaueston, Wanton Adonis, Watsons heyre”. Baconians see this as evidence that Clerke must have believed that Shak-speare attended Cambridge, Oxford, or the Inns of Court. “Why otherwise,” they speculate, “should Clerke have included Shak-speare in a work addressed to those institutions?”

Throughout the text and printed margins of *Polimanteia* appear the names of twenty-nine of “England’s Grandchildren,” (Athanasius, Clemens, Campion, D. Whitaker, D. Fulke, Humphrey Reinolds, Sidney, Spencer, Earle of Darbie, Sir Christopher Hatton, Earle of Essex, Master Campion, Britton, Percie, Willobie, Fraunce, Lodge, Master Danis of L.I., Drayton, M. Plat, D. Harvey, M. Nash, Hen. Darby, M. Ablaster, Shakspeare, Watson, Daniell, Chaucer and Lydgate). If Caius is counted as referring to Dr. John Caius of Cambridge, then the number is thirty. The majority were contemporaries of William Clerke. Also mentioned are some learned foreign or classical poets, to whom the English alumni are compared, or above whom they are exalted, plus some founders of universities.

Remarkably, and immediately opposite the marginal annotation, “All praise worthy Lucrecia, Sweet Shak-speare, Eloquent Gaueston”, in the body of *England to her Three Daughters*, Part Two, of *Polimanteia*, is printed:

dearlie beloued Delia, and fortunatelie fortunate Cleopatra;  
Oxford  
thou maist extol thy courte-deare-verse happie Daniell,  
whose sweete  
refined muse, in contracted shape, were sufficient amongst  
men, to gaine  
pardon of the sinne to Rosemond, pittie to distressed  
Cleopatra, and  
everliuing praise to her louing Delia.(22)

What could Clerke have possibly meant by his abstruse reference to “Cleopatra; Oxford”? I believe that “Oxford” was a direct reference to Oxford University, bearing in mind that Samuel Daniel (c.1563-1619) was educated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, and that he became tutor to William Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke’s son, at Wilton House. Also, in 1592 he published his sonnet sequence to *Delia*, a lady who lived by the Avon, and *The Complaint of Rosamond*, written in rhyme-royal, as was Shakespeare’s *A Louers Complaint*, and *The Rape of Lucrece*. In 1594 came his academic tragedy of *Cleopatra*, and the epic *History of the Civil Wars* (registered October, 1594).

The author Shakespeare was not only a classical scholar who often read his Latin and Greek source material in their original versions but also read some of his source material in French, Italian and Spanish. The ability to read all these not yet translated works could only have come from private tuition or extensive experience in a foreign country, or both, as neither French nor Italian nor Spanish were taught in the grammar schools or at a university.

Shakespeare’s linguistic skill in Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Spanish is not the only thing that is remarkable. Also remarkable are all the sources Shakespeare used for his vast assortment of passing remarks and allusions, with some of the sources being quite abstruse. All in all, it reveals an author who was exceptionally well-read and who clearly loved reading and researching in books and manuscripts — and who must have spent a good deal of time doing so.

To have read so widely and in such a variety of languages, both classical and modern, Shakespeare must have accessed books in libraries other than at Cambridge. The Inns of Court had better libraries, but the principal libraries containing many of the books that Shakespeare used could only have been private libraries, including that of Dr. John Dee, the Queen’s astrologer, who had the largest collection of books and manuscripts in England (almost 4,000 by 1583) at his home in Mortlake-on-Thames, and those of the nobility, such as Lord Lumley, whose collection was the second largest in the country (about 3,000 by the end of the sixteenth century), together with Lord Burghley and Sir Thomas Smythe’s vast libraries, amongst others.

The Shakespeare plays and many of the sonnets are filled with abstruse legal terminology. Moreover, this legal knowledge is not just applied to one sonnet or play, but is to be found permeating all of his works. Dawkins writes:



“The most reasonable conclusion concerning the author Shakespeare is that he was not only trained in the law, as were several Elizabethan playwrights, but was a lawyer; for, like the peculiar language of Cambridge University, such a knowledge and use of legal terms, employed with precision and aptness, is not learnt by someone without the necessary legal training and experience. Law is not like some other subjects, wherein skilled authors with a modicum of knowledge about those subjects may appear to be learned. As Lord Campbell, one of the most distinguished lawyers of the nineteenth century, who became Lord Chief Justice in 1850 and subsequently Lord Chancellor, pointedly said: ‘Let a non-professional man, however acute, presume to talk law, or to draw illustrations from legal science in discussing other subjects, and he will speedily fall into laughable absurdities’. That Shakespeare was a lawyer is the conclusion arrived at by some of the most eminent lawyers and judges. Such a conclusion is supported by Francis Meres’ analogy of Shakespeare with the eminent lawyer Seneca” (141).

Peter Dawkins, a foremost Baconian and special adviser to London’s Shakespeare Globe theatre, details *Polimanteia* in his current book *The Shakespeare Enigma* stressing the inscription on the Shakespeare Monument in which Shakespeare is likened to the renowned statesman and judge Nestor, the celebrated orator and philosopher Socrates, and the great poet and scholar Virgil (120-127). In addition there is the testimony of Francis Meres, a parson, schoolmaster and Master of Arts of both Oxford and Cambridge to Shakespeare’s great scholarship and learning in his book *Palladis Tamia*, published in 1598:

“As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagorus; so the sweete wittie soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous & honey-tongued Shakespeare. As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins so Shakespeare is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage.”

In these passages Meres likens Shakespeare to the great classical writers Plautus and Seneca for the writing of plays, and to Ovid for poetry. If one takes these analogies as being carefully chosen rather than just slowing metaphoric praise, then Meres is suggesting that the author Shakespeare was a poet whose classical knowledge and technical accomplishment in poetry was equivalent to that of the scholarly Ovid. (Meres, qtd in *The Shakespeare Enigma* 59)

Essentially, there is an abundance of evidence of university learning throughout the Shakespeare plays and poems. His plays are full of university matters, whether

the scene is in England or abroad, in France or Germany, Italy or Navarre. The playwright’s intimate acquaintance with college terms and usages would indicate that he had enjoyed the privileges of a university education. One of Shakespeare’s earliest plays, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, is crammed with abstruse scholarly references and pedantic puns in English, Latin, and French.

Shakespeare’s acquaintance with college jargon is such that in many cases it is specifically identifiable with Cambridge University. Dawkins states, “Only an alumnus Cambridge would not only know but also naturally fall over and over again into using the strange idiomatic language unique to Cambridge University; this despite which character in the plays is being portrayed as valid”. (122) For instance, “Titus: Knock at his **study**, where, they say, he keeps”. (*Titus Andronicus*, V.ii.)

‘Study’ was the Cambridge name for the closet space allotted to the individual student in the common room, while ‘where he keeps’, in the same context, means ‘where the student can be found studying’. Three further examples concern the words ‘act’, ‘commence’ and ‘proceed’:

Falstaff: “So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work, and learning is a mere hoard of gold kept by the devil, till sack commences it and sets it in **act** and use.” (*Henry IV*, IV.iii.)

Timon: Hadst thou like us, from our first swath **proceeded**  
The sweet degrees that this brief world affords  
Thy nature did **commence** in sufferance, time  
Had made thee hard in’t. (*Timon of Athens*,  
IV,iii.)

On this Professor Frederick Boas comments, “Here the misanthropist talks as if he had graduated on the banks of the Cam” (4) An ‘act’ was syllogistically a dispute required to be made by a candidate for a Cambridge degree. If the candidate was successful and admitted to the full privileges of a graduate, he was said to ‘commence’ in Arts, and the ceremony at which he was admitted was called ‘the Commencement’. If the graduate went on to a higher degree he was said to ‘proceed’. Then there is ‘scant’ and ‘sizes’ Lear: ‘Tis not in thee to **scant** my **sizes** (King Lear, II. IV.)

‘Size’, as defined by *Minsheu, Guide to Tongues* (1617) is the Cambridge term for a certain quantity of food or drink privately ordered from the buttery. Its origin lies in the old assize of bread and ale. The word and its derivatives, ‘sizar’, ‘a sizing’, and the verb ‘to size’, are unique to Cambridge and its daughter universities of Dublin, Harvard and Yale. To be ‘scanted of sizes’ was a



punishment for undergraduates, an indignity that might well stir Lear to a transport of rage.

Good writers can easily ghost the jargon of a locality for a particular character in a book or play, but it does not make sense for the same jargon to be used out of character, especially in historic characters such as the Celtic King Lear, Timon of Athens and the Roman Titus Andronicus, all of whom lived centuries before parlance specific to Cambridge University came into being. The only reasonable explanation for this is that the jargon was natural to the author, who lapsed into it over and over again.

As an example of stories and characters in the Shakespeare plays derived straight from the internal life and politics of Cambridge University, the most notable is Dr. Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The Welsh-hating, hot-tempered Frenchman, Dr. Caius, is based upon a real-life character, Dr. John Caius, Master and co-founder of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, whose intense dislike of Welshmen and choleric character exploded into a huge student controversy in the spring of 1573. The controversy caused such an upset in the University that the Queen's Lord Treasurer, Lord Burghley, was called upon to mediate. The matter was in fact soon resolved by the death of Dr. Caius, and the University quickly settled back into its quieter ways. All this Cambridge excitement took place when the actor William Shakspeare was still only nine years old, living with his parents in the obscure Warwickshire town of Stratford-upon-Avon. Moreover, in those days such a college matter was hardly known beyond Cambridge University circles.

John Caius (1510-73), thought to be the Latinized form of Kay, left England for Italy where he studied medicine and in 1541 took his M.D. at the University of Padua. He traveled widely in Italy, Germany and France, returning to England where he was appointed as one of the physicians to King Edward VI. He retained that position under Queen Mary, and on the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558 he became chief royal physician until his dismissal for Catholicism in 1568. His eminence as a physician was almost unequalled, and he was nine times President of the College of Physicians. In January 1559 he became Master of Caius College, Cambridge.

Following the death of Dr. Caius in 1573 he was succeeded as Master of Caius College by Thomas Legge (1535-1607), who wrote a Latin play on Richard III called *Richardus Tertius*. It was never published during the Elizabethan period, but it survives in nine manuscript copies. Three of these record that it was acted at St. John's College, Cambridge in 1573, 1579, and on the 17th March, 1582. Numerous parallels, which have not been found in any of Shakespeare's other known sources, exist

between *Richardus Tertius* and Shakespeare's *Richard III*. These parallels, and the facts relating to *The Return from Parnassus* Parts 1 and 2, plays performed by the students of St. John's College, Cambridge; and *Laelia*, a source of *Twelfth Night*, are fully explained in Chapter 17 of "Shake-Speare a Cambridge University Man" in Nigel Cockburn's excellent Book, *The Bacon Mystery*, published privately in 1998 by Biddles Limited, Guildford and King's Lynn.

From an Oxfordian perspective it is notable that Edward de Vere entered Queens' College, Cambridge during October 1558; the following January his name was entered on the books of St. John's College, Cambridge. That he left his mark on the University as a student of "rare learning" we have the testimony of John Brooke, himself a graduate of Trinity College:

"I understand right well that your honour hath continually, even from your tender years, bestowed your time and travail towards the attaining of (learning), as also the University of Cambridge hath acknowledged in praise thereof, as verily by right was due unto your excellent virtue and rare learning. Wherein verily Cambridge, the mother of learning and learned men, hath openly confessed: and in this her confessing made known unto all men, that your honour being learned and able to judge, as a safe harbour and defence of learning, and therefore one most fit to whose honourable patronage I might safely commit these my poor and simple labours.(Brooke 19)

Edward de Vere was later created Master of Arts in a convocation held in the public refectory of Christ Church College, Oxford, in the presence of Robert, Earl of Leicester, Chancellor of the University (Wood 215).

Alan H. Nelson, in his *Monstrous Adversary* records: "On 1 February{1567} 'Edward Vere' was admitted to Gray's Inn, Cecil's former legal establishment" (46). Thus, it is recorded that Edward de Vere received his extensive formal scholarship at Cambridge University (Queens' and St. John's Colleges) also at Oxford, (St. John's and Christ Church Colleges) and at the Inns of Court, (Gray's Inn), yet, notably Clerke does not mention Edward de Vere by name in his *Polimanteia*, but does refer to "Shak-speare", whose recorded education is a complete blank. Why not? Could this be an indication that Clerke considered that Edward de Vere — indisputably a leading writer, and patron, of the period — was, in fact, the pseudonymous "Shak-speare"?

In summation, I suggest that all of the Stratfordian speculations, the myths, thin guesses, and traditions relating to

*(Polimanteia continued on page 8)*



(*Horestes* continued from page 1)

Green identified a number of famous Elizabethans who were associated with Gray's Inn, including Sir Phillip Sidney, Sir Francis Bacon, George Chapman, and George Gascoigne, author of *Jocasta* and numerous court masques. The origin of these unique dramatic traditions of the Inns was rooted in the historic rites of the original occupants, the Knights Templars, whose Christian pageantry reflected connections to the pagan agricultural feasts. Buffoonery, burlesque, Latin heroic plays, interludes, and masques were all produced, and some were later performed before the sovereign at court. A number of scholars agree that *Horestes* was one of a group of seven dramas presented at court between Christmas and Shrovetide 1567-8 (Green 2).

The political nature of the interludes and masques performed at the Inns is well elucidated by Marie Axton in her essay "The Tudor Mask and the Elizabethan Court Drama" from *English Drama: Forms and Development* (1976). As much as any literary form, the early Elizabethan masque was a mischievous and feared political weapon; and could lead to hostility and suspicion among rival factions at court. According to Axton the tension between the crown, the Privy Council, and Parliament is reflected in a number of entertainments presented to Elizabeth early in her reign.

The Inns of Court were also instrumental in supporting the massive efforts at translating classical sources into English undertaken by Queen Elizabeth and her court. In *The First English Translators of the Classics* (1927) C.H. Conley notes a historical four-fold increase in translation efforts during Elizabeth's first decade in power. The works of Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Seneca, Lucan and Pal-in-ingenius were all receiving attention. Prominent among the classics translators associated with Gray's Inn were Arthur Golding, George Turberville, George Gascoigne, Thomas Churchyard, Arthur Hall, Jasper Heywood, Alexander Neville, and Barnabe Googe. Conley makes the

case that William Cecil seems to have provided a large portion of the patronage for the translators at Gray's. Besides Cecil, translation patrons who received dedications during these years included Queen Elizabeth, Nicholas Bacon, Robert Dudley, Edward de Vere, and Francis Russell: (Conley 39).

Axton and John Kerrigan have both suggested that English and Scottish politics of the 1560s lends a good reason to believe that *Horestes* was designed to reflect the concerns of a learned English audience regarding Mary Queen of Scots. The potential topical relevance of *Horestes* is spelled out clearly by Kerrigan in *Shakespeare and Early Modern Literature*, wherein he argues that revenge tragedy created for political purposes has been, since antiquity, psychologically and dramaturgically resourceful.

"If you look for its beginnings, what you find is another Orestian *drame de clef* about the death of princes — for most scholars now accept that in John Pykeryng's *Horestes* Elizabeth I is being urged to execute Mary Queen of Scots (Clytemnestra) for her role in the murder of her husband, Darnley (Agamemnon), by the Earl of Bothwell (Aegisthus)" (Kerrigan 232).

Eddi Jolly's *Oxfordian II* paper, "Dating *Hamlet*" makes similar points, citing Geoffrey Bullough who wrote that the play would have been topical about the time of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in February 1587. Jolly also quotes James Plumtre, who wrote in 1796, "Shakespeare had perhaps written his Tragedy of *Hamlet* to flatter the prejudices of his mistress and exhibit to the world an indirect crimination of her injured rival." (Jolly 19). Jolly's conclusion is that *Hamlet* is a highly topical play, reflecting a political awareness of the difficulties in beheading a sovereign, even one convicted of treason. "With Belleforest publishing his translation of  
(cont'd on p. 9)

(*Polimanteia* continued from page 7)

William Shakspeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, are tenuous in the extreme when compared to the factual scholarly education, the recorded foreign travel, the personality and the court experiences of Edward de Vere. Hence, the every increasing ocean-swell of belief, world-wide, that the Shakespearean plays, the sonnets, and the poems, come to life with the personality of Edward de Vere as their inspiration and explanation, and that it is to him that the honour of their authorship truly belongs.

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(*Horestes* continued from page 8)

Shakespeare's source for *Hamlet* at the same time that he attacks Burghley in another book..., one that forcefully defends the Queen of Scots, could *Hamlet* be part of this propaganda war? Hamlet himself states that the players 'are the abstract and brief chronicles of the times.' How can it be that, unlike his contemporaries, Chapman, Nashe, Marlowe, and Jonson, the man that created *Hamlet* had nothing to say about the events of his day?" (20).

*Horestes*, like *Hamlet*, demonstrates authorial inventiveness with new words and new meanings. These unusual words have been expertly identified, defined and cross-referenced by Barboura Flues in her extensive glossary, and she clearly demonstrates that an unusual number of these rare words show up later in Shakespeare. *Horestes*, also like *Hamlet*, employs a large number of classical allusions. Besides the characters from the Trojan War epics, Greeks alluded to include Socrates, Plato and his wife Xanthippe, and Pythagoras; Romans include Ovid, Nero, Livy, Juvenal, and Publius, a writer of mimes in the first century B.C. E.

An anomaly in *Horestes* suggesting a possible direct link to Aeschylus has been identified by Marie Axton in a footnote of her edition of *Horestes*. This has to do with the net Clytemnestra used in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* to trap Agamemnon where she stabs and kills him in the bath. The medieval sources of the murder of Agamemnon related by Caxton and Lydgate indicate that the king was killed in his bed by Aegisthus. However, in Pikeryng's *Horestes* Clytemnestra is described as having used "Mero's net" to trap and kill Agamemnon in the same fashion as the Greek original.

In her footnotes Axton also draws particular attention to the several allusions Pikeryng makes to the Roman satirist, Juvenal, whose 10<sup>th</sup> Satire may be the source of Hamlet's 'satirical slave' speech (2.2) where he mocks the appearance of old men's faces. Axton also identifies Erasmus as the probable source for the story Vice tells near the end of the interlude of Socrates being pitifully dumped-on by his wife's "pyspot"

Regarding general dramatic structure, *Horestes* and *Hamlet* both start with questions and the immediate appearance of revenge-driven inhuman entities. Both plays also include fatherly royal counselors prone to giving tedious advice to their departing charges. Whereas Polonius offers his blessing to Laertes with "these few precepts" (1.3), in *Horestes* King Idumeus lends his blessing to the young hero's revenge plan and cites a litany of poets (Socrates, Plato & Livy) to guide Horestes' endeavors.

Here are Sears' own words regarding the author's use of dramatic versification in *Horestes*: "For the dialogue of royalty or nobility, he uses the formal cadence of the

Fourteener (which was used in translating Ovid's *Metamorphosis*); for the country people, the rustics and soldiers, he uses a chaotic irregularity that is more like prose, but written as poetic lines. There are lines that scan as iambic pentameter and then the next might be trochaic tetrameter. It might be said that this variation is the first step in the development of using the sound and form of language as a definition of character. In other words, it is a step on the way to the variations seen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, moving from the blank verse of Theseus and Hippolyta, to the heroic couplets of the lovers, and finally the thinly-disguised fourteeners of the rustics." (interview)

Marie Axton notes how *Horestes* has an unusual and delightful surprise in its four songs, which were written to be sung to popular tunes of the day. A song begins the third, sixth, and eighth scenes; and interrupts the tenth. "The most outrageous of the songs is a duet between Egistus and Clytemnestra; it is sung to the tune which everyone in the audience would associate with the accession of Queen Elizabeth, recalling words which celebrated her victory over the menace of Rome:" (Axton 26-7). These songs are included in the recently released CD by Mignarda, *My Lord of Oxenford's Maske*, which has received a number of superb reviews. The recording may be ordered at [www.mignarda.com](http://www.mignarda.com) or through Amazon.

These observations summarize the fascinating story behind *Horestes* and its myriad connections to *Hamlet* which I originally presented at the Ashland Authorship conference in 2005. *Horestes* is quite possibly a *proto-Hamlet*, as Betty Sears brilliantly deduced, a revenge tragicomedy interlude that was the product of a youthful, talented, irreverent, musically-inclined and politically-connected playwright. Because of the insights and dedication of Betty Sears, the excellent editing support of Marie Axton and Barboura Flues, the musical talents of Mignarda, and web master Robert Brazil, scholars may now avail themselves of this historically important source.

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## Schurink's Discovery of a Century

Donald Frederick Nelson

In the summer issue of 2006 of *Shakespeare Matters* the editor, Roger Stritmatter, reported a “startling new development” in his regular column, “From a Never Writer.... News.” Thanking Thomas Reedy for bringing it to his attention, Stritmatter described a discovery by Fred Schurink of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in Thomas Vicars' manual of rhetoric(4). This discovery, which I believe is one of the most important discoveries ever made in the Shake-speare authorship debate, has not garnered the attention it deserves, perhaps because of the Stratfordians' rebuttal. I wish to analyze the discovery here, emphasize its importance, and rebut the Stratfordians' rebuttal.

Schurink's discovery, published in *Notes and Queries* in March 2006, concerned the second and third editions of Vicars' manual of rhetoric that has a combined Greek and Latin name, *Χειραγωγια: Manuductio ad artem rhetoricam*. He found its second edition of 1624 gave a list of outstanding English poets, Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, and George Wither but omitted William Shakespeare entirely. He found the manual's third edition of 1628 corrected this omission with a peculiar new sentence inserted after that list. It reads (in Schurink's translation from the Latin), “To these I believe should be added that famous poet who takes his name from `shaking' and `spear,' John Davies, and my namesake, the pious and learned poet John Vicars.” In short, Schurink found a previously unnoticed reference to Shakespeare but in a format seeming to imply the name was a made-up or pen name (74-76).

Let's consider the omission of Shakespeare from the list in the second edition first. Usually explaining an omission is entirely speculative but not here. It is clear that Vicars did not omit him because he regarded Shakespeare as inferior to Chaucer and the others, because he called him a “famous poet” in the later edition. Also, from the later edition, we can see that he did not wish to refer to the author simply as “William Shakespeare,” the full-name format of the other names in the list, or simply as “Shakespeare,” or even as “Shake-speare,” a hyphenated name form frequently used to indicate a made-up name. Vicars clearly did want to use the proper name of the London actor. It is a natural, even demanded, surmise that Vicars in 1624 had not yet thought of a way of recognizing the author of the Shakespeare canon without pointing credit at the actor Shakespeare, who he apparently knew was not the author. Further, it is apparent that Vicars either did not know the true identity of the author of the works of Shakespeare or felt constrained not to reveal it.

By the third edition in 1628, Vicars had thought of a way of recognizing the great works of Shakespeare without giving credit to the wrong man. By referring to the name by its parts, he indicated — even more clearly than by simple hyphenation — that he knew “Shake-speare” was a made-up name, that the man masquerading under that name was a front man, and that the real author was not generally known. This is strong, recorded evidence by a literary man of Shakespeare's time that he knew the actor and theater part owner Shakespeare was getting undeserved credit for writing the works of Shakespeare.

How does Schurink, who appears to be a traditionalist in the authorship question, interpret his two discoveries? He believes that the publication of the 1623 *First Folio* appeared too late in that year to have influenced Vicars to include Shakespeare (in some form) in his 1624 second edition. Apparently Schurink thinks that Shakespeare was poorly known or regarded before the *First Folio* publication. This ignores the popularity of his long poems of the 1590s, *Venus and Adonis*, which went through nine printings, and *Lucrece*, which went through six printings. It also ignores that roughly half of Shakespeare's plays had been published individually prior to the *First Folio* and that *Shake-speare's Sonnets* had been in print for almost two decades. And finally it ignores Francis Meres, who in 1598 had written in his book, *Palladis Tamia*, that “Shakespeare among the English is most excellent in both types [comedy and tragedy] for the stage.”

How does Schurink interpret the peculiar reference to Shakespeare in the 1628 third edition? He simply dismisses it as “Vicars' fondness for wordplay,” ignoring how inappropriate and even impolite such expression is in serious discourse about a “famous poet.”

Stratfordians immediately recognized how damaging this historical evidence is and launched an attack, saying Schurink's translation was defective. They contend that the Latin verb used, “habet,” should be translated in its usual simplest meaning, “has,” not “takes,” thus diminishing the implication of an adopted name. We all know that common verbs have many nuances and can not be translated with “a-one-word-fits-all-translations” approach, but let's not fall into the trap of contesting their translation as if it were the essential issue of the passage. It is not. Put “has” in place of “takes” in the translated sentence above and ignore the awkward English. We still have a literary man of Shakespeare's time giving a historical list of outstanding English poets by their full proper names except for one listed only by parsing his family name into its parts. Why



would a literary person write such a very peculiar thing? *Only if he had an important point to make that could not be made in any other way.* It is clear he is not referring to a real person because he has referred to each of them by their full proper names — not by the roots used to construct the family name. The only point Vicars can be making is that “Shake-speare” is a name made up from its parts, a pen name. Of course, this means that the actor and theater part owner, William Shakespeare, was simply a front man for the real author (Veal online).

The peculiarity of Vicars’ listing in 1628 can perhaps be seen more clearly if we take it out of the context of the Shakespeare authorship controversy. Can you imagine an author of a serious book on rhetoric writing two centuries later a sentence such as, “Among the great English poets of the late Georgian age are Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the man who has/takes his name from the “worth” of his “words,” Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats”? Of course not. There is no reason in such a context to be making a pun (and note, there’s no real pun in the Shakespeare case). Such a reference to William Wordsworth in a serious work is not just inappropriate, it’s insulting to him to play upon his name. There is no reason whatsoever to refer to him in such an irrelevant and irreverent manner. He was a real, known, respected poet. If he were referred to in that manner, there would have had to have been a very special and important reason for such an elliptic reference to him.

There was, of course, no reason for that. Thus, for a serious writer, such as Vicars, to have used such an elliptic construction concerning Shakespeare clearly shows that he had an *unusual and demanding* reason to avoid using the full proper name and instead to give only its roots. His message: *Shakespeare is a pen name.* Of course, the appropriateness of “Shake-speare” as a pen name for Edward de Vere has been given many times and his need for a cover or front man occurred about the time that the man who had arrived in London with the similar name, Shakspeare, was becoming described as a “Shakescene” in the London theater.

We conclude that Vicars by his handling of the name Shakespeare in the two editions of his manual gives us printed, contemporaneous, historical evidence that Shake-speare was a pen name. We believe this is the strongest evidence for this so far discovered. We believe the case for Shakspeare of Stratford upon Avon being an author is dead.

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(President's Page continued from page 2)

ship (in 2006 and 2007) and moving forward with planning the fourth joint conference to be held in White Plains, NY, October 9-12, 2008;

- Moving our office and extensive collection of books from Silver Spring, MD, to Yorktown Heights, NY (special thanks to Virginia Hyde);
- Launching a "Recruit-a-Member" program in which current members can recruit friends and relatives to join the Society at half price for the first year;
- Updating the website (kudos to Richard Smiley) and fine-tuning the Society's mission statement and approving a short, easily remembered tagline to convey our purpose — "Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard." (Please see my President's Page in the previous newsletter for more about our mission);
- Publishing the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Oxfordian* and appointing Professor Michael Egan to succeed Stephanie Hughes as editor — after her remarkable ten-year stint as founding editor of our flagship scholarly journal;
- Forming a youth outreach task force with the participation of an impressive young scholar, Allegra Krasznekewicz. Please see my previous President's Page for a bit more on this task force. Much more work is needed in this effort; and
- Embarking on several still-nascent initiatives including publishing a series of Hot Topics pamphlets; more aggressive media/PR outreach; creating a development committee to explore avenues for foundation/large donor support; and developing an Oxfordian/Authorship Speakers Bureau. Much more needs to be done in all of these areas. I encourage all members to volunteer to help!

## 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS*

One new project I'm especially excited about involves planning a series of activities during 2009 for what I'm calling "The Year of the Sonnets" — activities designed to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1609 publication of *SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS* with an emphasis on highlighting the authorship implications of that publication. The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary offers us an excellent PR opportunity for calling attention to the evidence in the Sonnets that tends to undermine the Stratford theory and bolster the case for Oxford's authorship.

### Reminder: Annual Meeting and Annual Conference, October 9-12, 2008

Just a quick reminder that our annual meeting will take place during the upcoming annual conference in White

Plains, NY, October 9-12, 2008. It would be terrific to have a really big turnout of Society members this October. Please visit the Society's website or call the office for registration information and other details. Hope to see you in White Plains!

### National Public Radio Series on the Shakespeare Authorship Issue

If you have not yet read or heard the excellent NPR stories about the Shakespeare authorship question (July 3 2008) and the case for Oxford (July 4 2008), please visit this page on the NPR website.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92236768>

### Excellent Website for Shakespeare Research

Visit [www.shakespeareswords.com](http://www.shakespeareswords.com). You can conduct searches for words and phrases in all of the Shakespeare works. Very useful resource.

I'd like to say a word of thanks to all Society members and to my fellow members of the Board of Trustees for their support over the past three years. Although I must step down as president, I do plan to continue to serve on the Board until the end of my current term in 2009.

Finally, I'd like to end my last President's Page column with one wish: to see even more members of the Society become actively involved in the various committees and other activities of the Society. Please contact me or other members of the Board to express your interest in volunteering. This is your Society and we need your help as we push ahead in our ongoing mission of researching and honoring the true Bard.

Sincerely,

Matthew Cossolotto

July 2008

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## Book Reviews

### *Columbia Professor Writing a Book-Length Study Of the Authorship Issue*

By Richard F. Whalen

What could be the most authoritative and influential analysis of the Shakespeare authorship controversy by a life-long Stratfordian is being written by a Columbia University professor who is a best-selling Shakespeare scholar.

Whether the book—the first full analysis by a Shakespeare establishment professor—will treat the authorship issue fairly is something else. So far, the signals are mixed.

The Columbia professor is James Shapiro. The punning title of his book is *Contested Will: the Shakespeare Authorship Controversy*, and he has a contract with Simon & Schuster to publish it in 2010.

Shapiro is the author of one of the most popular Stratfordian books in recent years, *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare, 1599*, published by HarperCollins in 2005. His 1995 book on Shakespeare and the Jews also got excellent notices.

Oxfordians can hope that Shapiro is striving to be scrupulously accurate and reasonably fair and balanced in his assessment of the authorship controversy. His book has been getting quite a bit of advance publicity, and in his statements he seems to be trying to convey a commitment to scholarly integrity while not betraying his ardently Stratfordian colleagues.

Most recently, Shapiro scoffed at anti-Stratfordians as conspiracy theorists. In her May 5 article on Mark Rylance in *The New Yorker*, Cynthia Zarin used Shapiro as a foil to contravene Rylance's doubts about the Stratford man as Shakespeare. Twice, Shapiro invoked what he no doubt considers the implausible conspiracy argument.

“There are also people who think the attack on the Twin Towers was a U.S.-government conspiracy,” he told her. And again, “It’s cool, sometimes, to think there’s a conspiracy.” But if he told her who was conspiring against whom, she did not report it.

Many Oxfordians, however, consider that a conspiracy allegedly required to hide Oxford’s authorship to be a straw-man argument set up by Stratfordians to be easily knocked down in their attack on the Oxfordian proposition.

As it happens, Zarin received her M.F.A. from Columbia, where Shapiro is full professor, and now is an adjunct professor in the Columbia School of Journalism, a post-graduate program. Her article on Rylance was sub-titled, “A Shakespearean maverick comes to Broadway.” Rylance, the first artistic director of the Globe Theater despite his skepticism, got rave reviews at the Broadway opening of *Boeing-Boeing* in May.

Shapiro took a different tack in a wide-ranging interview in *The Shakespeare Newsletter* (fall 2007, issued March 2008). He said that in all his writing projects: “I try to see things from as many perspectives as possible.” In answer to a general question about writers who should be “re-discovered,” Shapiro said:

There’s a great deal out there—much of it from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, gathering dust on library shelves or in used-book stores that is worth a second look. In my current work on the authorship controversy, for example, I’ve taken a good deal of pleasure reading Delia Bacon (*The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded*, Ticknor and Fields, 1857) and J.T. Looney (“*Shakespeare Identified in*

*Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, Cecil Palmer, 1920)—advocates, respectively, of Francis Bacon’s and the Earl of Oxford’s claims—not because I accept their conclusions but because these works tell me a great deal that I otherwise don’t know about how Shakespeare scholarship didn’t begin in 1960 (sic), and we miss out on a lot by not going back to older, ‘outdated’ work.

Why 1960? Perhaps Shapiro meant that Shakespeare authorship scholarship didn’t begin in 1960 but either mis-spoke or was mis-heard by the interviewer. Also, Shapiro probably knows that Delia Bacon was not a Baconian, as the term is usually understood. She put Sir Walter Raleigh at the head of a literary circle that influenced Sir Francis Bacon, the earl of Oxford and other writers to produce the Shakespeare plays and poems.

The interviewer was Michael Jenson, a freelance writer and contributing editor to *The Shakespeare Newsletter*. The tri-annual newsletter from Iona College goes to about 2,000 subscribers, most of them Shakespeare professors.

Two years ago, Shapiro was interviewed by the London *Sunday Times*. He had just won a literary prize of 30,000 pounds for his Shakespeare-in-1599 book. Disarmingly, he said in that interview, “At school, I hated Shakespeare.”

At Columbia College, he says, he “did an English degree but avoided Shakespeare and certainly wasn’t a brilliant student.” At the University of Chicago, his mentor was David Bevington, editor of the HarperCollins Longman collected works of Shakespeare. As a student of Bevington,



Shapiro received his Ph.D. from Chicago in 1982. Bevington has debated Oxfordians twice in public forums, Felicia Londre of the University of Missouri and myself.

Shapiro told the *Sunday Times* reporter that "people I respect are fascinated by this. Sigmund Freud and Henry James both believed it was someone else." The reporter wrote that Shapiro "intends to examine why so many people do not believe that Shakespeare wrote, well, Shakespeare." The interview continued:

Americans, Shapiro avers, are suckers for any conspiracy theory, while we [the British] are driven by snobbery to believe only an aristocrat could have an ear for such beauty. This Anglo attitude "diminishes the genius" because it doubts Shakespeare's imagination. He admits that this populist project alarms academics, who fear a Da Vinci Code style thriller., "My friends tell me I am going over to the dark side," he laughs, "but I doubt that I am going to change my mind (about Shakespeare's identity.)"

Perhaps his research might lead Shapiro to change his mind, or at least modify it as he examines the evidence and especially the testimony of all the writers, lawyers, actors and professors who have shared Rylance's skepticism and who in many cases have been persuaded by the evidence for Oxford as the true author. In any case, his book may well help to make the Shakespeare authorship controversy a legitimate subject for study and debate more widely in academia. And if it's as successful as his Shakespeare-in-1599 book, it could help raise awareness of the controversy in the general, reading public.

*Interred With Their Bones* by Jennifer Lee Carrell. New York: Dutton, 2007;

London: Little, Brown, 2008.

*Chasing Shakespeares* by Sarah Smith. New York: Simon & Schuster; 2003.

By Richard F. Whalen

Two first-rate suspense novels are plunging hundreds of thousands of readers into the Shakespeare authorship controversy and the case for the earl of Oxford as the true author.

Blend the gripping suspense and plot twists of *The Da Vinci Code* with the bold embrace of the Shakespeare authorship issue and the case for Oxford and you have the best-selling novel *Interred With Their Bones* by Jennifer Lee Carrell, a Harvard Ph.D. who lectured there on Shakespeare.

Merge a literary detective story like A. S. Byatt's *Possession* with the evidence for Oxford as the true author and you have the best-selling novel *Chasing Shakespeares* by Sarah Smith, also a Harvard Ph.D. in English literature.

And their Harvard doctorate degrees are only the beginning of the unusual parallels.

Carrell's book got off to a fast start last fall with a first printing in the US of 100,000 copies. In January, it was published as *The Shakespeare Secret* in London, where it climbed to fifth place on the *Sunday Times* list of best selling books.

It's an ultra-clever, super-fast-paced book with six murders and a sensational suicide of characters all racing to follow Shakespearean clues, thwart the others and be the first to find the lost Shakespeare play *Cardenio*. Each murder mirrors a murder in Shakespeare. The heroine, a Shakespeare scholar and theater director, survives several murderous assaults, one of them in the stacks in the Widener library at Harvard.

The reconstructed Globe Theatre is set afire, copies of the First Folio are stolen, and cryptography enters

when the heroine suggests a new and ingenious interpretation of the Baconians' "46" clue in the Book of Psalms. Clue: It involves William Stanley, sixth earl of Derby; Mary Sidney Herbert, countess of Pembroke; and Sir Francis Bacon. (As it happens, the last chapter in Carrell's book is Act Five, which is composed solely of chapter forty-six. Coincidence? Not likely.)

At the same time, Carrell uses every opportunity to lay out the arguments against William of Stratford as the author and for the other contenders, including especially Oxford. She has done her homework, reading all the authorship literature, which she handles quite well, and visiting all the settings for her novel, from London to Spain to the Widener library, to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC and finally to a bat-infested cave in the Southwest, a spelunkers cave strewn with human skeletons.

Carrell is the second Harvard Ph.D. in four years to produce a best-selling suspense novel on the authorship issue. Sarah Smith of Brookline MA was the first with *Chasing Shakespeares* from Simon & Schuster in 2003. Both went to Marjorie Garber's lectures on Shakespeare at Harvard. Garber gives Oxfordian books unusual prominence in the bibliography of *Shakespeare After All* (2004). In her Author's Note, Carrell says that "more than anyone else, Marge Garber has shaped the way I think about Shakespeare on the page."

And there are more parallels between the two books.

Both use as settings universities in Boston (Harvard and Northeastern), London and Stratford-on-Avon. Carrell's book centers on the dangerous search for the manuscript of *Cardenio*. (As it happens, *Cardenio*, despite being lost, was performed at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge this spring. The imaginary script was co-authored by Stephen Greenblatt of



Harvard, whose latest book was the imagined biography of his Shakespeare of Stratford, *Will in the World*. When the play text or the biographical facts are missing, apparently it's all right to make it all up.)

Sarah Smith's book centers on the dangers of authenticating a manuscript letter by William of Stratford that says he was not Shakespeare. The letter and the *Cardenio* manuscript would be worth millions of dollars. Both involve manuscript letters that would deal disastrous blows to the reputations of distinguished Stratfordian scholars, who stop at nothing to thwart the protagonists. Both explore the drives for fame, power and wealth in the motives of professional Stratfordians and to a lesser extent the dedicated anti-Stratfordians and Oxfordians.

And both novels were reviewed in the Sunday *New York Times Book Review*.

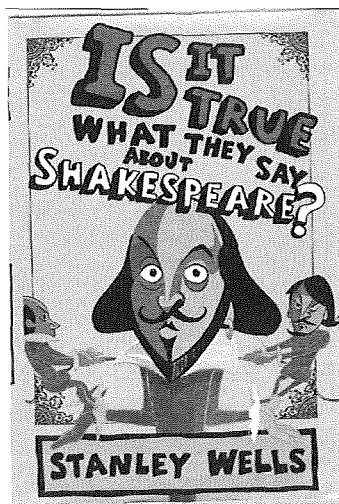
And both Carrell and Smith are Red Sox fans.

Smith's novel, much less violent, is a literary detective story about Joe Roper, a struggling graduate student at Northeastern University who finds a letter in a box of old papers but has his doubts, and Posy Gould, a rich, glamorous, California "valley girl" and Harvard graduate student who has no doubts that Oxford wrote Shakespeare. A manuscript expert in London who may or may not have pulled a switcheroo is their undoing.

The *Boston Globe* gave *Chasing Shakespeares* a long review, calling it a "smart sexy, modern-day mystery reminiscent of A. S. Byatt's *Possession*. The reviewer asked, "Who really wrote Shakespeare's plays?" and noted that "the debate has raged (albeit quietly) in the halls of academia for decades. Now, it comes to life in the able hands of Brookline-based Sarah Smith." Her book was a bestseller in New England for several months, and the publisher followed with a soft cover edition.

Earlier, Smith had written three historical novels that also became bestsellers. Two of them were named Notable Books of the Year by *The New York Times*. Her article on Oxford (not Anthony Munday) as the author of "The Paine of Pleasure," was published in "The Oxfordian" in 2002.

Thanks to two Ph.D. authors from Harvard University, several hundred thousand readers, many of whom probably know little or nothing about the Shakespeare authorship controversy, are experiencing a reasonably accurate and balanced emersion in the issue and the evidence for Oxford as the true author of the works of Shakespeare.



*This cover depicting the authorship controversy is the first for a Stratfordian professor's book.*

*The two men are in a tug of war behind the Stratford man, or perhaps they are pulling him in opposite directions. Or both. Apparently, the men in the tug of war are Marlowe on the right and Oxford or Bacon on the left.*

***Is It True What They Say About Shakespeare?*** by Stanley Wells.

Ebington, UK: Long Barn Books, n.d., ca. 2008

By Richard F. Whalen

Heavyweight scholar Stanley Wells has introduced Shakespeare Lite to the marketplace, and it's his first book that includes the Shakespeare authorship controversy at some length, even on the cover, a bold cartoon.

Wells has long been one of the top Stratfordian scholars. He is professor emeritus at the University of Birmingham, editor of the complete plays and poems, and chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. His purpose with this ultra-Lite book is to "examine some of the principal current beliefs, myths and legends... in the attempt to distinguish between fact, reasonable conjecture, speculation and pure fiction."

The authorship controversy gets seven of the eighty-eight chapters in this slim volume, which is aimed at the common reader. Like all the chapters, the seven are very short, just one to three pages. (His "Short Life of Shakespeare," the Stratfordian, is twelve pages.)

No surprise, for Wells the Oxfordian challenge to Stratfordians does not meet his criteria for "fact, reasonable conjecture."

Each chapter poses a question, discusses the evidence and arguments very briefly and concludes with a "Verdict." For example, "Is it true..."

That he was born in Shakespeare's Birthplace? Verdict: Probably true.

That he smoked cannabis? Pure fiction.

That he could read/speak French? True.

That he wrote a poem called "Shall I Die"? Perfectly possible.

That he portrayed himself as Hamlet? There may be a grain of truth in it.

That he borrowed most of his plots? Not really true.

That you can visit Shakespeare's Birthplace without leaving Japan? True (if you don't mind a reconstruction).

That the earl of Oxford wrote the plays? No, not true.

"Is there any reason to believe," Wells asks, that his Shakespeare of Stratford "didn't write the plays attributed to him?" His answer is crisp: "Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare." And he invokes what he calls "the overwhelming evidence from his own time that a man called William



Shakespeare who came from Stratford-upon-Avon wrote the plays and poems for which he is famous.” He lists more than a dozen writers who “referred to him by name.” (Of course, they were referring to the poet-playwright of London without identifying him as the man from Stratford, whose name was spelled Shakspeare there.) He also cites the Stratford monument inscription and the First Folio prefatory matter, which Oxfordians have shown to be weak and ambiguous.

Then he asks whether it’s true that the Stratford man could not have been well educated enough to have written the plays and poems. “Not true,” is his verdict, after mentioning the “excellent” educational system. “There is nothing in his plays or poems,” says Wells, “that could not have been written by a former grammar school boy who carried on reading after he left school.”

Author of more than a dozen major works on Shakespeare, Wells of late has been giving more attention to the authorship issue, and these assertions are probably his first line of defense for the general public against the Oxfordians and other non-Stratfordians.

He devotes six chapters (nine pages) to the claims for Marlowe, Bacon, Neville, Rutland, Mary Sidney and Oxford

as the true author. His two pages on Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, as proposed by Robin Williams in her book *Sweet Swan of Avon*, are astonishingly sympathetic. He cites Mary Sidney’s literary achievements and ends with a long excerpt from the jacket of Williams’ book, but without identifying it as the jacket blurb. The blurb says Williams intends “to provide enough documented evidence to open the inquiry into this intriguing—and entirely plausible—possibility...by providing overwhelming documented evidence connecting Mary Sidney to the Shakespeare canon.”

But is it true that she wrote the works of Shakespeare? “Of course not!,” is Wells’ verdict.

This sympathetic but at the same time dismissive treatment of claims for Sidney suggests that Wells believes she had a profound influence on the Shakespeare plays and poems. If that is truly his considered judgment, it’s quite incredible that he would believe that the commoner Will Shakspeare could have been a silent partner of Lady Mary Sidney and her literary circle of aristocrats. For Oxfordians, it’s much more credible that the countess may have had an important influence on the earl of Oxford, whose plays in

the First Folio were dedicated to her two sons, one of whom was Oxford’s son-in-law.

Dismissing Oxford as Shakespeare, Wells says that he would have been too busy as a courtier and traveler to do all the writing, and that “he left around ten masterpieces unperformed [emphasis added] when he died...to be printed over the next nine years under a false name.” Noteworthy is the fact that he says “unperformed,” when “unwritten” is the usual Stratfordian line. Thus, implicitly he accepts that it is not impossible that the ten plays were written before 1604, when Oxford died. Wells may not have intended that implication, but that is what he wrote.

And to use the pejorative “false name” instead of “pseudonym” betrays an unfair bias that also denigrates Mark Twain, George Eliot and other great writers who wrote under pen names.

The sensational front cover of the book depicts the “Shakespeare” of the First Folio but with a baffled expression. He’s being pulled in opposite directions, perhaps by Marlowe on one side and by Bacon or Oxford on the other. Hands outstretched before him, he seems to be saying, “I dunno.”

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Here is a thought for the Newsletter:

I was delighted to see Katherine Chiljan’s reference, in her article “Complaints about A Lover’s Complaint” in the Winter 2008 Newsletter, to “Orchards” as a sexual pun in line 171 of the poem. This pun appears, along with others, in *Julius Caesar* in Anthony’s speech about Caesar’s will:

Anthony. Moreover, he hath left  
you all his WALKS,  
His PRIVATE ARBOURS and  
NEW-PLANTED ORCHARDS,  
On this side Tiber (Thames  
Southwark  
red-light district); he hath left them  
you,  
And to your heirs FOR EVER(!);  
COMMOM PLEASURES,  
To walk abroad and RECREATE  
yourselves.

Here was a Caesar! WHEN  
COMES SUCH ANOTHER,  
(E.VER)?  
(Never, Never, Never, Never, Never)

Then there is LUPERCAL and  
TOUCH Calpernia. How about another  
look at thisplay from a different  
angle!

Pidge Sexton  
[pidge4@mindspring.com](mailto:pidge4@mindspring.com)



## The Ending of Oxford's *Othello*

Michael Delahoyde, Ph.D., Washington State University

After Othello has killed Desdemona, the Venetians have him in custody, and Iago has promised never to explain nor even to utter a word ever again. As Isaac Asimov notes,

Othello, however, has one last thing to say. With an effort, he manages to pull himself together into almost the man he once was and speaks once more, a little in self-pity, much more in self-hate. He asks them all to tell the tale honestly. (Asimov 631)

Othello

Soft you; a word or two before you go.

I have done the state some service, and they know 't.

No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,

When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,

Speak of me as I am; nothing ex-  
tenuate,

Nor set down aught in malice. Then  
must you speak

Of one that loved not wisely but  
too well;

Of one not easily jealous, but being  
wrought

Perplex'd in the extreme; of one  
whose hand,

Like the base Judean, threw a pearl  
away

Richer than all his tribe; of one whose  
subdu'd eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian  
trees

Their medicinal gum. Set you down  
this;

And say besides, that in Aleppo  
once,

Where a malignant and a turban'd  
Turk

Beat a Venetian and traduc'd the state,  
I took by th' throat the circumcised  
dog,  
And smote him — thus.

[Stabs himself]

Gratiano

All that's spoke is marr'd.

Othello

I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee. No way  
but this:

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

[Falls on the bed, and dies]

Cassio

This did I fear, but thought he had  
no weapon;

For he was great of heart.

Lodovico

O Spartan dog,

More fell than anguish, hunger, or  
he sea!

Look on the tragic loading of this  
bed;

This is thy work. The object poisons  
sight;

Let it be hid. Gratiano, keep the  
house,

And seize upon the fortunes of the  
Moor,

For they succeed on you. To you,  
Lord Governor,

Remains the censure of this hellish  
villain,

The time, the place, the torture, O,  
enforce it!

Myself will straight aboard, and to  
the state

This heavy act with heavy heart  
relate.

Most critical attention, naturally, is paid to Othello's 19-line speech here, a "famous and problematic outburst" (Bloom 474), alternately considered a regaining of the character's "magnanimity and ease of command" (Wells 250) or a demonstration of "obtuse and brutal egoism" (F.R. Leavis, qtd. in Wells 258). As Stanley Wells puts it,

The basic question raised by the play's closing episodes is whether Othello remains a beast or recovers his manly stature. Or, to put it in theological terms, whether he is destined for damnation or 'saves himself' by acknowledging his crime, repenting it, and punishing himself for it. (Wells 256)

Samuel Johnson called it, ambiguously, "this dreadful scene; it is not to be endured" (qtd. in Garber 615). Neutral or somewhat forgiving critics emphasize Othello's "self-exculpation," declaring it a speech "of self-condemnation, and it culminates in self-execution" (Wells 257). Despite his crimes, "He dies in the act of describing a noble public gesture, the killing of a public enemy" (Garber 615).

Other critics have been harsher. T.S. Eliot claimed in 1927 that he had "never read a more terrible exposure of human weakness — of universal human weakness — than the last great speech of Othello" (qtd. in Wells 257). F.R. Leavis influenced Laurence Olivier's 1964 performance, after which Dover Wilson protested the depiction of "an Othello in which he 'could discover no dignity ... at all, while the end was to me, not terrible, but horrible beyond words'" (qtd. in Wells 258). Harold Bloom, although he bemoans "a bad modern tradition of criticism" from T.S. Eliot to F.R. Leavis and New Historicism that "has divested the hero of his splendor, in effect doing Iago's work" (Bloom 433), nevertheless recognizes that Othello "seems incapable of seeing himself except in grandiose terms" (Bloom 445). Worse, in declaring himself "one that loved



not wisely but too well” and “one not easily jealous,” Othello is guilty of “absurd blindness” and “outrageous self-deception” (Bloom 474).

Othello’s final words have, as Goddard notes, a “preternatural calm” (Goddard 105), but is there “pathos in the eloquence” or “bombast” (Wells 256)? “His appeal is finally to the civilizing power of language” (Garber 615). Othello’s use of language is so beautiful that G. Wilson Knight called it “the Othello music” (Garber 596).

Stratfordians and Oxfordians agree that despite the horrified spectators surrounding him, Othello, like Hamlet, directs his final speech to us (Garber 614, Ogburn and Ogburn 520). Read so, and as an autobiographical utterance from Lord Oxford, some of the dissonances resolve.

Othello begins his final speech with a pointed reminder:

I have done the state some service,  
and they know ’t.  
No more of that.

This very prominent “aside” is grossly inappropriate to a murderer’s testimony and, so, awkwardly inserted and immediately dismissed. But, autobiographically, it fits the hypothetical hushed-up secret-service-funded £1000-annuity scheme to have Oxford boost national pride through his pro-England, pro-Tudor edutainment.

I pray you, in your letters,  
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate....

The phrase “unlucky deeds” seems less suited as a euphemism in the play for killing one’s wife (!) than as Oxford’s melancholy summation of what looked like would be his final life-story. This is the play, after all, in which we hear that “Reputation, reputation, reputation” (2.3.262) is supremely important and that a

human who has lost his reputation is indistinguishable from a beast. “Getting it right” about a person’s biography, a person’s story, is crucial, especially for the 17th Earl, whose “future name would be associated with scandal, profligacy, and disgrace. Thus Othello’s profuse regrets over a lost profession take on new and urgent resonance when viewed through the Oxfordian lens” (Farina 212).

Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice....

(Yeah, Alan Nelson! I’m looking at you.) A companion motto to this utterance might be “Vero nihil verius.”

Of one that loved not wisely but too well;  
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought  
Perplex’d in the extreme....

As Bloom has noted, these assertions constitute a surprisingly misguided autobiographical assessment on Othello’s part. But the misguidedness seems identical if we take it as Oxford’s own self-assessment.

... one whose hand,  
Like the base [Indian?] Judean, threw  
a pearl away  
Richer than all his tribe....

Whether Othello compares himself in the third person with a “base Indian,” as the quarto edition reads, or a “base Judean,” as the Folio reads, has intrigued critics. If “Indian,” then perhaps there are implications of the New World and of the so-called “savages” (Garber 615). Most prefer “Judean,” assuming the reference is to Judas Iscariot (e.g., Goddard 106, Asimov 632, Garber 615) for his kiss of betrayal and his discarding of the “pearl of great price” in a further inscribed parabolic application (Matthew 13:45-46; see Asimov 632), though Harold Bloom supplies a renegade application

to Herod the Great for murdering his Maccabean wife Mariamme (Bloom 474). In any case, albeit sublimated into Judeo-Christian history, Oxford seems once again to be expressing guilt concerning his treatment of his first wife, Anne Cecil. Oxfordians, listing other wronged women all over the canon from Hermione to Hero, tend to agree that in the end of *Othello*, Oxford is “expiating his condemnation of Anne; he is pleading *nolo contendere* to the worst charge he can bring against himself” (Ogburn 568; cf. Anderson 380).

Although the question remains as to how much here is bombast, Freud himself recognized that Oxford “had himself experienced Othello’s torments” (qtd. in Hazelton 309). Ogburn expands the vision:

Literature’s debt to Oxford’s remorse is incalculable, but none would have accrued had Oxford not had the capacity to stand apart from his emotions and observe them with detachment, plotting their dramatization and contriving the verbal alchemy with which he would capture, reshape, and refine reality, milling human lives, most notably his own, to artistic ends with no more compunction than Iago in manipulating his victims to his inscrutable purposes. (Ogburn 571)

Othello then ends his final speech:

... a malignant and a turban’d Turk  
Beat a Venetian and traduc’d the state,  
I took by th’ throat the circumcised dog,  
And smote him — thus.

Othello pictures himself as a Turk, as one of his own enemies, which



he did indeed become to himself. “‘Uncircumcised dog’ was a common derogatory phrase for Christians among Moslems, indicating that they were outside the pale of the true religion. Othello’s use of the reverse phrase in his last agony is like a return to his origins” (Asimov 632). However, he dies speaking of himself in the third person, perhaps signifying — but in a way controlling — his lost identity.

A Venetian witness to the suicide notes in despair, but oddly,  
All that’s spoke is marr’d.

Everything Othello said is corrupted? How so? The statement has a sweeping quality that renders it more sensible if taken in a much wider context. The severity of this tragedy has made all language itself corrupt somehow. All reports are erroneous. Truth and authenticity are nearly inaccessible. What you will hear is not going to be the truth, Oxford suggests.

Cassio laments and eulogizes, less abstractly but also oddly,

This did I fear, but thought he had  
no weapon;  
For he was great of heart.

I find it difficult to piece together all three components of this sentence to make any stable sense. Perhaps all that’s spoke is marred already. At any rate, some may not have thought so, but Oxford did have a “weapon” with which to exercise some control over the final story. Some may think that disconnecting the artist’s name from the title page does the job permanently, but Oxford buried enough materials so that with some serious textual excavating, a restoration can be accomplished.

Lodovico then addresses Iago:

.... O Spartan dog,  
More fell than anguish, hunger, or  
the sea!  
Look on the tragic loading of this  
bed;  
This is thy work.

Asimov envisions an Iago probably smiling at the tragic loading of the bed (633). He glosses “Spartan dog” as a bloodthirsty hound trained to hunt and kill (633). But “Spartan” has another association that has gone unnoticed. The ancient Spartans were famous for their laconic nature — that is, of being of few words. A legend about the Peloponnesian War (which obviously I paraphrase here very loosely) has the enemies of Sparta threatening, “If we prove to be the mightier army, we will trample down your city gates, slaughter all your men, take your women into slavery, dash your children’s brains out against the city walls, put your old men’s heads on pikes, urinate in your temples, rape all of your livestock, and dance the hootchy-kootchy on the graves of your forefathers.” The Spartans sent back their laconic reply: “If.”

When in the play recently Iago was asked *the* key question of “why,” his answer was, “Demand me nothing; what you know, you know. / From this time forth I never will speak word” (5.2.303-304), an enigmatic and Spartan final utterance from this villain.

Lodovico continues:

.... To you, Lord Governor,  
Remains the censure of this hellish  
villain,  
The time, the place, the torture, O,  
enforce it!

It is doubtful that torture will matter much. Iago has already been stabbed! You cannot faze this guy. Nearly inhuman himself, he seems immune to the forms of human suffering. “That Iago himself is trapped and is to be destroyed by torture must seem quite irrelevant to him. The victory is his” (Asimov 633).

Here are some last lines and nearly last lines asserting final crucial matters in their respective plays.

Please you, I’ll tell you as we pass  
along,

That you will wonder what hath  
fortuned.

Come, Proteus, ’tis your penance  
but to hear  
The story of your loves discovered....

(*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*  
5.4.168-171)

... if you’ll a willing ear incline  
... bring us to our palace, where  
we’ll show  
what’s yet behind, that’s meet you  
all should know.

(*Measure for Measure* 5.1.536-539)

... Good Paulina,  
Lead us from hence, where we may  
leisurely  
Each one demand, and answer to  
his part  
Perform’d in this wide gap of time,  
since first  
We were dissevered. Hastily lead  
away.

(*The Winter’s Tale* 5.3.151-155)

Lord Cerimon, we do our longing  
stay

To hear the rest untold. Sir, lead ’s  
the way.

(*Pericles* 5.3.83-84)

[Before the final “ringing” verse:]  
... Let us go in,  
And charge us there upon  
inter’gatories,  
And we will answer all things faith-  
fully.

(*The Merchant of Venice* 5.1.297-299)  
He shall have a noble memory.

Assist.

(*Coriolanus* 5.6.153-154)

And here are the final lines from  
*Othello*:

Myself will straight aboard, and to  
the state  
This heavy act with heavy heart  
relate.

Thus *Othello*, like numerous other plays in the canon, ends with a promise of recounting, retelling the events we the audience have just witnessed. These endings certify the experiences as narratives and look forward



to their re-presentation. Further, in the Shakespeare tragedies, “retelling becomes the tragic hero’s only path to redemption” (Garber 615).

Consider how focused *Othello* has been all along on narratives, or stories. Othello claims to have entertained Desdemona and her father, and to have won the love of the former, with dramatic autobiographical stories of his adventures. Iago’s success was in “constructing a narrative into which he inscribes ... those around him” (Greenblatt 234). And in terms of his *self-fashioning*, “not only does Iago mask himself in society as the honest ancient, but in private he tries out a bewildering succession of brief narratives that critics have attempted, with notorious results, to translate into motives” (Greenblatt 236). The infamous handkerchief has at least one story attached to it, so even stage props in this play can be caught up in the rampant narrativizing. In this respect, the tragedy of *Othello* is that Othello allowed himself to submit to, essentialize, and participate in the generation of a narrative involving infidelity and uncontrolled jealousy. Once activated by Iago, the narrative did its work all too well. “Even with the exposure of Iago’s treachery, then, there is for Othello no escape — rather a still deeper submission to narrative, a reaffirmation of the self as story, but now split suicidally between the defender of the faith and the circumcised enemy who must be destroyed” (Greenblatt 252). *Othello*, ultimately, is a tragic testament to the powerful hold a story can have over a human soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Tarry a little, there is something else,” as was once said in Shakespeare’s Venice. I have, it turns out, omitted one line. It occurs right after Othello’s final speech and his stabbing of himself. Lodovico remarks:

A bloody period. (5.2.357)

Even if we take the word “period” as temporal — referring to a time period — there is an unmistakable finality to the utterance: “so ends a real rough patch for Cyprus.” But Lodovico probably means “period,” more appropriately, as “end-point.” (Think of the Weelkes madrigal examined by Altschuler and Jansen: “Thule, the Period of Cosmography” = “Iceland, the End-Point of the World.”) In other words, “A bloody ending to a once noble general.”

More significance has been recognized, though, by über-Stratfordian Stephen Greenblatt — not, of course, in his faux biography *Will in the World*, but in his much more intelligent *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. He calls Lodovico’s remark “bizarrely punning” and says that it “insists precisely upon the fact that it was a speech, that this life fashioned as a text is ended as a text” (Greenblatt 252). Othello has ended his life as he led it: playing out his role in a fashioned narrative that bestows on him his identity.

Death is the terminal punctuation mark to a life. A period is the terminal punctuation mark to a life lived as a narrative. But perhaps suicide is the act of wresting back basic control of the end of that narrative.

Shakespeare, we know, was tormented by the tyrannically obliterating narrative control that posterity would have (unless the Sonnets expressing this were indeed mere pen exercises). Oxford, we suspect, had good reason to agonize about losing control of that narrative. And we, we happy few, we band of sisters and brothers, are commissioned to restore that narrative — to pin the right story on the right man. “He shall have a noble memory. Assist.”

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# SHAKESPEARE AUTHORSHIP CONFERENCE

WHITE PLAINS, NY

OCTOBER 9-12, 2008

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 2:00 – 2:30 Welcome and Introductions – Alex McNeil and Matthew Cossolotto
- 2:30 – 3:30 Dan Wright – Shakespeare: Pornographer and Liar
- 3:30 – 4:15 Helen Gordon – Comparing the Sonnets to the Life Events of Oxford vs. Shakspere
- 4:15 – 4:30 Break
- 4:30 – 5:15 Albert Burgstahler – “Read If Thou Canst” – The Challenge of the Stratford Monument
- 5:15 – 6:00 Betsy Clark – The Numerological Structure of Four Dedications and One Title
- 6:00 – 7:00 Social Event & Cash Bar

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 8:30 – 10:15 Shakespeare Oxford Society Annual Meeting
- 10:15 – 10:30 Greetings and Information – Richard Joyrich
- 10:30 – 11:15 Frank Davis – Henslowe’s Diary: Its Significance to Oxfordians
- 11:15 – 12:15 Michael Egan – Updating the fate of *Richard II* Part One and fielding questions about Michael Egan’s editorial policy for The Oxfordian
- 12:15 – 1:30 Lunch Break
- 1:30 – 2:15 Stephanie Hughes – The London Stage and the Birth of Functional Democracy
- 2:15 – 3:15 Ron Hess – The Spear – Shaker and the Dragon: Oxford, *Beowulf*, and *Hamlet*
- 3:15 – 3:30 Break
- 3:30 – 4:15 Paul Altrocchi – Does Westminster Abbey Hide Cloistered Authorship Secrets?
- 4:15 – 5:00 Paul Streitz – Oxford and the King James Bible
- 5:00 – 6:30 Alex McNeil – To moderate an open discussion about what aspects of the authorship issue trouble us the most. Or, put another way, if you could know one additional thing about the Oxfordian case, what would it be?
- 8:00 – 10:00 Movies –
1. DVD of the 1963 Twilight Zone episode in which Shakespeare shows up in the 20th century to act as a ghostwriter for a hack television writer who’s run out of material. 52 minutes (Alex McNeil)
  2. DVD of Mark Twain’s *Is Shakespeare Dead?* 44 minutes (Richard Joyrich)

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11**

- 9:00 – 9:45 John Hudson – Why Was Shakespeare So Interested in the Roman – Jewish War?
- 9:45 – 10:30 Ron Song Destro – Tips on Presenting The Oxfordian Lecture
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – 11:30 Bonner Cutting – Where There’s A Will
- 11:30 – 12:15 Matthew Cossolotto – A Posthumous Publication? Sleuthing Through Shakespeare’s Sonnets for Authorship Clues
- 12:15 – 1:45 Hosted Lunch and Keynote Address: Mark Anderson – 1604: The Oxfordian Ace in the Hole
- 1:45 – 2:30 Derran Charlton – “Had`st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport, Thou hadst bin a companion for a King”.
- 2:30 – 3:30 Robert Brazil – Analyzing Further Writings by Oxford
- 3:30 – 3:45 Break
- 3:45 – 4:30 Sarah Smith – Shakespeare’s Library: Then and Now
- 4:30 – 5:30 Bill Boyle – Shakespeare and the Succession Crisis of the 1590s: Some Thoughts and Observations
- 7:00 – 10:00 Movies:
1. DVD of *Dream*, John Hudson’s adaptation of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* 52 minutes (JohnHudson)
  2. *Timon of Athens* (produced by BBC & Time – Life) starring Jonathan Pryce as Timon in possibly “the most autobiographical” of all of Shakespeare/Oxford’s works. 120 minutes (Earl Showerman)

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12**

- 8:30 – 10:15 Shakespeare Fellowship Annual Meeting
- 10:15 – 10:30 Break
- 10:30 – 11:15 Robin Fox – Shakespeare’s Education? The Grammar School Reconsidered.
- 11:15 – 12:00 Earl Showerman – *Timon of Athens*: Shakespeare’s Sophoclean Tragedy
- 12:00 – 2:00 Banquet and Awards Presentation – Thomas Regnier – *Henry V* and the Salic Law



## *You're Invited!*

Dear Society Members and Friends:

The 4th Annual Joint SOS/SF Shakespeare Authorship Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains, NY, Thursday to Sunday, October 9-12 (Columbus Day Weekend).

Please contact the Society's office by phone (914-962-1717) or email ([sosoffice@optonline.net](mailto:sosoffice@optonline.net)) with any questions.

Registration form, preliminary schedule (with speakers and topics), and other conference information now available on our website: [www.shakespeare-oxford.com](http://www.shakespeare-oxford.com).

Also see registration form below. Don't delay. Register today!

Hope to see you in White Plains.

Best wishes,

Matthew Cossolotto

President

Shakespeare

Oxford Society





## Registration Form

2008 Annual Joint SOS/SF Shakespeare Authorship Conference

Please print out this form, fill out the appropriate information,  
and send or fax the completed form to

Shakespeare Oxford Society, PO Box 808, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598-0808 (fax: 914-245-9713).

For more information or to register online, please visit our website:

[www.shakespeare-oxford.com](http://www.shakespeare-oxford.com).

Call or email the SOS office for assistance: Tel: 914-962-1717 Email: [sosoffice@optonline.net](mailto:sosoffice@optonline.net).

Registrations wanted (enter number):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Full Registration-\$200 (includes all presentations and meals)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ One Day Registration: Thursday-\$50 (presentations only)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ One Day Registration: Friday-\$75 (presentations only)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ One Day Registration: Saturday-\$75 (presentations only)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ One Day Registration: Sunday-\$50 (presentations only)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Sunday Banquet-\$45

Total amount to be paid \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed-US Dollars only please (CHECK ONE)

Check (made out to Shakespeare Oxford Society)

Money Order \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card:  American Express  MasterCard  Visa

Name (as it appears on card):

\_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ :

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ :

**If you can afford to donate over and above your annual membership dues,  
please do so now. Thank you for your generous contribution!**