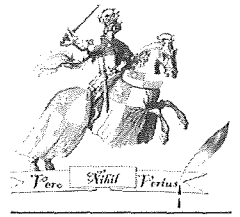




The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter



Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard

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September 2009

Watertown Symposium

Bill Boyle

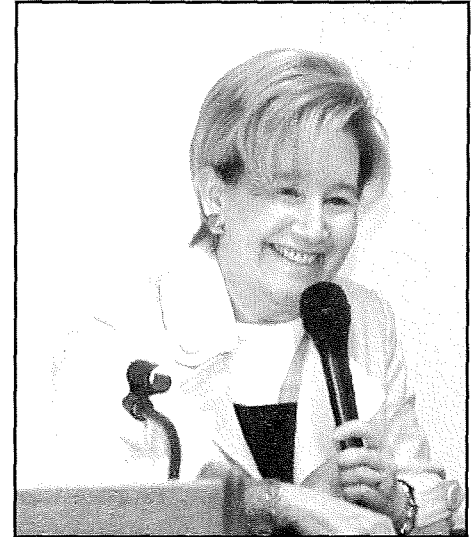
The two-day "Shakespeare from the Oxfordian Perspective" symposium held May 29-30, 2009 in Watertown, Massachusetts, was a great success. About 50-60 people — many of them first timers — turned out for both a play on Friday night and the all-day symposium in Watertown Public Library on Saturday. There was coverage in the local media both before and after the event.

The event was organized by Lori DiLiddo of Cambridge, working with Watertown resident and longtime Oxfordian Carole Berney and Shakespeare Fellowship President Alex McNeil. The symposium was the first major Oxfordian event in the

Boston area since the Oxford Day Banquet — founded in 1988 by Charles Boyle — ceased after 2005 due to increasing costs at the Harvard Faculty Club. There had been several small gatherings since then — including a joint mini-conference in Concord last spring with a Concord-based group that has reinvigorated the concept of the Concord School of Philosophy — but no major event with speakers and publicity. DiLiddo said she modeled the event on the last several Oxford Day banquets that included a Friday evening dinner followed by speakers and a panel discussion the next day.

The major venue for Saturday was a meeting room in the Watertown Public Library that was large enough to accommodate audiences of over 100 including room for tables, displays, and a catered lunch. The room also had a built-in ceiling projector that could be hooked up to laptop computers for PowerPoint displays, movies, and other electronic media. The room is available to local groups at no cost. In addition to the library space, the First Parish of Watertown Unitarian Universalist Church was used for a Friday night performance of Hank Whittemore's *Shakespeare's Treason*.

(cont'd on p. 33)



Bonner Miller Cutting



Mark Anderson



Marie Merkel

Photos courtesy Bill Boyle

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SOS President Matthew Cossolotto:

My name be buried — marking the 400 anniversary of Shakespeare's posthumously published sonnets

"A booke called Shakespeares Sonnettes" was registered for publication on May 20, 1609, by publisher Thomas Thorpe. That much we know for sure. It is assumed by most scholars that the book bearing the rather bland title *Shake-speare's Sonnets* was published shortly thereafter.

It's fair to say this book, which contains 154 sonnets and a short narrative poem titled "A Lover's Complaint," has perplexed casual readers and expert commentators alike over the past four centuries. Winston Churchill's famous 1939 description of the Soviet Union as "a

riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" can aptly be applied to the publication of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*.

Questions and uncertainties abound regarding just about everything associated with what is arguably the most famous collection of poems in the English language, perhaps in any language. While I am fascinated by all of the mysteries surrounding the sonnets – including such things as the identity of the Fair Youth, the Dark Lady, and the Rival Poet – this column will focus on one specific issue: The hypothesis that this book of sonnets was published posthumously in 1609.

Progress report

I thought members would be interested in a quick progress

(cont'd on p. 45)

SOS on Facebook

SOS board member and publications committee member Brian Bechtold opened the SOS Facebook page on July 23, 2008. He was assisted by Stuart Green and Julia Bechtold. Julia helped with initial building of the social networking site and both helpers suggested items to be included.

"We are attempting to appeal to a younger, more Internet-savvy crowd," Bechtold said. "We need to keep things happening on the site — news, discussions, answering questions — leading readers to relevant sites, so they return to the SOS Facebook page

on a regular basis, rather than becoming a fan and moving on to the next one."

Those who are interested in working with Bechtold on ideas for keeping the SOS Facebook site interesting and relevant to users may contact him at: brian033@centurytel.net.

Visit the site today at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Shakespeare-Oxford-Society/96412830317?ref=nf> and become a FAN to help spread the word.

2009 SF/SOS joint conference

The 2009 joint conference of the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held November 5-8 at the Houston Intercontinental Airport Doubletree Hotel in Houston, Texas. The cost for full registration is \$200 including presentations, Saturday luncheon buffet and Sunday luncheon banquet.

A preliminary list of presenters includes:

- Frank Davis: The "Bard's" Six Signatures
- Alex McNeil: Is "Shakespeare" in Jeopardy?
- Hank Whittemore: "Shakespeare's Treason"
- Keir Cutler: Teaching Shakespeare and "Is Shakespeare Dead" by Mark Twain?
- Earl Showerman: Trolius and Cressida — Shakespeare's Homeric Satire
- Paul Altrocchi: How to Baste and Barbeque an Upstart Daw

- Ron Hess: Did Thomas Sackville influence Shakespeare's Sonnets?
- Richard Whalen: The Influence of Commedia dell'Arte in Shakespeare
- John Hamill: A Spaniard in the Elizabethan Court — Don Antonio Perez
- Marty Hyatt: Heaven's Sweetest Air
- Ren Draya: Music in Othello
- John Shahan: Declaration of Reasonable Doubt: Strategy Implications for Oxfordians
- Matthew Cossolotto: Posthumous Sonnet Publication
- Tom Regnier: Law in the Sonnets

A registration form is included in this newsletter, mail it in or register online for the SF/SOS annual conference at:

<http://www.goestores.com/catalog.aspx?Merchant=shakespeareoxfordsociety&DeptID=170579>

The Houston Intercontinental Airport Doubletree Hotel has reserved a block of rooms at a reduced rate of \$99 a night

(plus tax and fees). The hotel provides a free shuttle service to the George Bush International Airport. For online hotel reservations: <http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/HOUAPDT-SHP-20091105/index.jhtml>, or contact Angelica at Doubletree: angelica.canto@hilton.com, 281-848-4001 or 1-800-222-TREE

Attendance options:

Full registration: \$200 includes presentations, Sat. lunch buffet and Sun. luncheon banquet
One Day Registration: Thursday \$35 (Presentations only)
One Day Registration: Friday \$60 (Presentations only)
One Day Registration: Saturday \$60 (Presentations only)
One Day Registration: Sunday \$35 (Presentations only)
Saturday Luncheon Buffet: \$35
Sunday Luncheon Banquet: \$35
Special student and teacher rate: \$15 (For Saturday 1:00 - 6:30 p.m. only)

Join the Shakespeare Oxford Society, founded in 1957. Members receive the quarterly *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* and the annual journal, *The Oxfordian*.

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Remembering K.C.

Hank Whitemore

Friends, colleagues and students of Katherine Dunfee Clarke (K.C.) Ligon gathered on June 22 in New York to celebrate the life of this multi-talented and beloved actress, dialect coach, teacher, writer and leader of the modern Oxfordian movement, who died on March 23 at age sixty after battling a long illness. The memorial service took place in the heart of the Broadway theatre district on a Monday evening — when most stages are dark — at the legendary Circle in the Square, where K.C. was on the faculty of the Theatre School specializing in voice, speech and dialects.

In a parallel life, K.C. was deeply involved in the effort to establish Edward de Vere as Shakespeare. Twenty years ago she won a playwriting contest sponsored by Ruth Miller (1922-2005), a giant of Oxfordian research, and they became close friends. She served on the Board of Trustees of the Shakespeare Fellowship, was a top contributor to its website discussion forum (logging 4,871 posts since 2002) and wrote articles for the various Oxfordian publications. Recently she co-authored “The Harvey-Nashe Quarrel and *Love’s Labor’s Lost*” with German scholar Robert Detobel that is published on Robert Brazil’s Elizabethan Authors website. She also created three blogs: K.C. Ligon’s Blog; About Theatrical, Truly Shakespearean Life, Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Myth and the Reality, and Actors and Accents: The Actors’ Dialect Workbook.

At her memorial, after the crowd took seats at one end of the Circle’s theater-in-the-round,



K.C. Ligon (1948-2009) in 1981

speaker after speaker turned the occasion into an emotion-charged outpouring of affection mixed with laughter and tears, prompted by anecdotes about K.C. as a tough-minded, bluntly honest, thoroughly professional teacher and coach with deep reservoirs of empathy along with humor and insight as well as personal style and flair.

At her memorial . . . speaker after speaker turned the occasion into an emotion-charged outpouring of affection mixed with laughter and tears, prompted by anecdotes about K.C. as a tough-minded, bluntly honest, thoroughly professional teacher and coach with deep reservoirs of empathy along with humor and insight as well as personal style and flair.

K.C. was fond of saying she had been a professional performer most of her life, born to it, not in a trunk but appearing on stage

even *before* she was born — in 1948, when her mother Nora Dunfee was acting in *Red Peppers* by Noel Coward. She made her Broadway debut at eight in the Dylan Thomas play *Under Milk Wood* and at eleven appeared with both parents — her father was actor David Clarke — in the national tour of *The Visit* with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. A member of the first graduating class of New York University Tish School of the Arts Graduate Acting Program, she built an impressive resume of stage and television credits while also becoming a professional writer.

K.C. designed dialects for entire Broadway productions and for regional theatre companies around the country. As a dialect consultant she worked with scores of extraordinary actors such as James Earl Jones, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Estelle Parsons. She also worked with actor Tom Ligon — whom she married in 1976 and who, at the memorial, introduced a video montage of K.C. in photographs that was both funny and deeply moving.

Also at the service was K.C.’s younger sister, Susan Dunfee; Theodore Mann, co-founder of the Circle in the Square Theatre; actor-director Austin Pendleton; and many others who told how K.C. had “performed miracles” helping hundreds of professional performers and students with phrasings, breath control, accents and interpretations of their acting roles.

One graduate of her instructions told how K.C. transformed a young man who “sounded like a thug” into a polished professional announcer; another

recalled that after K.C. became too ill to travel uptown to the Theatre School, she summoned everyone down to her apartment in Greenwich Village and held class there. Tom Ligon described how she was able to help actors adopt dialects indirectly, that is, by immersing them within their characters' settings until their accents and speech patterns began to change on their own.

By the time it was my turn to speak I realized I was opening a window on a related yet very different aspect of K.C.'s life – the Oxfordian world. I found myself talking about our friendship, our talks on the phone, conversations by email and many long, often daily discussions about various topics surrounding the issue of Shakespearean authorship. When I took my seat again a woman

rose to her feet and recalled how K.C. had spoken to her often about the Earl of Oxford, citing the evidence for his authorship of the Shakespeare works.

"So when I heard she died," the woman said, "I imagined her ascending into heaven and looking down upon us, with that sultry smile of hers, and saying, 'I was right, wasn't I!'"

Yes, K.C., you were right — in so many, many ways.

Hank Whittemore is a former professional actor and the author of eleven books including The Monument, elucidating the world of Shakespeare's sonnets (www.shakespearesmonument.com). He currently performs a solo show based on the book, entitled Shakespeare's Treason (www.shakespearestreason.com), co-

written with Ted Story, director. He lives in Nyack, New York, with his wife Glo and their son Jake. Hank also produces a blog (<http://hankwhittemore.wordpress.com>).

K.C. Ligon's blogs are available on the Web at:

- *K.C. Ligon's Blog: About Theatrical, Truly Shakespearean Life at <http://kcligon.typepad.com>*
- *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Myth and the Reality at <http://kcligon.wordpress.com>*
- *Actors and Accents: The Actors' Dialect Workbook at http://kcligon.typepad.com/acting_accents*
- *"The Harvey-Nashe Quarrel and Love's Labor's Lost" written with German scholar Robert Detobel is published on Robert Brazil's Elizabethan Authors website at <http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/harvey-nashe001.htm>.*

TOX update

*Dr. Michael Egan, Editor
The Oxfordian*

The next issue of the Shakespeare-Oxford Society annual journal, *The Oxfordian*, **Vol. XI 2008**, is in active preparation and will be available in fall, 2009. The line-up of contributors reflects the editor's emphasis on the authorship question as opposed to the question of authorship. A special Open Forum contains four provocative essays about some of the newest contenders, plus an update of the case for Oxford.

Open Forum:

- *Amelia Bassano Lanier: A New Paradigm* by John Hudson
- *The Case for Derby as Shakespeare* by John Raithel

- *Playing Dead: An Updated Review of the Case for Christopher Marlowe* by Peter Farey
- *Shakespeare Wrote Shakespeare*, by David Kathman
- *The Case for Oxford Revisited* by Ramon Jiménez

The rest comprises a series of high-level academic papers related to matters of attribution, authorship and the question of who Shakespeare was. Articles include:

- *Shakespeare, Oxford and the Grammar School Question* by Robin Fox
- *Greene's Groats-worth of Witte: Shakespeare's Biography?* by Frank Davis
- *Slurs, Nasal Rhymes and Amputations: Manipulating Evidence in the Case of 'Woodstock'* by Michael Egan

- *The Life of Timon of Athens: Shakespeare's Sophoclean Tragedy*, by Earl Showerman
- *Masters of Mischaracterization: Elliott & Valenza and the Claremont Shakespeare Authorship Clinic* by John M. Shahan and Richard F. Whalen

Among other goodies in the issue readers will find a response to the Open Forum authors by Stephanie Hughes, and an extended letter to the editor on the Sonnets by Matthew Cossolloto

The Oxfordian is a benefit of membership in the Shakespeare-Oxford Society. See the insert on this page for information about becoming a member online or by mail.

Somebody We Know Is behind No-body and Some-body

Robert Prechter

In 1878, Chatto and Windus published *The School of Shakspeare*, a two-volume collection of seven anonymous Elizabethan and Jacobean plays edited by the recently-deceased Richard Simpson, a prominent Shakespeare scholar. They had all been performed by Shakespeare's company during his connection with it, or were assigned to him by tradition, and were not to be found in the customary collections of old plays. Simpson's volumes included *The Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stuckeley*, *Nobody and Somebody*, *Histrion-Mastix*, *The Prodigal Son*, *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, or *The Comedie of Pasquil and Katherine*, *A Warning for Fair Women* and *Faire Em*.

Modern Shakespeare scholars do not include any of these plays in the Shakespeare canon. I decided to check the accepted conclusion by reading all these plays, keeping in mind the Oxfordian perspective that Edward de Vere was writing plays well before the name *Shakespeare* appeared in 1593. Internal evidence suggests that at least one of these obscure plays, *No-body and Some-body*, is quite probably a product of a younger Bard.

Nobody and Somebody was performed by Shakespeare's company in Germany circa 1600(Farmer). "(The play) was published in 1606, but scholars have argued convincingly for an initial composition date of circa 1592, with subsequent revisions" (Curran 2 n.5). If Oxford wrote this play, my guess is that it actually dates from the 1570s. Besides its mediocre quality, another reason to assume an early

NO-BODY, AND SOME-BODY.

With the true Chronicle Historie of Elydure,
who was firsteately here, forsed names
to round King of England.
The true Copy therof, as it hath bene called by the
Queens Maiesty's Seruants.



Source: John S. Farmer "Nobody and Somebody", 1911, reproduced in The Tudor Facsimile Texts <http://www.archive.org/stream/nobodyandsomebo00unknuoft/nobodyandsomebo00unknuoft_djvu.txt>

date of production is that the list of Shakespeare's plays with which this play shares phrases are mostly ones that Oxfordians (and many Stratfordians) consider to be among the earliest works of Shakespeare.

Everyone who reads this play also notes structural similarities to Shakespeare's late play, *King Lear*:

... this play has much in common with *Lear* including the division of England between two rulers, resignation of government by the ruler, accusation of mildness in a ruler, attempted regicide, talk of following the strongest party, banishment and a mock trial. There is a parasitic character called Sicophant and a character called Braggart, and there is a clown." (Marks)

The approximately contemporary Jacobean plays, *King Lear* and *Nobody and Somebody*, share an ancient British setting, a preoccupation with instability in the state, and an unsettling interest in negation.... The dramatic mode of existence of the character called "Nobody" is paradoxical,

denaturing—an early modern visual and verbal *Verfremdungseffekt*, at once philosophical and clownish. His negativity, which is articulated in dialogue with the companion figure of "Somebody", is matched in *King Lear*, above all in the role of Edgar . . ." (Womack 195)

Lacking, however, are the thematic depth and the high level of poetic quality that *King Lear* evinces.

Several aspects of the play might mislead one from a proper attribution. It contains a sub-plot that, though very cleverly rendered, is an oddity for Shakespeare because it involves representational, yet non-classical characters: Nobody and Somebody, who war with each other about who is to blame for various social ills. The play has only four classical references — to Diana, Hercules, Jove and Fortune — and there are few examples of euphuism. Finally, the play is not divided into acts and scenes. These factors might prompt one to withhold the play from the Shakespeare canon, but doing so would be a mistake. There are numerous indications of Shakespearean style and enough flashes of his technique to confirm this as the Bard's work.

Conforming with Shakespearean settings, the main characters in this play are all courtiers. As with Shakespeare, the courtiers speak in blank verse and the commoners speak in prose, and important speeches end in rhymed couplets. The setting of the play is early Britain. The plot concerns royal succession and the proper behavior of a king, two of Shakespeare's

perennial subjects. As in many of Shakespeare's plays (for example *Measure for Measure* and *The Winter's Tale*), a struggle for the mind of a king in either showing mercy or doling out severe punishment is portrayed. Much of the characters' bad behavior derives from *ambition*, a term of focus used in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. Typical of Shakespeare, the author writes passages of extreme passion arising from anger and ambition. Recalling *Hamlet* and the sonnets, three characters profess a wish for death over their state in life.

There are also some very funny lines: after two lords bid princes, "Come, kill me first" and "kill me to[o]" and Lady Elydure adds "The third am I," her rival the Queen immediately interjects, "Nay strike her first." In the end, three bad characters make instantaneous transformations into good ones, as occurs singly in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, *As You Like It* and *The Tempest*. As in so many of Shakespeare's comedies, this change resolves the play's driving conflict: "My oath is past and what I have lately sworn/Ile hold inviolate. Here all stryfe ends." In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the end of the play is delayed with a humorous conclusion to the sub-plot involving the rustic players. In the play under consideration, the end is delayed with a humorous conclusion to the sub-plot involving Nobody and Somebody. Shakespeare directly connects a spirit-character to the name Nobody in *The Tempest* (III ii) when the sprite, Ariel — who has rendered himself invisible — plays a tune on a tabor and pipe, to which Trinculo responds, "This is the tune of our catch, played by the picture of Nobody."

In three separate instances, characters eavesdrop on others — another common device in Shakespeare. Two characters goad two others to usurp the king, much as the witches goad Macbeth to do the same; then Elydure's wife passionately entreats Elydure to take the crown unlawfully, as Lady Macbeth entreats Macbeth to do. In doing so, moreover, she connects two words in "To minister this soveraigne Antidote," just as does: "Canst thou not minister...some sweet oblivious antidote...?" (Macbeth 5.3.43) The Queen orders the princess to pick up her glove, and after some argument the princess strikes one of the courtiers; as Simpson notes, the scene is akin to one in *Henry VI Part 1*, scene iii, "where the Queen tells the Duchess of Gloucester to pick up her fan, and gives her a box on the ear—pretending to take her for someone else" (Simpson 297fn). Prince Elydure is, above all, moderate in his demeanor, and in one scene "he comes, reading a booke," suggesting an aspect of the bookish Hamlet in the hero. There is a humorous non-fight scene between Nobody and a Braggart, recalling that between Cesario and Andrew in *Twelfth Night*.

There are metaphors of theater, birding, music and several of nature, including eclipses, an idea Shakespeare uses in Sonnet 107. There are terms of law and instances of wordplay between characters. The metaphor "Bridle your spirit" appears in several forms throughout Shakespeare, but especially in *King Henry VI Part 3*: "it...makes me bridle passion." The metaphor in "these unripe ills" appears four times in Shakespeare. The metaphor of women's eyes as sharp or fiery weapons occurs in

Shakespeare, and here Sicophant says, "Your lookes...were all fire," to which Lady Elydure replies, "Would they had burnt his eyes out." The play contains many other phrases found in Shakespeare, for example the following (Note: all play citations are from *The Riverside Shakespeare* 2nd ed., 1997):

- "Weele have some sport with him" recalls the Bard's line in *Timon of Athens* (2.2.47): "let's ha' some sport with 'em."
- In speaking of his rival rustic, the Clown asserts the comparative fineness between "his leg and mine," much as in *Twelfth Night* Sir Andrew wishes that he "had such a leg" (2.3.20-1) as the Clown.
- In Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost* (V ii), Holofernes dismisses Moth with "Keep some state in thy exit, and vanish" (5.2.594); the Clown in *Othello* (3.1.19-20) says, "for I'll away: go; vanish into air; away!"; likewise in the play at hand the Clown dismisses the rustic with "go silly Rafe, go, away, vanish."
- Lady Elydure cries, "O monstrous!" and Nobody shouts, "O intolerable!" just as Shakespeare's characters cry, "O monstrous" 15 times, along with "O monstrous!...intolerable" in *King Henry IV Part 1* (2.4.540-1) and "O vile, intolerable" in *The Taming of the Shrew* (5.2.93-4). Indeed, Peridure recalls Shakespeare's title when he declares, "I the shrew will tame."
- Somebody says, "Ile follow thee with Swallowes wings," just as Richmond in *Richard III* (5.2.24) says, "True hope...flies with swallow's wings."
- Lady Elydure's phrase, "Shee's shadow; We the true substance are," echoes throughout Shakespeare. This word pairing occurs in Sonnets 37 and 53: "Whilst that this shadow doth such

- substance give" and "What is your substance, whereof are you made,/ That millions of strange shadows on you tend?"; in *King Henry VI Part 2* (1.1.13-14): "the substance/ Of that great shadow I did represent"; *The Merchant of Venice* (3.2.127-9): "The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow...this shadow doth limp behind the substance"; and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: "Love like a shadow flies when substance love pursues" (2.2.207).
- Nearly as common in Shakespeare are variations on the Clowne's line, "truth will come to light"; Shakespeare uses it identically in *The Merchant of Venice* (2.2.79): "truth will come to light"; and similarly in *Lucrece* (Stanza 135): "Time's glory is...to bring truth to light."
 - In *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Shakespeare has one character say to another, "you have an exchequer of words" (2.4.43-4); in this play, one character calls another "You old exchecker of flatterie."
 - Shakespeare pairs life and forfeit three times, and in this play we have the line, "Thy life is forfeit."
 - Shakespeare uses injurious with a noun 17 times—for example, "Injurious duke" in *Henry VI Part 2* (1.4.48) and "injurious villain" in *Richard II* (1.1.91)—and in this play we have "injurious tyrant."
 - In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (3.1.43), Caesar disparages "Low-crooked court'sies and base spaniel-fawning"; and in this play the Queen berates a flattering courtier named Sycophant: "Time was, basespaniell, thou didst fawne as much/ On me." Shakespeare uses spaniel in the same manner numerous other times and links it with fawn again in *The Two Gentle-*

men of Verona (4.2.14-15): "Yet, spaniel-like, the moreshe spurns my love,/ The more it grows and fawneth on her still."

- Shakespeare links base and noble four times, and in this play we find "O God, that one born noble should be so base."
- In Sonnet 93, Shakespeare writes, "heaven in thy creation did decree"; and in this play we find the same word pairing in "Heaven hath decreed."
- Shakespeare pairs treble with a noun half a dozen times, and in this play we find the phrase "treble wall."
- The author connects the rare word interdict with inappropriate behavior relating to government in "What traitrous hand dares interdict our way?" and Shakespeare does the same in *The Phoenix and the Turtle*: "From this session interdict/ Every fowl of tyrant wing" (9-10).
- Shakespeare's characters call people a cipher ("To prove you a cipher," *Love's Labor's Lost* (1.2.56); in this play a king says, "Before ile stand/ Thus for a Cipher...."
- He continues, "with half my command,/ Ile venture all my fortunes," pairing two words found together in Brutus' speech in *Julius Caesar* (4.3.218-24), in which a flood taken "leads on to fortune...Or lose our ventures."
- Shakespeare uses the term confederate almost exclusively to mean one of several ill-intentioned schemers, as in "thou art...confederate with a damned pack" (*Comedy of Errors* 4.4.101-2) and "swore to Cymbeline/ I was confederate with the Romans" (*Cymbeline* 3.3.67-8); in this play, a character asks, "Are you confederate in this treason, sirra?"
- Somebody speaks of "rich and wealthy chuffes,/ Whose full cramd Garners to the roofes

are fild," using a rare word that shows up in *King Henry IV Part I* (2.2.88-9) also to indicate an overstuffed state: "ye gorbellied knaves...ye fat chuffs."

- Shakespeare is also well known for expressing one idea with two different terms, and this author does the same: "Those monstrous crimes, the only staine and blemish/ To the weale-publike."
- The Prologue in this play explains that a stage version of a person named Nobody, who is presented as having no body, is "lesser than a shadowes shadow," echoing Rosencrantz in *Hamlet* (2.2.261-2): "ambition...is but a shadow's shadow."
- In the Epilogue, the spirit-character Nobody steps out of the play and addresses the audience, saying, "If nobody have offended..."; likewise at the end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the spirit-character Puck steps out of the play and addresses the audience, beginning, "If we shadows have offended..." (5.1.423).

Many of Shakespeare's terms and variations on his phrases are evident throughout *Nobody and Somebody* as well: *sweete, sugred, joys, delight, blisse, content, Wo, melancholy, misery, weepe, teares, griefes, sorrows, pittie, disdaine, constancy, constant, inconstants, bootlesse, worser, glose, trashe, despite, Unseasons, dissemble, importuned, importunate, usury, usurers, thraldome, hipocrisie, counterfeit, countercheck, countermaunded, Banish, banisht, banishment, bankrout, exchecker, pompe, sawcie, mauger, Goddess, mynion, drudge, Exile, usurpation, treason, traytor, traitresse, Tyrant, tirannous, tirannie, moitie, Screechowe, Raven, overthrow, over-heard, over-proud, treasures, black despaire, torments my troubled soul, flint-harted,*

sweet friend and this hunnied night.

Simpson observes that the rare term *Fulloms*, meaning loaded dice, shows up here and as *ful-lam* in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1.3.85).

The following passages in *Nobody and Somebody* have a Shakespearean ring:

The state itself mournes in a robe of Wo (3)

Shadow us, State, with thy majestic wings! (248)

your proude aspiring thoughts (274)

My deerest love, the essence of my soule... (612)

*What is my greatnes by my brothers fall,
But like a starved body nourished
With the destruction of other lymbes?* (616-618)

*Innumerable are the griefes that waite
On horded treasures, then much more on Crownes.
The middle path, the golden meane for me!* (619-621)

*Men, heavens, gods, devils, what power should I invoke
To fashion him anew? Thunder, come downe!
Crowne me with ruine, since not with a Crowne.* (638-640)

*Lady: Tis sweete to rule.
Elid: Tis sweeter to obey.* (653)

The throne I reckon but a glorious grave. (716)

I was a King, but now I am [a] slave.

*How happie were I in this base estate
If I had never tasted royaltie!
But the remembrance that I was a king,
Unseasons the content of pov-ertie.* (854-858)

*O Elidure, take pittie on my state,
Let me not live thus infortunate.* (885-886)

The sight of thee...draws rivers from my eyes . . . (875-876)
*Alas, if pittie could procure your good,
Instead of water, Ide weepe teares of blood . . .* (887-888)

*Death is the happy period of all woe.
The wretch thats torne upon the torturing wrack
Feeles not more devilish torment than my hart,
When I but call to minde my tirannie.* (930-933)

*Then happie Elidurus, happie day!
That takes from me a kingdoms cares away.* (967-968)

*Come, gentle brother! Pittie, that should rest
In women most, in harbor'd in thy brest.* (973-974)

*Blame not me;
Wisedome never lov'd declined Majestie.* (1031-1032)

*Once more our royall temples are ingirt
With Brittaines golden wreath.
All-seeing heaven,
Witnes I not desire this soveraigntie.
But since this kingdoms good, and your Decrees
Have laid this heavy loade of common care
On Elidure, we shall discharge the same*

To your content, I hope, and this Lands fame. (1096-1102)

*So but cal me King,
The charming Spheres so sweetly cannot sing.* (1281)

*Oh, but wheres our Crowne,
That make[s] knees humble when their soveragines frowne?* (1283-1284)

He discords taught, that taught thee to sing. (1326)

Before such bondage, graunt me, heaven, a grave! (1339)

Tirants good subjects kills, and traitors spare. (1352)

*Hast lived a king, and canst thou die a slave?
A royal seat doth aske a royall grave.
Though thousand swords thy present safety ring,
Thou that hast bin a Monarch, dye a king!* (1360-1363)

*O heaven, that men so much should covet care!
Septers are golden baites, the outsides faire:
But he that swallowes this sweete sugred pill,
Twill make him sicke with troubles that grow, still.* (1381-1384)

My doomes severer then my small offence. (1434)

*I but waite the time,
To see their sodaine fall, that swiftly clime.* (1461-1462)

*Then, when the fielde consists of such a spirit,
He that subdues conquers the Crowne by merit.* (1613-1614)

*what new flatteries
Are a coyning in the mint of that smoth face?* (1639-1640)

(*Nobody cont.*)

The title of this play contains the phrase, "With the *true* Chronicle," and the title page promises to present "The *true* copy thereof." These terms, possibly punning on *Vere*, could be deliberate.

A few years after finishing this analysis, I received a copy of an e-mail sent to Oxfordians by Barboura Flues. She commented on this play, which she had originally dismissed as not by Shakespeare, as follows:

On this (second) typing I spotted a number of Shakespeare markers, so am placing it in my brain's rather large limbo section. The clusters are self-explanatory. I haven't yet looked closer at the amazing amount of colloquial legal language, most of which deals with forfeitures, bonds and the like—highly suggestive of the tribulations of poor Oxford. I search Matty Farrow's site and found a huge number of Shakespeare situations evolving around the same problems. (Flues 1)

In the appendix to her reprint of the play, Flues notes certain verbal "markers" and "clusters" suggesting Shakespeare's authorship of the play. They include *bootless*, *sycophant*, *love/pity* and *bond/forfeit[ure]*. She reports, "*Nobody and Somebody* is one of the very few non-Shakespeare-attributed works that are found to have significant clusters, both in number and content." (Flues 2 19) Echoing a common observation about Shakespeare, she adds, "...the high number of first or early *Oxford English Dictionary* citations (shows that) the author of *Nobody* was

a prolific and inventive coiner of words." (Flues 3 1) One example she cites is the word *techy* or *tetchy*, which shows up first in this play and later in Shakespeare (RJ 1.3.32; TC 1.1.96; R III 4.4.169). Her observations extend the case for Oxford's authorship of *No-body* and *Some-body*.

Somewhat off-putting (as other scholars note) are the dual plotlines in the play, with the antics of *Nobody* and *Somebody* standing substantially apart from the story of the ups and downs of the king. Perhaps originally meant as tavern entertainment, the pair's banter is a less well interwoven version of the rustics' role in the sub-plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The form of the title of the play: *No-body and Some-body. With the true Chronicle Historie of Elydure*, given its separating period and the conjunction *With*, suggests that these two stories might have begun as separate entities, which the playwright then merged to create a longer production. If so, which part came first and the reason for the merger we can only guess. But perhaps we need no longer wonder who was behind most or all of the composition.

Robert Prechter is author of 13 books on financial markets, including the New York Times bestseller, Conquer the Crash (John Wiley, 2002). He is president of Elliott Wave International and Executive Director of the Socionomics Institute. He presented a new theory of finance in the Summer 2007 issue of the Journal of Behavioral Finance, and he has written for The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter, Shakespeare Matters, and The Oxfordian.

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Note: The text of this play is also available on Robert Brazil's Elizabethan Authors website at: <<http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/Nobody102.htm>>.

Edward de Vere as Henry IV

Derran Charlton

In 1993 I presented a talk at the Shakespeare Oxford Society Conference in Boston that included brief references to a portrait by an unknown artist. I claimed the painting depicted Edward de Vere in the role of King Henry IV (Figure 1). Older members of the audience dismissed my claim without further discussion, asserting that the painting was a well-known portrait of Henry IV. Others such as Roger Parisious and keynote speaker Norrie Epstein were fascinated and more receptive to the idea of Oxford as an actor. Subsequently, Professor Uwe Laugwitz and Robert Detobel kindly published a copy of this portrait in the second issue of the German *Neues Shakespeare Journal* (1998), describing it as "an anonymous Elizabethan gentleman in the role of King Henry IV."

I put my thoughts of the portrait to one side until earlier this year when I was reminded of my presentation by the issue of a current English postage stamp depicting King Henry IV (Figure 2). I instantly realized the remarkable difference in the color of the king's tunic in comparison with the Oxford-blue tunic worn by the "anonymous English Elizabethan Gentleman" whom I had suggested was actually Edward de Vere.

A remarkable epigram — one Stratfordians rarely refer to — by John Davies of Hereford (c. 1565-1618), published six years after the death of Oxford in 1610, evokes the possibility



Figure 1. English portrait, possibly of an English gentleman, unknown artist, in unknown hands

that de Vere may have played Henry IV. Davies' "The Epigram on Shake-speare" (number 159) appeared in *The Scourge of Folly* titled as "To our English Terence Mr. Will. Shake-speare":



Figure 2. Portrait of Henry IV on English postage stamp, probably based on the portrait by an unknown artist (late 16th century), National Portrait Gallery

Some say good Will (which I,
in sport, do sing)
Had'st thou not plaid some
Kingly parts in sport,
Thou had'st bin a companion
for a King:
And become a King among the
meaner sort.
Some others raile; but raile as
they thinke fit,
Thou hast not rayling, but a
raining Wit:
And honesty thou sow'st,
which they do reape;
So to increase their Stocke
which they do keepe.

The last two lines of the epigram very frankly state that others claim "Shakespeare's" work as their own.

Davies also wrote in his *Microcosmos* (1603), "And though the stage doth staine pure gentle-bloud." Davies' reference to "pure gentle-bloud" probably indicates that he had an aristocrat in mind; perhaps someone like de Vere. In a similar vein, he wrote in *Speculum Proditori* (first published following his death) these verses:

I knew a Man, unworthy as I
am,
And yet too worthie for a coun-
terfeit
Made once a King; who though
it were in game,
Yet was it there where Lords
and Ladyes met;
Who honor'd him as hee had
bene the same,
And no subiectiue duties did
forget;
When to him-selfe he smil'd,
and said, lo here
I haue for noght, what Kings
doe buy so deere . . .

The reference "I knew a Man, unworthy as I am" was written in the past-tense following the

(De Vere cont.)

death of Oxford. Davies, in his humility, appears to be signifying his shadowed respect.

Despite the myths and Stratfordian traditions, there is no evidence that William Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon had ever acted in any play by Shakespeare. The supposed hard evidence on behalf of William Shakspeare was fictional; other claimed evidence was a total blank. Davies must have been referring to someone else.

That John Davies of Hereford might have known of deVere's stage activities is suggested by his associations. Though he primarily wrote about metaphysical and religious topics, Davies was also a writing master, a person who taught penmanship. In that capacity his pupils included members of the earls of Pembroke, Derby, and the Herbert, Percy and Egerton households. In 1605 Davies was appointed Master of Penmanship to Prince Henry when the prince attended Magdalene College. Moreover, Davies' literary patrons were the family and close associates of Edward deVere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Almost half of his works were dedicated to: Mary Sidney Herbert, Dowager Countess of Pembroke, Oxford's long-time friend and the mother-in-law of his daughter Susan; William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and one of the First Folio's "Incomparable Bretheren"; Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, husband of Susan Vere; Lady Alice Stanley, Dowager Countess of Derby, widow of Ferdinando Stanley; and Edward Herbert,



Figure 3. Henry IV (1367-1413), 1550-1650, British School – possibly Sixteenth Century, Royal Collection, St. James Palace

first Baron Herbert of Cherbury. The contacts of John Davies of Hereford were considerable and most influential.

The portrait of King Henry IV that is depicted on a current English postage stamp is probably a portrait of one of the kings to which Davies referred. Of particular note are the cream-

Henry IV
King of England; Lord of Ireland (more...)



Henry IV depicted in Cassell's "History of England"

Figure 4. Henry IV depicted in Cassell's History of England, 1903

colored tunic, chain of office, elongated reddish mustache and small beard, straight nose, blue-grey eyes, normal-sized earlobe, and the rounded buttons on the tunic. There are 23 extant portraits or engravings of Henry IV — according to the British National Portrait Gallery — and though none were produced in his lifetime, several were either painted or engraved during the Elizabethan age. Others were completed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

A larger, more detailed portrait of King Henry IV (Figure 3) depicts the name Henricus III. Son of John of Gaunt, First Duke of Lancaster, and the grandson of King Edward III, Henry was born in 1367 and gained the crown by usurpation in 1399. He was the first Lancastrian King and the War of the Roses had begun. In this portrait Henry displays in his right hand a symbolic Tudor Rose. In his left, he holds a mace, the symbol of his authority. Remarkably, the Earl of Oxford's family was Lancastrian, and their sympathies were clearly with that version of history. Another illustration, a named engraving of Henry IV, as depicted in *Cassell's History of England*, shows Henry wearing a ring on the little finger of his right hand (Figure 4).

These portraits may be compared to those of Oxford. The well-known Welbeck portrait, itself a copy painted in 1575, shows de Vere at age 25 (Figure 5). Note the hazel-colored eyes, the Roman nose, the enlarged earlobe, and the small reddish mustache. As another example, the undated supposed portrait depicted on



Figure 5. Edward de Vere, 1575, unknown artist, from a lost original, currently held in National Portrait Gallery, Welbeck Abbey

the cover of Katherine Chiljan's fine edition of *Letters and Poems of Edward, Earl of Oxford*, has been fully accepted as being authentic by Oxfordians in England and mainland Europe (Figure 6), (Note 1). This one shows reddish hair and mustache, a Roman nose, a large earlobe, and a fine hand with elongated fingers.

A "pencil drawing squared in ink" (Figure 7) by Henry Bone, after an unknown artist, drawn in 1814 was acquired by Sir George Scharf in 1890 and is now part of the National Portrait Gallery collection. When enlarged, the sitter can be seen to be wearing a ring on the third finger of his left hand and no rings on his right, in contrast to the Cassel engraving (Figure 4). A similar stippled engraving by Charles Knight, after Sylvester Harding, dated 1792, is also held by the National Portrait Gallery (Note 2). The portrait I had long ago suggested was of Edward de Vere (Figure 1) is similar to Henry Bone's engraving. The similarities include the sleeve of the tunic, the head of the

mace, ring on the third finger of the left hand, the button on the head-dress, and the curvature of the head gear where the mace intersects it. In addition, close examination and comparison of the Bone drawing with the authentic portrait of Henry IV reveals numerous variations and reinforces my belief that Figure 1 is, in fact, a previously unrecognized portrait of Edward de Vere dressed for a possible performance of Henry IV.

The portrait of the unidentified English

gentleman in Figure 1 displays some peculiar characteristics as well as some similarities with the Oxford portraits and differences with the known portrait (Figure 3). It features a clumsy and apparently unnecessary overpainting in black at the base of the portrait. The mustache and small beard



Figure 7. King Henry IV, by Henry Bone, after unknown artist, pencil drawing squared in ink for transfer, March 1814, National Portrait Gallery



Figure 6. The Chiljan portrait of Oxford, English School, 1581

appear to have been deliberately blackened with the same paint. On closer examination, the mustache and small beard had originally been reddish in color. Note the clear hazel-colored eyes, enlarged earlobe, and Roman nose that are like the Welbeck portrait of Oxford and the cover illustration of the book of Oxford's poems. Inspect the medallion on the tunic depicting the single lion rampant and the gold chain that is different than the chain in the acknowledged portrait of Henry IV (Note 3). The rounded buttons on the tunic worn by King Henry IV are square-shaped in the anonymous portrait. The head of the mace is in a totally different pattern, also. Finally, note that the subject of the anonymous portrait wears a ring on his third finger, not on his little finger as in the Cassell engraving.

In conclusion, why does the anonymous portrait of Henry

(*De Vere cont.*)

IV vary so much from the authentic portraits of him, and yet so resemble Edward de Vere? Essentially what could be mistaken as a portrait of Henry IV now clearly appears to be a portrait depicting Edward de Vere dressed in the role of King Henry IV. It is plausible that Oxford, having most probably written the plays *Henry IV (Part One and Part Two)* circa 1583 when he was aged 33, performed the actor's role of King Henry IV possibly for the entertainment of the court. This explains why John Davies of Hereford said in "The Scourge of Folly" published in 1610: "Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport, Thou had'st bin a companion for a King."

***Speculum Proditorri*
by John Davies of Hereford,
dedicated to the third
Earl of Pembroke**

*I knew a Man, unworthy as I
am,
And yet too worthie for a coun-
terfeit
Made once a King, who though
it were in game,
Yet was it there where Lords
and Ladyes met;
Who honor'd him, as hee had
bene the same,
And no subjective duties did
forget;
When to him-selfe he smil'd,
and said, lo here
I have for noght, what Kings
doe buy so deere.
No odds there was in shew (and
but in show,
Kings are too often honour'd)
save that he
Was but twelve gamesome daies
to king it so;
And kings, more yeares of
soveraigne misery,
His raigne was short and sweet,
theirs long in wo,*

*He after liv'd; they, with or for
theirs, die.
He had a tast of raigne, with
power to leaue;
They cannot tast, but life must
take or give,
Kings for the treasons to them
offered
Must offer them that offer it,
whereby
The body still may hold up hie
the head,
Lest otherwise they both too
low might lye;
Yet by this meanes, blood, oft,
with hate, is shed,
If bloud so shed, do fall or
much, or hie;
But he without bloud did he
behead his foes,
So made him friends, indeed, or
foes in showes.
He sate in state, that mirth, and
love did stay;
They sit in state that hate oft
undermines;
He, without feare, had some to
take assay;
But they have such, for feare of
sodaine fines;
He poison'd some (to play as
kings might play)
But twas with Suger and per-
fumed wines;
He went with guards, yet stab-
bing feared not:
They go with guards, yet feare
the stab or shot.
He would devise with Ladies, if
he could
Devise with Ladies, without all
suspect;
If they do so, they do not as
they should,
For 'twill be sayd their honors
they neglect;
He could command, and have
all as he would;
But their commands of have not
that effect.
Then who had better Raigns,
judge all of sense,
Either a king indeed, or in
pretence.*

Notes

1. See Katherine Chiljan's articles in the Winter 1997, Summer 1998, and Winter 2003 issues of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*.
2. Sylvester Harding's depiction turns out to be not an oil painting but a small watercolor and is now held by the Folger Shakespeare Library.
3. The rampant lions is featured on two different portions of Oxford's coat of arms (see illustration at Robert Sean Brazil's site at <http://www.elizabethanauthors.com/euphues-england-01.htm>). Other noble families of the period also display rampant lions on their coats of arms, however.

Derran Charlton has been an honorary member of the De Vere Society since 1989. He is described as being an indefatigable Oxfordian researcher having endlessly researched primary records at the British Library, the Bodleian, Oxford; the colleges at Cambridge University; Lambeth Palace; numerous Records Offices; the Folger Library; Huntington; Harvard; amongst household collections and private archives including Wentworth Woodhouse, Oxboro Hall and others for more than twenty years. He has given presentations at The Globe; Castle Hedingham Historical Society; Montacute House; Concordia University, and at various meetings and conventions in England, Canada, and the USA. He has compiled more than 320 files of Research Notes and Oxfordian correspondence, being a regular contributor to the SOS/DVS newsletters and various European publications. The late Charlton Ogburn wrote that he was "astounded and flabbergasted by Derran's Oxfordian endeavors, researches, and findings". He may be reached at: dcharlton102@aol.com.

Ben Jonson & *The Tempest*: “The Copie may be Mistaken for the Principall”

Marie Merkel

Meanwhile, we make it clear that we do not rest upon these earlier date theories, and that the rejection of “*The Tempest*” must in our view be incorporated ultimately into the general argument. J.T. Looney, *Shakespeare Identified*, 1920

J. T. Looney was quite the optimist. He confidently left the job of collating *The Tempest*’s many curious anomalies, and the search for an alternate author who fit the resultant profile, to his followers. Since scholars and critics routinely acknowledge *The Tempest*’s unique departures from what Shakespeare had accomplished in the past, there’s a secure foundation of difference for us to build upon. Yet most Oxfordians remain as enchanted by *The Tempest* as their Stratfordian counterparts, who regard the play, often with sentimental awe, as the Bard’s final solo work.

As long as we agree to sequester *The Tempest* from authorship interrogation, Stratfordians retain their silver bullet against the earl of Oxford, whose death in 1604 made it impossible for him to write a Jacobean play intricately bound to other works written between 1609 and 1614. Stratfordians have wisely concentrated on the play’s apparent connection to Strachey’s account of the 1609 shipwreck of the Sea-Venture. Why is this wise? Because more often than not, the play’s other Jacobean elements revolve around the work of Ben Jonson, the man upon whose word the Stratfordian Monument rests. Proof that he tampered with any part of their ace-in-the-hole against Oxford



Credit: City of Westminster Archive Centre, London, UK / The Bridgeman Art Library

Ben Jonson (1573-1637), engraved by George Vertue (1684-1756), 1730 (engraving), Honthorst, Gerrit van (1590-1656)

would be bad news indeed. Stratfordians simply cannot afford to reject *The Tempest*, much less hand one four-beat couplet of it over to Ben.

Oxfordians, on the other hand, do not need *The Tempest* to secure their case. “Spell-stopt” by its charms, however, they have yet to take full advantage of *The Tempest*’s strange parody of Ben Jonson’s *The Alchemist* of 1610 (Lucking; Murphy 5-8; Sokol 196-98) or the even stranger parody of *The Tempest* found in Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair* of 1614 (Burnett, chs. 5 & 6). *The Tempest*’s insistent echoes of Jonson’s masques, such as *Hymenaei* of 1606 or his 1609 *Masque of Queens* also await Oxfordian researchers. Overlooked up to now: the presence of at least 37 words, proper names like Prospero and Stephano, and a dozen or more phrases that Shakespeare *never* used, appear in *The Tempest* and in Ben Jonson’s works. As Jonson slyly insinuated in the induction

to *Bartholomew Fair*, there’s an awful lot of unexplained heads mixing with other men’s heels going on between 1609 and 1614.

In 2001, when I began profiling the elusive sources and other intellectual and prosodic oddities of *The Tempest*, Ben Jonson’s name swiftly rose to the top of a very short list of poets capable of crafting drama of this caliber. Last May at the “Symposium: Shakespeare from the Oxfordian Perspective” in Watertown, Massachusetts, I presented a paper entitled “Raising the Dead: Ben Jonson & *The Tempest*.” My focus was not on what makes *The Tempest* non-Shakespearean, or non-Oxfordian, but on the many unexplained or overlooked Jonsonian elements in the play. Along with a brief outline of my case for Jonson as author of *The Tempest*, I invited the audience to entertain this controversial idea, even if they were sure they disagreed, simply to see what questions might come up. I hope that my readers will do the same.

The argument

Sometime between 1609 and 1611, Ben Jonson (1572-1637) knowingly forged a new Shakespearean play. By linking *The Tempest* to events and dramatic productions current in 1609-14, Jonson helped to maintain the brand name of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and direct attention away from Edward Oxenford (1550-1604) as author of the works. By recycling situations and characters or *humours* from his earlier plays, and by employing a wide range of his

(Ben Jonson cont.)

own dramatic preferences, Ben Jonson left an indelible signature on his forgery.

What follows are Jonson's possible motive, means and opportunity for perpetrating this hoax and five dramatic elements of *The Tempest* where we might discern Jonson's hand.

Motive

Why would Ben Jonson want to maintain the brand name of William Shakespeare and direct attention away from Edward Oxenford as author of works?

There is clear evidence of bad blood between Shakespeare and Jonson during the time of the so-called *poetomachia* or Poet Wars of 1597-1602 as an unbiased examination of the literary evidence – especially in Jonson's *Poetaster* and Dekker's *Satiromastix* – will confirm. If Shakespeare is Oxford, how does this change the topical narrative in these plays? In 1597 Jonson's collaboration with Nashe on *The Isle of Dogs* landed him in prison where Elizabeth's infamous torturer, Richard Topcliffe, questioned him. The scandal also eliminated one of The Globe's major competitors, The Swan. Since Oxford (as Master Apis Lapis) appears to have been Nashe's patron, we need to re-assess the earl's stance towards Nashe and Jonson, their risqué comedy, and their association with The Swan and Pembroke's Men at this disruptive juncture.

At the end of Act IV, Prospero unleashes his hellhounds on Caliban; in the seventh scene of Act IV in Jonson's *The Case is Altered*, Jacques de Prie unleashes his mastiff on Peter Onion — another back-talking servant

who dares to desire his master's daughter. "Popular tradition held that the queen kenneled her royal hounds on the Isle of Dogs," (Riggs 32) a location that resurfaces in *Eastward Ho*, Jonson's second provocative collaboration (with Marston and Chapman, in 1605) packed with mockery of Shakespeare's work and Oxford's financial distress. Echoes of these plays, and of *Poetaster* and *Satiromastix* reverberate throughout *The Tempest*, accounting for several of the unique words and phrases shared with Jonson (such as "invisible to every eye" and "care of thee" from *The Case is Altered*; "zenith" and "in case" from *Poetaster*.)

"What's past is prologue," *The Tempest's* villain, Antonio, helpfully informs us (2.2.249). How far back should we look for that past? "Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since," Prospero insists to his daughter (1.2.53). For the audience at the play's first recorded performance of 1611, counting backward would lead them directly into the dark abysm of the *Poetomachia*. This inglorious war of words ended when Shakespeare, along with the poetasters Marston and Dekker, publicly administered a humiliating purge to Jonson, one that made him "bewray his credit" (*Parnassus* 138). For Benjamin the Bricklayer – whose name, like Prospero's, means *fortunate* (Miles 6; Vaughan 23) – a chance to even the score with the seventeenth earl of Oxford would be well worth the wait of twice twelve years. When Prospero brags about his "potent Art," we may want to keep in mind Jonson's famous declaration that "Shakespeare wanted Arte." (Drummond 4)

Aside from personal grievances, Jonson was also the most prominent member of the Pembroke literary coterie, a circle whose base of reference was the martyred hero and poet, Sir Philip Sidney, "who had been one of Jonson's earliest formative influences." (Miles 88) Sir Philip's brother, Robert, along with Robert's three children (including the poet Mary, wife of Sir Robert Wroth) as well as William Herbert — son of Sidney's sister Mary, Countess of Pembroke — all offered Jonson some form of patronage or hospitality, which he reciprocated by immortalizing them in his poems.

Oxfordians will not need an itemization of the many ways in which we know that Lord Oxford and Sir Philip were not the best of friends. Oxford's mockery of Philip in his plays — long after the knight's tragic death from a battle wound in 1586 — probably made him more enemies than Oxfordians have been willing to acknowledge. In 1616, Ben Jonson, the most linguistically potent of these overlooked foes, risked public scorn to publish the first collected works of any English playwright. By 1623, he was London's premier literary authority.

As a great poet himself, Jonson knew the greatness in his rival's works. He may have been the major force behind collecting and preserving the earl's literary remains; no one else would have known so well their true worth. Forging a play, however, that helped to disconnect the earl of Oxford's callous wit from Shakespeare's name may have been the right thing to do in Jonson's eyes – a gift to both his patrons and to future readers.

Jonson also had a reputation for being a practical joker. As his host in Scotland, Sir William Drummond remarked, Ben was “given rather to lose a friend than a jest.” (Drummond 27) I think he did it simply to prove that he could. His own comedies did not always please, and in 1611 his ambitious play *Catiline* flopped. The common sort preferred sweet Shakespeare who’d given them bad-boy rogues like Falstaff to idolize and laugh at. Disgusted by their ignorance, Jonson forged a Shakespearean fantasy guaranteed to thrill these die-hard fans, and King James to boot. But he forged it from his own metal, and purposely left his fingerprints all over the crime scene.

Means

How did Ben Jonson go about forging a play that most scholars and critics regard as an authentic Shakespearean triumph?

Jonson was a poetic genius who, “like most Elizabethan schoolboys,” learned his trade through devoted *imitation* of his chosen masters (Barton 16). In his *Timber: or Discoveries made upon Men and Matter*, he gives us his *modus operandi* for forging literary masters:

The third requisite in our Poet, or Maker, is Imitation, to bee able to convert the substance, or Riches of an other Poet, to his owne use. To make choise of one excellent man above the rest, and so to follow him, till he grow very Hee: or, so like him, as the Copie may be mistaken for the Principall. Not, as a Creature, that swallowes, what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested; but, that feedes with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, devide, and turne all into nourishment (Jonson 93).

In essence Jonson describes a literary cannibal: one who feeds on the body of another’s work, thus transforming the original genius into something uniquely his own. This public confession of his own digestive practices may go some way towards explaining why Ben’s contemporaries referred to him in *Satiromastix*, published in 1602, as an *anthropophagite*.

We know that Jonson was sufficiently proficient at *imitation* to earn a living with this art, since on September 5, 1601, he received a generous payment from Henslowe for additions to Thomas Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy* (Miles 65). This journey-work required that, “to some extent, his nature would have to subdue itself to what it worked in, like the dyer’s hand.” (Barton 15) The play was well known to London audiences by this time, and Ned Alleyn — the famous actor who played a principal role in the work — “could not have welcomed an Hieronimo who seemed to be two different people, speaking in two radically opposed styles.” (Barton 16)

To this day, scholars have trouble finding Jonson’s style in these additions, yet Barton gives two persuasive examples of Jonson caught in the “act of ventriloquism.” (17) First, there are the “four elegies in *The Underwood* (XXXVIII, XXXIX, XL, XLI) (that) have for long been a subject of critical dispute, precisely because the voice speaking sounds so like Donne’s.” Three of these, says Barton, “...are credibly the work of a Jonson choosing for the moment to pay his friend the compliment of judicious imitation.” (17)

Collaborations also asked the playwright to conform his man-

ners to the group project. Jonson participated in several of these — most notably, *Eastward Ho*, Barton’s second example of style subdued to the work. For all we know, there may be undetected additions by Jonson within Shakespeare’s plays — especially in the late romances — since “even the computer finds it difficult now to distinguish Jonson’s hand from that of Chapman, or Marston, in *Eastward Ho*.” (Barton 17)

Jonson also indulged in the “verse form called the *recusatio* (refusal). A *recusatio* evokes the style and content of a poem the author refuses to write.” (Riggs 77) As David Riggs observes:

This paradoxical combination of disclaimer and imitation crops up repeatedly in Poetaster. Jonson disavows Ovid, yet he retells the story of Ovid and Julia in the lovers’ own words. . . . In the last act, he brings Virgil on stage, has him recite forty-two lines of the Aeneid in Ben Jonson’s new English translation, and then abruptly halts the recital. (78)

Riggs concludes his discussion with this subversive recognition: “The whole performance is a staged *recusatio*. Jonson hints that he could write in the style of Ovid, or Shakespeare, or Virgil, *if he felt inclined to do so*; but he does not.” (78) (emphasis mine) In other words, there’s nothing in the highly Romantic, Ovid-and-Virgil-infused *Tempest* beyond the range of Ben Jonson’s “potent Art”.

Opportunity

How was Ben Jonson in the right place at the right time to pull off his extraordinary hoax?

Jonson was at the height of his poetic art at the time of the first

recorded performance of *The Tempest* in 1611. He had access to the many possible sources of *The Tempest*, including news that reached London in 1610 that all had survived the wreck of the Sea-Venture.

Like Shakespeare, Jonson wouldn't have needed this news to write of shipwrecks and miraculous survivals, or to infuse a flavor of New World adventures into his play. William Strachey — the survivor who wrote the letter that seems most echoed in the play — was, however, Jonson's friend. In 1605 he contributed a prefatory sonnet to Jonson's play, *Sejanus*. As time has proven, select details from his friend's account of the 1609 Bermuda tempest, seemingly interwoven with the text of *The Tempest*, would move Jonson's literary forgery beyond the reach of Edward de Vere, the seventeenth earl of Oxford, should posterity ever find him behind Shakespeare's mask. "He died too soon!" may have been precisely what Ben Jonson had hoped we would say.

How do we know that Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*? The two records of performance at court (1611 and 1613) do *not* list the names of authors, and before its first appearance in print in 1623, no one anywhere ever referred to *The Tempest* as by Shakespeare. We have only the dubious word of the First Folio collectors for its authenticity. Jonson's proximity to this publication venture would have given him the chance to slip his piece of faux-Shakespeare into the line-up of "Comedies, Histories and Tragedies". The evidence of his active role in the First Folio project is circumstantial but compelling:

- In his own 1616 Folio, Jonson dedicated his Epigrams — a collection he referred to three times within the first page-and-a-half as "my book", echoing Prospero — to his patron, William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, one of the "incomparable brethren" to whom Shakespeare's Folio was dedicated.
- Jonson contributed two prefatory poems of surpassing ambiguity to the project, poems which helped to secure William Shakespeare of Stratford on Avon as author.
- As George Greenwood deftly summarized in 1921, the two letters in the Folio signed by Heminges and Condell — both of whom acted in many of Jonson's plays — bear a suspicious resemblance to Jonson's prose style.
- Ralph Crane, the scrivener who prepared some texts of the First Folio, worked with Jonson in the years before 1623. Jonson's editorial preferences show up in Crane's work as well as in *The Tempest*, a play that stands out from all the other Folio texts for its accuracy and careful preparation. "By comparing Jonson's holograph of *The Masque of Queens* (1609) with Crane's earliest known transcript, Jonson's *Pleasure Reconcild to Virtue* — presumably made under the supervision of Jonson, who may well have "trained" him — Howard-Hill finds a great many of Jonson's practices to have their counterparts in Crane's later transcripts." (McAvoy 80)
- "The scribes who prepared the copy for the Shakespeare folio abandoned the "light pointing" or "playhouse punctuation" of the Shakespeare quartos and adopted the so-called logical pointing that Jonson had employed in his Works. The extensive use of parentheses, semicolons, and end-stopped lines in the 1623 folio

owes more to Jonson's example than to Shakespeare's habits of composition." (Riggs 276)

As David Riggs observes, "the men who prepared the folio for the press (and Jonson may well have been one of them) remade Shakespeare in Jonson's image." (276) With these close ties and working relationships, Jonson was thus in a position to offer the play as genuine Shakespeare with or without the connivance of others, who may not have been capable of judging its authenticity.

Five Jonsonian elements in *The Tempest*:

Though there are many more, these five categories should provide a starting place for codifying "the substance, or Riches" of *The Tempest*. Which, if any, of the ingredients in its magic must be unadulterated Shakespeare? Which appear to be Shakespeare-as-digested-by-Ben Jonson? Which are actually anti-Shakespearean, and/or original to Jonson? There are no proofs in these brief glimpses, only suggestions for research projects designed to re-evaluate, from a Jonsonian point of view, the forged Shakespearean essence of *The Tempest*.

Character

Exhibit A in the case for Jonson as master-forgery of *The Tempest* should be his 1598 hit, *Every Man in His Humour*, where we find the author's first Prospero and his first Stephano, along with Jonson's other perennial humours in their youthful garb. In *The Tempest*, we see the same themes and humours distilled in hindsight and tempered by maturity when revisited by Jonson twelve years later, perhaps concurrent with work on *The Alchemist* in 1610, or shortly thereafter. (Fig. 1)

Figure 1

1598 *Every Man in his Humour*

- Musco (Italian for “the fly”), a servant
- Cob, part fish/cannibal
- Cob, the water-bearer
- Lorenzo Jr. + Hesperida = true love
- Stephano, a frippery-loving gull
- Bobadil, a drunken braggart
- Clement, an honorable wise man
- Lorenzo Sr., doting father
- Lorenzo Sr., paragon of reason
- Antonio, privileged dark wit

1610-1611 *The Tempest*

- Ariel, “an ayrie Spirit” and servant
- Caliban, part fish/cannibal
- Caliban, the log-bearer
- Ferdinand + Miranda = true love
- Trinculo, a frippery-loving gull
- Stephano, a drunken braggart
- Gonzalo, an honorable wise man
- Prospero, doting father
- Prospero, paragon of reason
- Prospero, privileged light wit

As Oxfordian scholar Chuck Berney pointed out in the question and answer session after my Watertown talk, a comparison of Shakespeare’s witty clowns with *The Tempest*’s buffoons or his several beloved or honorable characters named Antonio with Prospero’s villainous brother of the same name, would be a rich vein of inquiry.

Vocabulary and usage

“Insisting that individuals are best identified through speech, Jonson writes in *Discoveries* that “*Language* most shows the man; speak that I may see thee”. We derive our most personal thoughts from public language, but inflections of style identify poets as the creators of the words they use.” (Bednarz 28) The 37 words and a dozen or more phrases I’ve found thus far in *The Tempest* that appear nowhere else in Shakespeare’s canon, but do appear in Jonson’s works, provide intriguing glimpses into the inter-textual dependence of *The Tempest* on an intimate knowledge of Jonson’s published opinions and customary usages.

A few examples of words unique to *The Tempest* but

found in Jonson, that an audience may have localized as peculiar to him: *roarers, furze, zenith, correspondent, imposter,*

The Tempest sounds very much as if Shakespeare, in his dotage, had lost his bearings and fallen under the rugged charm of Ben Jonson’s oppositional style.

fens, marmazet, totters, aspersion, corolary, Barley, frippery, mushrumps and *chesse*. Some unique phrases that are found nowhere else in Shakespeare but do appear in quintessential Jonsonian passages such as: “use your authority” (Tudeau-Clayton 40). Others that I discovered are: *Liberall Artes, in case, expect it, barns and garners,* and *My Bird*.

Prosody and rhetoric

To my ear, *The Tempest*’s “rough magic” – aggressive enjambment, “weak” or double-endings, syntactic inversions, and an austere use of figures – suggests Ben Jonson’s manly defiance of

Shakespeare’s Euphuism. A systematic comparison of *The Tempest*’s prosody and rhetoric with Jonson’s choices may support this impression.

Jonas A. Barish compares the two playwrights thus: “Shakespeare belongs, on the whole, to the older school of rhetorical ornament, Jonson to the new school of anti-rhetorical naturalness. Shakespeare uses a syntax derived from Lyly, in which artful symmetry plays a cardinal role. In Jonson, syntactic effects are equally studied, but with a different purpose: to dislocate symmetry and thus create the illusion of the absence of rhetoric.” (Barish 2) *The Tempest* sounds very much as if Shakespeare, in his dotage, had lost his bearings and fallen under the rugged charm of Ben Jonson’s oppositional style.

Classical structure

Two aspects of *The Tempest*’s structure betray a clear Jonsonian influence: its ostentatious use of the unities of time, space and action, and its experimental use of the “four-part structure . . . invented by Terence . . . , revived by Machiavelli . . .

(Ben Johnson cont.)

and *naturalized* on the English stage by Ben Jonson." (Boughner 10)

Boughner's essay, "Jonsonian Structure in *The Tempest*" gives a compelling description of *The Tempest's* dependence on Jonson's neo-classical dramatic import: "Before him as he contemplated the disposition of the material of *The Tempest* . . . Shakespeare found an unembarrassing richness of theory and application." (6) Charting the clearly dated progression of Jonson's experiments with this structure may give us an unexpected new piece of dating evidence for *The Tempest*.

As for the unities, *The Tempest* is the first play with Shakespeare's name on it to bother with them since his very early *Comedy of Errors*. Jonson, however, aggressively called attention to his rival's failure to heed the unities in his 1616 prologue to the revised *Every Man in His Humour*. He obviously relished the challenge of sparring with classical strictures. In 1610 he perfected his game — as F. H. Mares observes, "Not only has *The Alchemist* the most complete unity of action of any of Jonson's plays, it also observes the other two of Aristotle's imputed unities with more exactness than any other play of Jonson's." (xiv) Why would the earl of Oxford interrupt his astonishing run of expansive dramatic singularity to play the game by Benjamin's arbitrary rules?

Masques, anti-masques and spectacles

This is well-established Jonsonian territory, implicitly acknowledged by all scholars

of the play. Under King James, Jonson became a master of these hybrid entertainments, and scholars routinely turn to his work to explain phrases and stage directions associated with the masque-like spectacles in *The Tempest*, such as these phrases taken from the First Folio edition:

- *confused noyse*
- *Solemne and strange Musicke*
- *Weake Masters*
- *Hymen's Lamps*
- *Peacocks flye amaine*
- *Prosper on the top*
- *the Great Globe*

Studies by Gary Schmidgall in *Shakespeare and the Courtly Aesthetic*, 1981 and John G. Demary in *Shakespeare and the Spectacle of Strangeness: The Tempest and the Transformation of Renaissance Theatrical Forms*, 1998, document *The Tempest's* many echoes of Jonson's masques. Regardless of how Shakespeare used masques in plays printed before 1604, the unique experiments in *The Tempest* show a writer acutely aware of Ben Jonson's Jacobean contributions to the genre. Jonson also left notes on the extensive research underlying the surface simplicity of his masques, much of which overlaps with the wide-ranging knowledge informing *The Tempest*.

"Next to truth, a confirmed error does well." Ben Jonson, induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, 1614

With Shakespeare as author of *The Tempest*, the play remains an echo chamber of enigmas and anomalies, more so than any other play in the canon. Harold Bloom's wonderful intuition holds firm: "Mysteri-

ously, it seems an inaugural work." (673)

Yet once you begin looking at the play as Ben Jonson's forgery — an error he personally confirmed in the First Folio — you'll find premonitions of *The Tempest* throughout his collected works, as well as in the one play he chose not to preserve, *The Case is Altered*. As late as 1629, in *The New Inn* or *The Magnetic Lady* of 1631, he was still playing and re-playing *The Tempest* soundtrack in his mind.

If Ben Jonson had included *The Tempest* in his own Folio of 1616 — rather than in Mr. William Shakespeare's Folio of 1623 — I believe that discerning scholars after Looney would have seen the play for what it is: a brilliant pastiche and critique of Edward Oxenford's life and work. Through his choice of sources, employment of his own dramatic innovations, and by internal references within his published works, Ben Jonson anchored *The Tempest* in the Jacobean-Jonsonian literary milieu of 1609 - 1614, safely beyond the earl of Oxford's reach.

Marie Merkel's poems have appeared in The Carolina Quarterly and The New Republic. The first three chapters of her unpublished manuscript, The First Mousetrap: Titus Andronicus and the Tudor Massacre of the Howards (a full-length study of the play's topical references to Edward Oxenford's Howard relations) appear on her website, www.thefirstmousetrap.org. She wishes to express her thanks to Lori DiLiddo, Nicole Doyle and Anna-Marie Saintonge for their perceptive comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

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Veritas

*To Edward de Vere, Earl of Bulbec,
Lord Oxenford, Great Lord Chamberlain,
the Never Recognized:*

Bulbec earl Bulbec earl
Your true heraldry unfurl
Shake the spear, hand uncurl
Bulbec earl

Chamberlain Chamberlain
Verify the inner slain
The wounded heart, the uttered pain
Truth does never wane
Chamberlain

Oxenford Oxenford
Truth high King, you a Lord
Through time and lies downcourse poured
The lancet pen a mighty sword
Oxenford

E. de Vere E. de Vere
Ever you are singing here
True song will persevere
Beauty seer
E. de Vere

from "Three Tributes for de Vere" by WJ Ray
www.wjray.net

Proofs of Oxfordian authorship in the Shakespearean apocrypha

WJ Ray

With appreciation for Katherine Chiljan's analysis of "A Lover's Complaint" (Chiljan 5-8) as Oxfordian, I should like to extend the discussion of Shakespearean apocrypha, and to establish a like conclusion, that two more of the minor poems are traceable to Oxford — certainly not to a provincial commoner — and are linguistically consistent with the accepted Shakespearean canon.

Indeed "Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a brook", "Sonnet IV" from *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and "Sonnet IV" from *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music* go some distance to show the academy's judgment — that those poems are not Shakespearean — ignores plain literary evidence to the contrary.

The 1927 edition of *The Yale Shakespeare* includes a volume of short ballads, lyrics, and narratives edited by Albert Feuillerat. His commentary states without much elaboration, "Out of the twenty poems only five are indisputably by Shakespeare. These are numbers I, II, III, V of *The Passionate Pilgrim* and II of *Sonnets to Sundry Note*" (*The Yale/Venus* 185).

He does say about the others, "It should be also be noted that IV, VI, and IX (of *The Passionate Pilgrim*) are remarkable for their lack of imagery; they scarcely contain any simile and metaphor. The man who wrote them was singularly devoid of imagination, a thing which cannot be said of Shakespeare . . ." (186).

Although I discuss only "Sonnet IV" below, sonnets VI and IX are Oxfordian/Shakespearean for the same reasons. The reader is invited to study them as a unit.

Stephen Greenblatt in his relatively recent *Will in the World* repeats Feuillerat's language without attribution or detail: "(Of the twenty poems in the collection, only five are actually by Shakespeare)" (Greenblatt 235).

Dunton-Downer and Riding similarly comment in their 2004 volume, *Essential Shakespeare Handbook*: "In fact, only five of its 20 poems are Shakespeare's" (Dunton-Downer 458).

Greenblatt off-handedly communicates to the lay reader via the parentheses that his unsupported assertion may be granted on authority alone and needs no further inquiry. We have been facilely led from the ground of scholarship into the domain of "actuality" with no logical bridge between. The term: *Only five are indisputably* has been abandoned. The unconditional term: *only five are actually* has been substituted. Feuillerat allowed that there once may have been a dispute but it was resolved for five poems. Greenblatt erases any dispute by dismissing disputation.

None of the scholars takes into consideration that "Sweet Cytherea" is allegory, a device employed doubly to narrate surface events and covertly tell another tale. This critical oversight betrays unexamined class prejudice. They couldn't imagine their man as autobiographi-

cally complex enough to use poetic disguise, since the broad broom called genius seemingly sweeps all personal detail aside. Accordingly, though contrary to human nature and creativity, the works exist marvelously free of authorial motivation. This merely flattens and de-humanizes the writing. All artistic creation begins with someone's personal experience in a social frame. If I am right that Oxford wrote this poem, "Venus and Adonis", and the rest, then it makes sense that his primary narrative method was the use of allegory. Oxford had much to conceal and yet more to tell that was true.

I "Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a brook"

Rather than accept scholars' statements as definitive, let us go to the text of the purged number IV sonnet in *The Passionate Pilgrim*:

Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a
brook
With young Adonis, lovely,
fresh, and green,
Did court the lad with many a
lovely look,
Such looks as none could look
but beauty's queen,
She told him stories to delight
his ear;
She show'd him favours to al-
lure his eye;
To win his heart, she touch'd
him here and there,—

Touches so soft still conquer
chastity.
But whether unripe years did
want conceit,
Or he refus'd to take her figur'd
proffer,

*The tender nibbler would not
touch the bait,
But smile and jest at every
gentle offer:
Then fell she on her back, fair
queen, and toward:
He rose and ran away; ah! fool
too froward. (The Yale/Venus
116)*

From the point of view favoring an historical affair between Oxford and Elizabeth I, this is as blatant a Mrs. Robinson-like failed seduction as could be packed into the Shakespearean sonnet format.

Comparing the historical Queen and youth to the verbal alchemy shown in "Sweet Cytherea", we find remarkable fidelity between what we know of the affair and its artistic depiction. Fiction feigns more than fact can say.

Sweet Cytherea, named after one of mythology's erotic deities, symbolically equivalent with Venus, refers the reader back to the Spartan island Cythera, known for murex, a purple dye sanctified since antiquity as royal (Smith 101). In reading the poem we are left in no doubt which level of royalty Cytherea represents. From beginning to end, the tale's moving party is "beauty's queen", and she, "fair queen", falls on her back as Adonis bolts running like the wind.

According to Greek myth, the Island of Cythera was the birthplace of Aphrodite, goddess of love. In this poem the archetypal lover, "beauty's queen", sits by a BROOK. Lord Ox-FORD thereby embeds his personal signature, as Alfred Hitchcock cinematically presents his comic rotundity, in the first entry of the drama. The name Arthur Brooke has been proposed as an

early pseudonym of Oxford's. In further description, the youth is "young Adonis, lovely, fresh, and green." The French equivalent for the word green is *vert*, the Spanish is *verde*. The latter word is a clever reverse anagram of de Vere. Both Oxford and Elizabeth spoke Spanish. Fresh in Dutch is *vers*. The adjective *lovely* shares with the sonnets' nomenclature the sense of majesty and high rank, someone worthy of allegiance. The poet is alluding to a young god of the sun. Collectively the line is a string of clues about himself.

The poem's reluctant hero is named after Adonis, traditionally the hunter beloved of Venus and later slain by a boar, the de Vere totemic animal, *verres*, in Latin. Working from my assumption that Oxford later lowered his visor and masked himself Shake-speare, the poet here adumbrates key elements of the 1593 epic poem, "Venus and Adonis", prefiguring the hero's hunting avocation, the tryst's conjugal dynamic of older woman and younger man, and most significantly, the surrounding world — wild and perfect Nature.

The Greek word *therios* — from which is derived Cytherea — indicates the animal universe. Sweet Cytherea is a passionate creature. She abandons herself to her chosen love. Both the early poem and later epic rely upon the book of Venus and Adonis in Ovid's *The Metamorphoses* wherein Venus was so smitten that she had "forgotten Cythera's flowery island" — in other words her purple robed majesty (Hughes 130).

In the poem's two-veiled reference to Elizabeth I — who

received frequent tributes in her reign as the moon goddess Cynthia — the name Cytherea is nearly homonymic with Cynthia, granting her a like status as simultaneously the goddess of the moon and the chase. The moon votary in the poem encounters the short-living sun god Adonis, relying for metaphorical power upon the bond between those two celestial archetypes.

Oxford continued to couch his life experience in mythological terms when in "Venus and Adonis" he expanded into epic form the dramatic features of his experiment in this Shakespearean sonnet.

We see a distinctive Oxfordian stylistic feature as well, the repetition of an ending word or phrase in the beginning phrase of the following line, a signature technique that links together the obscure poem, Oxford as its author, and the pseudonymous cypher Shake-speare. Note that the words *look* and *touch* repeat in this poem: lines 3-4 and 7-8. The same repeat pattern also occurs in "Grief of Mind" attributed to Oxford: "What plague is greater than the grief of mind?/ The grief of mind that eat in every vein. . ." (*Shakespeare* Vol. I 599). It occurs somewhere else, in *Comedy of Errors*: "She is so hot because the meat is cold/ The meat is cold because you come not home . . ." (*Shakespeare* Vol. I 599). No other poet of the era but Oxford took on the challenge of echoing phrases end to end.

In a single rarely read poem with no reputation we have encountered a master of evocation: evoked identity clues, foreign language meanings, mythic analogy, and stylistic cues. For a final

identifying evocation, before the youth (Oxford) physically breaks away, in the thirteenth written line his patronymic Vere (properly pronounced Vair) scripturally mates with the royal love-goddess. The words *fair* and *queen* — fair being a near homonym to Vere — conjoin as a phrase as Cytherea falls on her back and Adonis flees.

This verbal ambiguity of fair/vair no doubt had more evocative power to the author's original courtly audience than it does in today's predisposition toward a rural superman as author. We can't understand the words' meaning if we ignore what they tell about him — his experience and his social frame. Certain words mean so much to a writer they must reappear. *Fair* is such a word for Oxford/Shake-speare. *Fair* did reappear in subtle code in the sonnets' reference to the Fair Youth, de Vere's son Henry, as proposed in Whittemore's thesis: (Whittemore 820). Very early, *fair* had become a possessive, evocative of someone de Vere held dear. *Fair queen* takes on the meaning that she is his and of him, not only that she is compelling.

As the brilliant but forgotten classicist Frederick W. Locke asked, "Can any reader of poetry deny that evocation is one of the prime creators of metaphor?" (Locke 304). And can any writer evoke meaningful cues and references without the audience able to hear them? There is no evidence whatever that Shakspeare of Stratford moved in Elizabethan court circles or knew of Elizabeth's and Oxford's mutual past.

The cleverly planted epistemologies and allusions in "Sweet Cytherea" may escape the first-time reader or incurious scholar — hence Feuillerat's rejection. One may argue that the poem is not high Shakespeare: it has a felicitous rather than profound narrative style. The poem manifests, regardless of that conceit, masterly command of language and of a poetic form first used by Oxford's uncle Henry Howard. The poem so effortlessly conveys familiarity with the courtly romantic tradition that "Sweet Cytherea" appeared in the poetic miscellany entitled *THE Passionate Pilgrime/By W. Shakespeare in 1599* (*The Yale/Venus* 185).

Dating the poem is a matter of deduction, as we have no record. Something that indicates its general time-span is the poem's post-youthful tone. The hero both lives and fears the power of his carnal vitality, a youthful trait. He impulsively runs away from his tryst — as the youthful Oxford escaped Elizabeth's court to Europe in 1573. I propose that this would place the affair in the early 1570s, and the poetic representation some time later but before the publication of "Venus and Adonis" in 1592-3. As to why the late publication in 1599 — according to Looney, after 1576 only three of Oxford's poems were published under his name during his lifetime (*Shakespeare* Vol. I 553). This poem's author, like the plays', lay hidden in plain sight.

Only much later, in *Venus and Adonis*, did the force of Adonis'/Oxford's animal nature become explicit. There Adonis' beloved (and valuable) steed received a testimonial not matched since Virgil and Alexander the Great.

And there the boar, Oxford's ancestral totem, personified the moral danger of his own animal desire. The theme of animal desire reappeared in the late Shakespearean canon, notably in *Othello*, where that theme became as inexorable and lethal as the demonic boar of classical myth.

For our present discussion though, we see recurring clues that an aristocrat, self-coded in the poem as both de Vere and Oxford, wrote "Sonnet IV" of *The Passionate Pilgrim*. Furthermore, its narrative is consistent with Oxford's station, his love affair with Elizabeth I, and his worship of Nature. The poem's thematic features and dramatis personae are identical to those of Shake-speare's first heir of his invention: "Venus and Adonis".

II "Whenas thine eye hath chose the dame,"

To take another example, Feuillerat rejected "Sonnet IV" in *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music*, and his criticism is brief:

"The other poems in the book [*The Passionate Pilgrim*] — with the exception of VII, X, XIII, XIV and I, III, IV of *Sonnets to Sundry Notes*, which have nothing Shakespearean about them — have been restored to their owners . . ." (*The Yale/Venus* 186).

The referenced Number IV poem is not a sonnet but, taking the title of the cycle literally — *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music* — it is a musical interlude, elegant instruction to young courtiers about the high ritual of wooing. By the meter and stanza length, the poem was meant to be sung, perhaps with the accompaniment of a lute.

Oxford was recognized early and late as a highly skilled musician. The sweet songs scattered through the plays are explainable on this basis. There has never been any documented connection between the grain merchant Shakspeare and the English ballad tradition. The passage discussing music in *The Merchant of Venice* remains the most articulate statement of music's effect on character written in English. (*The Yale/Merchant* 69-88) John Farmer praised Oxford. William Byrd collaborated with him. Number IV begins:

*Whenas thine eye hath chose
the dame,
And stall'd the deer that thou
should'st strike,
Let reason rule things worthy
blame,
As well as fancy, partial wight:
Take counsel of some wiser
head,
Neither too young nor yet un-
wed . . .* (*The Yale/Venus* 126)

The song is high Renaissance fare, light-heartedly conceived by someone "neither too young nor yet unwed" and offered in the context of a court of rich barbarism:

*Spare not to spend, and chiefly
there/ Where thy desert may
merit praise,
By ringing in thy lady's ear:
The strongest castle, tower, and
town,
The golden bullet beats it
down."* (*The Yale/Venus*)

The golden bullet refers to the modern missile, a rifle ball, being compared to Cupid's golden arrow of love. Modern weaponry was available only to the upper class, and only its members could pursue large game.

The instruction though light is not trivial. It aims, like Messer Pietro Bembo in Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, (78) to cultivate the virtue of the courtier:

*Serve always with assured
trust,
And in thy suit be humble true;
Unless thy lady prove unjust,
Seek never thou to choose anew.
When time shall serve, be thou
not slack
To proffer, though she put thee
back.* (*The Yale/Venus* 127)

Further on in the lesson sex appears without prudish constraint, reminiscent of Chaucer: "Were kisses all the joys in bed,/ One woman would another wed."

The author displays comprehensive knowledge of an idealized courtesan's tempestuousness, inclination to be courted by flattery, wish to be pursued, voluptuous lust, and charming hypocrisy. The ballad is a musical equivalent, or perhaps a whimsical variation of "If women would be fair and never fond", attributed by Chiljan to the composer William Byrd, and by Looney to the early de Vere (*Letters* 172; *Shakespeare* Vol. I 595).

I am inclined to attribute the song to Oxford, because of the narrator's closing reference to himself as a fool: "To play with fools, oh what a fool was I." It is kin to the ending mood of "Sweet Cytherea": "He rose and ran away; ah! Fool too froward." Since Shakespearean language shows up in numerous contemporary authors' works, authors whom Oxford supported, and for which they paid him dedicatory tribute in return, the parallelisms can be likened to col-

laborative creation, as occurred in medieval guilds other than the then relatively new writing circles.

Turbervile, Munday, Lyly, Whetstone, Googe, Brooke, and Golding for example were authors associated with Oxford and to whom are attributed literature stylistically parallel with Shakespeare texts – as described in *Shakespeare's Fingerprints* by Brame and Popova. A comparable example of the transitional literary guild would be Mary Sidney's country circle at Wilton with Spenser, Greville, Daniel, Drayton, Breton, Watson, and Fraunce (Williams 36).

Corporate or guild circles revolving around a wealthy brilliant aristocrat appear more feasible and persuasive in explaining linguistic parallelism than the self-defeating conjecture that great master Shakespeare was, at one and the same time, Western literature's most blatant copy-cat.

Returning to our theme – "Whenas thine eye hath chose the dame" is Shakespearean in its distinct musicality and its depth of understanding courtly ritual, joined to ease at the ballad form, and in an underplayed paideiac, or pedagogical, commitment to human perfectibility. The latter vocation appeared very soon in Oxford's literary career, first expressed in the 1573 introduction to Bedingfield's translation of *Cardanus Comfote*: ". . . lift up the base-minded man to achieve to any true sum or grade of virtue. . ." (Anderson 65).

III The Cornwallis Apocrypha

But the credibility of Feuillerat's exclusion of "Whenas thine eye

(*Apocrypha cont.*)

hath chose the dame" fails not so much from textual as from detective evidence. Before its publication in 1599, the poem was in Anne Cornwallis' commonplace book, a bound volume with the title, *MSS POEMS BY VERE EARL OF OXFORD, etc.* Mark Anderson in *Shakespeare By Another Name* stated that the Cornwallises moved in 1588 into Fisher's Folly, where previously Oxford had housed and trained numerous writers. Thomas Watson, Oxford's employee, stayed on to tutor the adolescent Anne (Anderson 231-3). We infer he was the source of her practice poetry texts, which included Sidney, Raleigh, Dyer, Bentley, and Edwards, in addition to Oxford.

Circumstantial evidence does not prove Oxford wrote a poem later attributed to or at least included with the Shakespearean canon in virtually every edition. But it most certainly reveals the social context of the late 1580s English Renaissance in London — that of master and men. There was no free agent who walked in and took the town by storm. And the Cornwallis commonplace book logically excludes any claim of authorship by the erstwhile hostler and loan shark called Gulielmus Shakspere. He hadn't arrived in London then, so was not known as the author of anything nor was it his poem copied out in the bound volume belonging to Anne Cornwallis.

IV Oxford's Echo Early and Late

The *echo* verses are attributed to Anne Vavasour in the Cornwallis commonplace book (*Shakespeare* Vol. II 380). However, "Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood" is laced with echoes of de Vere,

his anagramic *ever*, and his initials.

The image of sound re-sounding to all Nature's ears through all times, which began humbly in the heart's breath, must have been a profound metaphor to Oxford as well as a hint of the civilized future. Books would convey to the writer spiritual immortality. If the written Word echoes onward in another's breath, truth carries on forever. Even the word EchO (Edward/Earl of Oxford) bespoke a benediction on his own identity.

In "Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood", (*Letters* 83; *Shakespeare* Vol. I 560) Oxford once again communicated his identity by means of encoding key words. The E-O first-and-last initialling letters of the word *echo* manifest one of his literary signatures. An elongated repeated *you* and *youth* also echo the pining lady in the poem, "ee-oo" (ee-you) acoustically expressing the author's initials. The initials themselves, E-O, when vocalized resemble the Italian first person singular pronoun, *io*. We are reminded of his declaration to Lord Burghley upon returning from Italy: "I am that I am." It was a pun, mentally translated back into Italian, on his sounded initials, E-O. Iago haunts the phrase when he says in his depravity, "I am not what I am."

As a climax of embedded self-identification, the last verse of the narrative compresses Oxford's persona in a triple *entendre*.

*And I, that knew this lady
well,
Said, Lord, how great a miracle,
To her how echo told the truth,
As true as Phoebus oracle.*

The key word *echo* derives from the name of a mythological figure, Echo — a nymph who spent her days in rocky hills calling for love. Oxford's uncle Arthur Golding first used *echo* as a noun, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, in a Calvinist text.

Echo also bears a resemblance to the common German word *echt*, meaning genuine or true. Oxford communicated with Sturmius, the German seer, at various points of his life, including a personal visit in 1575-6. We may assume Oxford knew the German equivalent, *echt*, for his own Latin-derived name, vere = truth. There is an attenuated form of *echt* in the poem "Reason and Affection" (*Letters* 165; *Shakespeare* Vol. I 592).

Thus, echo/*echt*=true/=Vere contains a triple *entendre* implying his name and bounded by his initials, E and O. The rest of the line, "told the truth", again indicates Oxford's personal identity (Vere) wedded to his life mission (truth). The verbal construction is Kabbalistic in its economy. Truth must echo truth. Or to quote the de Vere motto: nothing truer than truth.

And the simile, "As true as Phoebus oracle" in the last line cues us to how much de Vere identified with Truth as a mystical calling: Phoebus' oracle was at Delphi, where the gods themselves voiced the prophetic truth. Phoebus, like Oxford's literary alter-ego Adonis, was god of the sun.

V Calling to the Future

The metaphors of echoing and resonance that characterized Oxford's early poetic thought deepened in his maturity to the spiritual level. Suffering the fate of the artist before that calling

had social sanction, Oxford had been forced to stealthily silence any personal projection of his life's work. His appeal for post-humous justice in this regard occurred in *Hamlet* when Hamlet gasps to his warrior cousin Horatio/Horace de Vere: "report (i.e., re-carry) my cause aright to the unsatisfied." Oxford had thus embedded into the play a last echo motif, the cry to resound his spiritual testament into future time. Oxfordians aim to honorably reply.

WJ Ray is a West-Coast poet, writer, and cultural events producer in Willits California, where he and his wife Judith have lived since 1971. Ray became convinced that the Stratford Shakespeare was a politically driven myth and he began to study the issue after reading Freud, Looney, and works published by the Miller family. He collaborated with Michael A'Dair to produce a series of lectures on the topic to a full-house audience in Willits, and the lectures became an introductory book as well as a DVD shown repeatedly on local television. Willits is thus the highest per capita

Oxfordian constituency in the world. The Shakespeare Papers appear on the website, <http://wjray.net>.

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Much Ado . . . on the Hudson

Stephanie Hughes

My family and I had a wonderful time last weekend at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, performed in (and around) a big circus type tent on the grounds of Boscobel, one of the great estates that line the Hudson River as it approaches Manhattan. Rather than a painted backdrop, the audience sees the action taking place before a living vista of the valley as day draws slowly down to night. Located at one of the most scenic junctures of the river, facing West Point on the

western shore, the river dotted with sailboats, it's as though one of the great nineteenth century paintings from the Hudson River School has come to three-dimensional life.

Like most of the audience, we picnicked first on the lawn. Once within the theater tent where protected from the weather — though luckily we needed no protection on this beautiful evening — we observed the odd behavior of some beings from another time. We could have been sitting with the English

Court on the lawn of some great estate in one of the summer bowers built to keep off the weather, watching the original cast perform this play.

Although the director calls his preferred style of costume design *steampunk*, the result for the audience is a happy submersion in the holiday world that Shakespeare portrays in most of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, parts of *Twelfth Night*, Act IV of *A Winter's Tale*, Act V of *Two Gents*, and most of *As*

(cont'd on p. 47)

Book Review:

***Soul of the Age, the Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare* by Jonathan Bate**

**(UK: Penguin Books, Ltd.
Oct. 2008; published as
*Soul of the Age:
A Biography of the Mind of
William Shakespeare*,
US: Random House,
April 2009.)**

Richard F. Whalen

First came Harvard's Stephen Greenblatt in 2004 with *Will in the World*, which he admitted was an imaginary biography of his "Shakespeare" of Stratford-on-Avon. Necessarily "an exercise in speculation," he called it.

Then in 2007 came Rene Weis of University College London with *Shakespeare Unbound*, his desperate attempt to find the Stratford man everywhere in the works of Shakespeare.

Now comes Jonathan Bate of Warwick University with *Soul of the Age*, in which he also promises to find the biography of his man from Stratford in the works of Shakespeare.

It looks like a trend, if not a movement, by Stratfordians to intensify their search for Will Shakspeare in Shakespeare's works. It's been done before in bits and pieces, but now, within four years, three eminent Shakespeare establishment scholars have been driven to publish backwards biography. Lacking an historical biography of their man, they back into one by trying to conjure it from the Shakespeare works. Their sources for biographical facts are not historical documents; they pick what they want from

the author's creative fiction and turn it into speculative biography.

In contrast, classic literary biography shows how the known biography of an author is reflected in his or her writings, and there are hundreds of examples of such biographies. The best writers write best about what they know best, their own life. Their life experience and deepest concerns are reflected in their writings. Once the life is known, the writing is illuminated.

Apparently, these are desperate times for Shakespeare biographers. They are reduced to making up a biography of the Stratford man as the author and selling it to unwary readers. It's not biography. It's historical fiction, and their books should be shelved with the fiction titles. But desperate times call for desperate measures, and Shakespeare being Shakespeare they get away with it, so far. Unwary readers probably believe every word of it.

Oxfordians might grasp at some straws of hope that if these three self-styled biographers were to research far enough into Elizabethan history and think hard enough about it they'd have to recognize that the works of Shakespeare reflect in many and varied ways the actual, known biography of Edward de Vere, the 17th earl of Oxford. But that may be too much to hope for, given their career-long commitment to the probably uneducated, certainly untraveled, mostly

illiterate commoner-businessman from Stratford.

Greenblatt is the most imaginative of the three, opening his narrative with "LET US IMAGINE" in capital letters. Weis is the most comprehensive, teasing out improbable factoids with his favorite device: "If so, then. . . ." He anticipates Bate, seeing his Shakespeare as a regular "commuter" between London and Stratford, a regular guy "no . . . different from the rest of us."

Bate does it best. He mines the plays and poems expertly for whatever he can find that points to a grammar school "country boy" (just like him?) who became the world's greatest writer. He repeatedly urges, "Let us imagine" (although not capitalized).

Here is Bate's methodology in his own words: "Gathering what we can from his plays and poems: That is how we will write a biography that is true to him." For support, he cites the critic Barbara Everett: "If his biography is to be found it has to be here, in the plays and poems, *but never literally and never provably.*" (her emphasis)

For most scholars, evidence that is not literal is conjectural and evidence not provable is speculative. Thus, Bate endorses literary-historical biography that is conjectural and speculative. Essential to his methodology is looking for what he calls "traces of cultural DNA— little details such as a reference to Warwickshire or the knowledge of a par-

ticular school textbook... to make surprising connections." But the little details in the Shakespeare works that Bate cites throughout his book are not unique to William of Stratford, and they are truly "little details."

So for Oxfordians, nothing much new. Bate takes only three very brief, indirect swipes at anyone who thinks someone else, like an earl, wrote the Shakespeare works.

For 486 pages he retails all the supposed, little connections between the Shakespeare works and William of Stratford, bolstering them with speculations, conjectures and rhetorical questions that suggest even more outlandish bits of biography. Bate has done his homework, and he offers detailed arguments that might interest a student of the authorship issue who wants to see how far the arguments for the Stratford man can be taken and what needs to be done to counter them.

He has a full chapter on "Shakespeare's Small Library," wherein he discusses at length sources for the Shakespeare

plays, including books in French and Italian and concluding, "These speculations are of course biographical fantasy. But the point is a serious one." And these speculations are based in large part on speculations, namely, the Stratford man's alleged but unproven friendship

Let us imagine Shakespeare [of Stratford] at the very end of his career, sorting through his book chest. My guess is that it would have contained no more than about forty volumes and possibly as few as twenty (excluding his own).

— from *Soul of the Age* by
Jonathan Bate.

with Richard Field, the printer from Stratford, and his "very probable" acquaintance with John Florio, the London-born scholar of the Italian language. Of course there is no evidence for any of this.

For the general reader who is unaware of the historical realities and the case that can be made for Oxford as the true author, Bate will probably be persuasive. He's a clever and engaging writer. He takes this life of "mundane inconsequence" (Sam Schoenbaum's words), embellishes it, goes into flights of fancy and re-imagines it with multiple little details from the Shakespeare works—irony of ironies, works that were written by the 17th earl of Oxford.

More informed readers, especially those who know how proper biography is written, will no doubt be skeptical. They would not tolerate backwards biography for any other literary figure.

Richard F. Whalen is the author of Shakespeare: Who Was He?: The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon, co-editor with Professor Daniel Wright of The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, and editor/annotator of Macbeth in the series. He is past president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and a regular contributor to the Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter.

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Update on Eagan-Donovan film project

Cheryl A. Eagan-Donovan

What if Shakespeare was bisexual? What if Shakespeare was French? What if everything you knew about Shakespeare was wrong?

The true challenge in making a contemporary film about Shakespeare is in making Shakespeare sexy. To compete with the absurdist queercore satire of *Bruno*, the teen angst fantasy world of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, and the explosive testosterone of Michael Bay's blockbuster *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, the filmmaker must totally reinvent Shakespeare.

Not that it hasn't been done before. *Shakespeare in Love* started an Academy Award winning streak for the Weinstein brothers and Miramax that lasted close to a decade. Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* transformed the classic love story into a psychedelic spectacular and outrageous musical. Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho* paid homage to Orson Welles' Shakespeare, with Falstaff and Prince Hal as archetypal class warriors and comrades. Most recently, *Hamlet 2*, the little indie that could, did, raking in a cool \$10 million in box office, targeting YouTube viewers.

Everyone's read Shakespeare. In China, the poet formerly known as the bard is a status symbol, as sought after as Gucci accessories. What they don't know is that Shakespeare really is dead. After 400 years, what scholars around the world have discovered is that Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is

our ever-living poet. He is also undeniably sexy.

An A-list party boy on the continental circuit, a true alpha male, Edward de Vere was a man quite unlike any other. My documentary film project, *Nothing is Truer than Truth*, looks at the process of writing, where life experience, imitation of the masters, and relentless revision come together to create genius, as the key to discovering Edward de Vere as the true author of the works attributed to William Shakespeare. The film will reveal de Vere's epic life story and introduce a brilliant, troubled, charming man.

Having secured the documentary rights to Mark Anderson's seminal biography *Shakespeare By Another Name*, I began by interviewing the leading Oxfordian scholars, documenting the ongoing debate about the significance of authorship, the role of biography, and the meaning of genius. With over 60 hours of footage, I have produced two fundraising trailers, and have had the great privilege of meeting some truly extraordinary and exceedingly generous people. On screen, Sir Derek Jacobi and Mark Rylance regale us with their unique portraits of the earl, and British historian Charles Bird takes the viewer on a walking tour of Castle Hedingham, home of the De Vere family since the days of William the Conqueror. Without the support of the many Shakespeare Oxford Society members who have donated their time and financial resources to the film, I could not have made such progress.

Harvard Professor Steven Pinker has agreed to an interview. He



Cheryl A. Eagan-Donovan

is an acknowledged expert on language, neurobiology, and the definition of genius. In his book *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature*, Pinker concludes, "Almost by definition, art has no practical function, and as philosopher Dennis Dutton points out in his list of universal signatures of art: art universally entails virtuosity — a sign of genetic quality, the free time to hone skills, or both — and criticism that sizes up the worth of the art and the artist.

In *The Mating Mind*, the psychologist Geoffrey Miller argues that the impulse to create art is a mating tactic: a way to impress prospective sexual and marriage partners with the quality of one's brain and thus, indirectly, one's genes. Artistic virtuosity, he notes, is unevenly distributed, neurally demanding, hard to fake, and widely prized. Artists, in other words, are sexy.

Nothing is Truer than Truth will focus on the eighteen month period when De Vere escaped

the confines of life at the court of Elizabeth I, and traveled the Continent from his home base in Venice gathering material for the great canon that would become known as the works of Shakespeare. It is my immediate and pressing goal to raise enough funds to begin principle photography this year, shooting on location in Italy and France.

Mark Anderson describes what Edward de Vere encountered on his visit:

The Venice of 1575 was the New York City of its day – a world financial center, fueling an ongoing explosion of learning, literature, theatre, music, and art. The city nicknamed La Serenissima had, with the economic and artistic decline of its rival Florence, become perhaps the premier cultural capital of late sixteenth century Italy. Reaching the shore of the Venetian lagoon sometime in mid-May 1575, the conte d'Oxford had finally arrived.

By the 1570s, Venice had become perhaps the most vibrant theatrical community in all of Europe. One can readily envision how, as this aristocratico inglese settled into his new hometown, he also began attending plays that would be meting out ideas, plots, characters, and inspiration for the rest of his life. The theatrical mixture of high and low, refined and proletariat, comic and tragic, that graced Venetian stages at the

time would present an aesthetic philosophy that would later be developed into the works of Shakespeare.

I began my career as a writer, and I know a good story. *Nothing is Truer than Truth* unveils a multi-media portrait of one man whose life story is perhaps the greatest story ever written. The trick is to convince the funders and distributors.

With blatant disregard for the previously mentioned box office successes, they seem to think that if Shakespeare is dead

An A-list party boy on the continental circuit, a true alpha male, Edward de Vere was a man quite unlike any other.

— that no one will want to see a film about Edward de Vere. One strategy that has proved effective in today's independent film marketplace is the collection of zip codes, and the construction of a database of cities and towns, throughout the country and around the world, where film audiences are guaranteed to turn out for a screening.

If you would be willing to help organize a screening in your neighborhood, please write to me at eagandonovan@verizon.net, and if you can make a donation to the project in any amount, please visit our website at www.controversyfilms.com.

As a writer, I am determined to tell this story. With your support, *Nothing is Truer than Truth* will prove that the universal appeal of Shakespeare's work is due to the fact that the true author was a perfectionist, a world traveler, a temperamental, tempestuous trouble-maker, and most of all, a writer.

Cheryl Eagan-Donovan studied Shakespeare and wrote poetry as a literature major at Goddard College, and holds a business degree from Boston University. She served as publicist for the award-winning features All the Rage (Roland Tec 1996) and Could Be Worse! (Zack Stratis 2000). Her debut documentary All Kindsa Girls (2006) screened at film festivals and in theaters in London, Toronto, and throughout the US. She is President of Women in Film & Video/New England and serves on the Board of Directors of The Next Door Theater in Winchester, Massachusetts. Contact: Cheryl A. Eagan-Donovan, Controversy Films, 119 Braintree Street, Suite 509, Boston, MA 02134, 617-987-002, eagandonovan@verizon.net, Fiscal Sponsor: IFP New York, www.iofp.org.

Altrocchi and Whittemore build the case

The first five volumes of a new series of books entitled *Building the Case for Edward De Vere as Shakespeare*, edited by Paul Hemenway Altrocchi and Hank Whittemore, is now available online at iUniverse.com, Amazon and Barnes & Noble booksellers. The books attempt to preserve authorship research in book form for scholars, students and general readers. The series begins with work done in the early twentieth century leading to "*Shakespeare*" Identified by J. Thomas Looney in 1920 and continues up to the 1960's, with more volumes to come.

"This series is the result of Paul's (Altrocchi) vision of compiling our literature from its earliest stages and preserving it in book form. We started a couple of years ago and now the first five volumes are published," co-author Hank Whittemore said. "This collection already stands as an overwhelming argument against all those phony attacks on anti-Stratfordians in general and Oxfordians in particular. It's manifestly clear that these 'amateurs' were neither 'lunatics' nor 'snobs' nor 'conspiracy nuts,' but, rather, some of the finest scholars anywhere. The depth and breadth of their work is remarkable. In my view theirs is the best Shakespearean work of all."

Whittemore explained that most of the early literature pointing to Edward de Vere as the author of the Shakespeare works appeared in obscure newsletters, magazines and currently out-of-print books. Some of this initial research work is of elegant quality and only recently emerged from years of storage by two of England's authorship groups, the De Vere Society and

the Shakespeare Authorship Trust. When, in 2006, Professor William Leahy of Brunel University organized the first graduate degree program in the world on Shakespeare Authorship Studies, both societies permanently loaned their books and papers to the English department of Brunel, located in Uxbridge, a suburb of London.

Through the courtesy of Dr Leahy, De Vere Society President Kevin Gilvary, Charles Beauclerk, and other members of the board of trustees of the Shakespeare Authorship Trust, Altrocchi and Whittemore were able to study and copy this early Shakespeare-authorship material. They have made these difficult-to-find articles and book excerpts available in the first five volumes of *Building the Case for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare*.

"Here is the legacy of the great papers and publications that have developed and expanded the Oxfordian thesis over the generations — starting with Sir George Greenwood in the early decades of the twentieth century and Looney's identification of Edward de Vere as "Shakespeare" in 1920," Whittemore said. "The idea was to assemble as much as possible of our most important literature all in one place, rather than leave these works scattered everywhere in hard-to-find newsletters, journals, books and so on."

The first five volumes in the series include:

- Volume 1: The Great Shakespeare Hoax — After Unmasking the Fraudulent Pretender, Search for the True Genius Begins
- Volume 2: Nothing Truer Than

Truth—Fact Versus Fiction in the Shakespeare Authorship Debate

- Volume 3: Shine Forth — Evidence Grows Rapidly in Favor of Edward de Vere as Shakespeare
- Volume 4: My Name Be Buried — A Coerced Pen Name Forces the Real Shakespeare into Anonymity
- Volume 5: So Richly Spun — Four Hundred Years of Deceit are Enough

"These first five volumes include research and writings in the early stages by dedicated people such as Eva Turner Clark, Marjorie Bowen, H.H. Holland, B.M. Ward, Percy Allen, Gerald Rendall and so on," Whittemore said. "In later stages these same books include articles and excerpts from other giants in the field — Charles Wisner Barrell, Montague Douglas, Louis Benezet, Esther Singleton, Gwynneth Bowen, Alden Brooks, Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Francis Edwards and Ruth Lloyd Miller."

Whittemore said he wishes that he had this work at his fingertips when he learned about the Oxfordian movement more than two decades ago. They would have given him an understanding of early Oxfordianism and prevented him from "re-inventing the wheel".

"So this series of volumes will be there now and in the future for students, scholars and the general public," Whittemore said. "There will be no question about the scope and integrity of the Oxfordian movement."

The authors intend to ask current researchers to join them in collecting their work in single volumes, possibly ending with up to 20 volumes in the series.

Whittemore

Whittemore's show is based on his theory of what the sonnets are all about as expressed in his 2005 book, *The Monument*. The theory is, in brief, that the Fair Youth is the third earl of Southampton, the Dark Lady is Queen Elizabeth, the Poet is Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford, and that the story being told is of the Essex Rebellion — Southampton's crime in participating, his death sentence, and his reprieve. Whittemore posits the hidden story behind the known story of the Essex Rebellion is that Southampton could have been, and perhaps should have been, Henry IX. The 90-minute one man show, which Whittemore has presented 15 times since last year, was well received by the audience. This show has

proven to be an excellent way of presenting a complex set of historical and literary facts in an entertaining manner.

Whittemore remarked later that the church venue, with its slightly raised stage in front of rows of seats, high ceiling and the impressive backdrop of windows and decorations was an intriguing venue to perform in. After the show he and Alex McNeil answered audience questions. Everyone adjourned to a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception in the church activity room.

Cutting

The first of four presentations in the library on Saturday was given by Bonner Miller Cutting, daughter of Oxfordian stalwart Ruth Loyd Miller. Cutting had come to town all the way from Houston to participate. Her talk expanded on the presentation she gave at the joint Shakespeare Oxford Society/Shakespeare Fellowship Conference last October in White Plains, New York.

Cutting has been examining Shakespeare of Stratford's will for several years, and has developed insights that are noteworthy. She has examined 2000 other wills from the same period to make comparisons with the Stratford will, and the results are not flattering. For example, everyone knows about the bequest of the "second-best bed" to his wife, but Cutting's research makes it unmistakable that this was at least a deliberate insult to his wife, if not an outright attempt to disinherit her by mentioning only the bed and nothing else. For example, he treated his sister Joan much more generously.

The well-known absence of books and manuscripts in the will is accompanied by the glaring omission of any bequests for his daughters' education, or to the town — for example, how about something for that famous grammar school that taught him so well? Bequests to schools from formidable citizens were often present in wills examined by Cutting. This is where Cutting's diligent work over several years in comparing the Stratford will to many others of the period shows that the Stratford man seemed to have had no literary interests during his life or after it, and furthermore, as some of us joked after the presentation, his will in comparison to others of his time reveals him as cold — not generous. Cold. But you won't find that in any mainstream discussions.

Anderson

Mark Anderson spoke on the recent Cobbe portrait controversy and expanded his comments to include the Ashbourne portrait. The Ashbourne graces the cover of Anderson's 2005 book *Shakespeare By Another Name* as a split image with the Welbeck portrait of Oxford. The Cobbe portrait was recently discovered by its owner to be identical to the Janssen, a putative portrait of Shakespeare owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library. The Cobbe was unveiled with great fanfare by Stanley Wells and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust as being a "true likeness" of Shakespeare, painted in his lifetime and most likely the model for the Droeshout engraving in the First Folio.

Anderson has written about the Cobbe portrait on his blog several times since the story first broke a few months

Building the Case for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare

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ago, and most of us in the audience were aware of it. He highlighted the story in the *Times Literary Supplement* by Katherine Duncan-Jones that dismisses the Birthplace Trust claim, and agreed with her that the portrait is most likely of Sir Thomas Overbury. The real story here is that Stratfordians are actually engaged in the authorship debate *sub rosa* when they reach out like this — anything to make Shaksper more real is the name of the game. The second part of Anderson's talk was on the authorship debate itself, including a point he has been making for several years now: that after 1604 no new sources or historical facts are ever used or alluded to in the Shakespeare canon. This is significant since 1604 is the date of Oxford's death.

Merkel

Marie Merkel led off the afternoon session with a provocative presentation in which she put forth the idea that perhaps *The Tempest* was actually written by Ben Jonson. This is a topic that Merkel has been pursuing for several years, and there's no doubt that it is controversial, no matter where one stands on the authorship debate itself. But *The Tempest* is different from the rest of the Shakespeare canon in a number of ways, and the differences have been commented upon for a long time. Oxfordians understand this very well, since J.T. Looney in his 1920 *Shakespeare Identified* felt obliged to write an appendix in which he claimed that *The Tempest* was probably not by Shakespeare.

Merkel quoted such mainstream scholars as Harold Bloom and David Lindley in support of the

view that *The Tempest* is different from the rest of the canon. She also presented some interesting lists of textual analysis and word usage demonstrating that the play has many characteristics that are not characteristic of Shakespeare. As anyone involved in the authorship debate knows, *The Tempest*, its sources, and its actual date of composition are a hot topic because any *bona fide* composition of a Shakespeare play after Oxford's death in 1604 would knock him out of contention. But as Merkel's presentation demonstrated, mainstream scholars puzzle over this play as much as Oxfordians. For

The real story here is that Stratfordians are actually engaged in the authorship debate sub rosa when they reach out like this — anything to make Shaksper more real is the name of the game.

more information on *The Tempest* debate see the Oxfordian Roger Stritmatter-Lynne Kositsky essay at the Shakespeare Fellowship website and the Stratfordian David Kathman essay at the Shakespeare Authorship Page.

Boyle

As the final speaker of the day I reprised a talk given last fall at the joint SF/SOS Conference in White Plains, with some updates from the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference last April in Portland, Oregon. My presentation titled "Shakespeare and the Succession Crisis of

the 1590s" takes a closer look at some of the lesser known historical and publishing events that occurred during the same period that Shakespeare burst upon the scene. I consider that Shakespeare himself — Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford — was keenly interested in the issue of who would succeed Elizabeth I. The Shakespeare plays — *Richard II*, for example — and poems — *Venus and Adonis*, *Rape of Lucrece* — published during this period may have been written, or re-written, with the succession issue in mind.

Two publications were the focus of much of my talk:

First is a pseudonymous political tract, *Conference about the Next Succession to the Crown of England* (1594/95), which is concerned with the rightful claim to the English throne after Elizabeth and which prominently features the historical story of Richard II as a good example of rightly deposing a monarch. The 1595 printing in London of *Conference* also features a dedication to the earl of Essex claiming that he and his followers would "settle the succession," thus bringing together Essex, Richard II and the succession issue all at once.

A second publication of note was *Willobie His Avis* (1594), a notoriously enigmatic poem about Avis and her five suitors, that has front matter containing the first reference to "Shakespeare" as an author (of *Lucrece*), and even alludes to Avis and Lucrece as being the same person. The identity of Avis has puzzled scholars for more than a century, but I believe the problem was solved in 1970 by Barbara N. De Luna in her book

The Queen Declined. Her solution has great implications for the authorship debate.

Avisa is identified as being none other than Queen Elizabeth, and the suitors are the well-known suitors in her lifetime that include the earl of Essex and his step-father the earl of Leicester. Since *Willobie* also includes a peculiar section – inserted into the section about Essex and Leicester — in which an “olde player” named “W.S.” (most likely meant to represent Shakespeare) is advising a “young actor” named “H.W.” (most likely meant to represent Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton) on how to woo Avisa, several important questions arise: First: why was this insert added to this section of *Willobie*? And second: How can a “W.S.” from Stratford be an expert on wooing Avisa if Avisa is the Queen of England?

I emphasized that this view of *Willobie His Avisa* brings together the queen, Essex, Shakespeare and Southampton. This view, when coupled with the politics of succession in both *Conference about the Next Succession* and Shakespeare’s *Richard II*, has great significance for understanding Shakespeare’s role in the succession crisis of the 1590s. It also is key to understanding how the Shakespeare authorship problem may have had its roots in Elizabethan succession politics.

DiLiddo

The day concluded with this final talk. Attendees hung out for a while with ample time to meet and talk about what had been presented. This was a very well organized, fun event. Plans are already under way for next spring. Organizer Lori DiLiddo

commented to us later about her experiences in organizing this event. She said that her primary goal was to have an event that combined both a relaxing, party-like atmosphere such as the Oxford Day Banquets, plus some good intellectually satisfying presentations the next day, including time for discussion, and would still leave time for attendees to talk with each other and relax. The two day format was perfect for this.

DiLiddo also took note of something that Mark Anderson had told her about his experiences during his book tours over the

In my youth I had been an ardent Oxfordian ... but I have in the last half-century — for better or worse — rejoined the orthodox Stratfordian mainstream. But there remain a host of questions that have not been satisfactorily answered by anyone. So the battle will certainly continue for a long time. Caldwell Titcomb, PhD

past several years, namely that most folks don’t know what *Oxfordian* means. So care was taken in the publicity for the event both to explain that presentations would be “Shakespeare from the Oxfordian perspective” and to explain what is meant by “Oxfordian perspective.”

Another important decision that the organizers made was to ask only for donations at both the show on Friday and the talks and catered box luncheon on Saturday, relieving prospective attendees of having to commit to paying anything in advance. DiLiddo felt that this

may be the best way to have an event that would draw in new people. The organizing group will consider this approach next year, for which planning is already underway. While this year’s symposium had no overall theme, for next year consideration is being given to focusing on the Roman plays. DiLiddo credits Prof. David Lowenthal of Boston College for suggesting that the five Roman plays as a group might prove to be an interesting topic, since each one covers successive periods.

One might ask why this pattern, and why this period in Roman history. Did the author have an agenda in doing this? The Oxfordian perspective might provide an intriguing way for different speakers to explore this topic.

Titcomb

Arts critic and blogger, Harvard University Professor Emeritus Caldwell Titcomb, PhD, attended the seminar and wrote up the event within a week. He was thorough and fair in his reporting at *The Arts Fuse* blog. Titcomb gave a detailed summary of each talk without passing any judgments on any of them. He concluded his article with an interesting note about his own position on the authorship question:

In my youth I had been an ardent Oxfordian ... but I have in the last half-century — for better or worse — rejoined the orthodox Stratfordian mainstream. But there remain a host of questions that have not been satisfactorily answered by anyone. So the battle will certainly continue for a long time.

Two local Stratfordians who did not attend the symposium

(Conference cont.)

commented on Titcomb's article. Thomas Garvey at *The Hub Review* blog was most telling about the true conundrum in the debate when he wrote:

But Oxfordian textual claims are easily undermined by the possibility that Edward de Vere may indeed have been a model for Hamlet without having been the author of Hamlet. (As it's known that de Vere sponsored theatre companies and therefore probably mixed with actors privately, it's quite possible Shakespeare could have picked his brain for all manner of details for Hamlet, or other plays.)

Garvey concedes a key point in the debate — the Hamlet-de Vere connections — and then can only resort to the it's-quite-possible line of reasoning to have the Stratford man channeling de Vere rather than de Vere writing about himself.

Duane Morin at *Shakespeare Geek* gets right to his point in the first paragraph:

I'm not sure if I'm happy or sad about this. Seems just last week there was a 2 day Shakespeare conference right in my backyard (Watertown, MA). Unfortunately it was about Shakespeare Authorship - "mostly Oxfordians", the post tells us. So perhaps it would not have been my cup of tea.

He was especially intrigued by Merkel's theory on *The Tempest*, and noted that it was something new. Several comments on his site did have something to say about the notion of Ben Jonson writing *The Tempest*, which can be summed up in two words: "No way!" Merkel, however, wrote a good response in the comments section, laying out some of her reasoning. At that point no one responded, and the thread died out.

Congratulations are in order to all involved in planning and running the Symposium: Lori DiLiddo, the symposium organizer, Chuck and Carole Berney of Watertown, Barbara Hansen, Anne Atheling, Judith Christianson, and Alex McNeil who did all the introductions and was also emcee for a Shakespearean/Oxfordian quiz after lunch.

We should also note that right before lunch Cheryl Eagan-Donovan showed a clip of her upcoming documentary based on the life of Edward de Vere, *Nothing is Truer than Truth* — information is available at the Controversy Films website. The film will be available soon and should add more fuel to the authorship fire. Several of those in attendance — Alex McNeil, Hank Whittemore, Mark Anderson and Chuck Berney — were featured in the clip shown.

In all, this brief two-day event brought together many of the Oxfordian regulars in the area and a fair number of new-comers. "Symposium: Shakespeare from the Oxfordian Perspective" is now destined to become an annual spring event in the Boston area.

Bill Boyle works as a cataloger at the Social Law Library in Boston, Massachusetts. Bill has been active in the Oxfordian movement for 30 years and has been a regular at conferences for the last 20 years, reporting on talks, taking pictures, and in recent years, presenting papers. He was the editor of the Shakespeare Oxford Society newsletter from 1995 to 2001, and the Shakespeare Fellowship newsletter, Shakespeare Matters, from 2001 to 2005. On the Internet he founded the Shakespeare Oxford Society home page in 1995, and the Ever Reader website in 1998. His current cyber-life includes maintaining a new website and blog The Shakespeare Adventure, <http://www.shakespeareadventure.com>, and a Shakespeare/Shakespeare authorship library with an online catalog The New England Shakespeare Oxford Library, <http://www.shakespeareoxfordlibrary.org>. He is also working in cooperation with the Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre on an online Shakespeare Authorship Resources database (SOAR), to be announced later this year.

Shahan's letter to Shermer, the skeptic

On July 24, 2009, independent Oxfordian researcher John Shahan sent this letter to the editor in reply to Michael Shermer's column, "Shakespeare, Interrupted," in the August 2009 issue of *Scientific American*: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=skeptics-take-on-the-life>.

Shahan wrote:

As a skeptic myself, I usually agree with Michael Shermer, but not on the Shakespeare authorship question. On that issue, I find Mr. Skeptic's position oddly credulous. Shermer objects to Justice John Paul Stevens' declaration in the WSJ that "the evidence that (Shakespeare of Stratford) was not the author is beyond a reasonable doubt." To hear Shermer tell it, one would think that Justice Stevens is the first and only authorship doubter to serve on the Supreme Court. On the contrary, others include Justices Scalia, O'Connor, Blackmun and Powell, as the WSJ article noted. Only two current Justices (Breyer and Kennedy) openly support the Stratford man.

Other prominent doubters include Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William and Henry James, Charles Dickens, John Galsworthy, Sigmund Freud, and Shakespearean actors Orson Welles, Sir John Gielgud, Sir Derek Jacobi, Michael York, Jeremy Irons and Mark Rylance. Over 1,500 people, including nearly 300 current and former faculty members, many of them scientists, have signed the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt (www.DoubtAboutWill.org/declaration). How ironic that Shermer, the professional skeptic, rejects out of hand the informed skepticism of five U.S. Supreme

Court Justices and so many other prominent, well-educated people.

Orthodox scholars say there's "no room for doubt" about the author. They use this false claim to stigmatize and suppress the issue in academia. It is a taboo subject. This is wrong. The authorship issue doesn't belong in the same category as teaching intelligent design alongside evolution. It should be regarded as a legitimate issue. That's what the Declaration is about.

Shahan sent this email to *Skeptic* Editor Michael Shermer on July 28

(The presentation has been edited for ease of reading. Ed.)

Dear Michael,

Naturally I am very disappointed in your column, "Shakespeare, Interrupted," in *Scientific American*. I had the impression that you were receptive to Oxford's candidacy; evidently not. I don't know how I got on the wrong side of you and Frank (Sulloway, author of *Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives*, Ed.) I think of myself, first and foremost, as a scientist. It's all those English professors who are not. I think highly of you, or I wouldn't have approached you in the first place. I based my strategy partly on my reading of *Born to Rebel*, which analyzes how paradigm shifts take place. In 2002, I reviewed it for *The Oxfordian*. I wrote and presented a paper based on it in New York and Carmel in which I proposed the Declaration strategy. How ironic that you, of all people, would now be attacking me in

Scientific American. If I thought you understood, I would take it to heart; but I don't think you do understand. Sorry this email is so long. If I didn't care, I wouldn't bother to address your issues, but I've tried to do so in some detail.

Can a theory be discredited before being replaced?

You say that, "reasonable doubt should not cost an author his claim, at least not if we treat history as a science instead of as a legal debate," and also that "In science, a reigning theory is presumed provisionally true and continues to hold sway unless and until a challenging theory explains the current data as well, and also accounts for anomalies that the prevailing one cannot." To the extent that this refers to Justice Stevens, he said "beyond" a reasonable doubt and *did* name a challenger whose claim he sees as superior — that of the seventeenth earl of Oxford.

Judges deal with questions of evidence, including scientific evidence, and that is what Stevens' opinion is based on. He says the reigning theory should be overturned. You may disagree, but he never said that he thinks Shakespeare's claim should fall based merely on "reasonable doubt." If writing the works were a crime, there wouldn't be enough evidence to convict Shakespeare beyond a reasonable doubt; but the earl of Oxford could probably be convicted. Stevens is qualified to make that judgment. He has followed the controversy for twenty years since participating in a moot court trial. He has a perfect right to speak out.

(Shahan cont.)

To the extent that it refers to me, I have never said that the reigning theory should be overturned based on reasonable doubt, and the Declaration doesn't say that either. Its stated purpose is to *legitimize* the issue in academia by calling attention to problems with the case for Shakspeare. Is it not a legitimate part of the scientific process to call attention to "anomalies" that don't fit the reigning paradigm? That's all we have done, and all we've ever claimed to have done. Your comment suggests otherwise.

If the issue is legitimized, and scholars turn their attention to it, I have little doubt about who will emerge as the author; but of course it depends entirely on the evidence. Speaking of evidence, I am perfectly willing to have a neutral panel of scientists rule on authorship-related issues within their area of expertise. That's why I came to you. You weren't interested. I am still willing. It's the orthodox Shakespeare establishment that doesn't want a neutral, objective panel of scientific experts ruling on the merits.

The reason why I focused first on Shakspeare isn't because the case for Oxford is weak; rather, it's a huge circumstantial case that's much more difficult to communicate. The orthodox distract attention from the case for Oxford by claiming there is "no room for doubt" about Shakspeare. They're correct that this question logically comes first. If there's no room for doubt about him, then there's no point wasting time considering anyone else. That has been their position, so it's perfectly legitimate to challenge it. They use their 'no room for doubt' claim to delegitimize and suppress the

issue, making it a taboo subject in academia. Thus the need to point out the reasons for doubt. Pointing out anomalies in a reigning paradigm is a perfectly legitimate part of the scientific process. There is no requirement that every article aim to overturn a paradigm.

You say, "we should grant that Shakespeare wrote the plays unless and until the anti-Stratfordians can make their case for a challenger who fits more of the literary and historical data." I respectfully disagree. We should grant that Shakespeare

Well, at some point the emperor's nakedness is just too obvious to ignore. It may not be polite to point out that the emperor is naked, and some will prefer not to notice; but sometimes the best way to bring about change is to call attention to all of the anomalies that don't fit the reigning theory at once, and make them clear to everyone.

wrote the plays unless and until someone makes a compelling evidentiary case that he didn't. Proving that someone else did is one way to prove he didn't, but not the only way. It's possible to prove a thing didn't happen one way without knowing how it did happen.

Your formulation is *descriptive* of how science normally proceeds, but there is no "iron law of science" that says one must accept a reigning paradigm until it is replaced. There is no reason why an existing theory cannot be thoroughly discredited, based

on evidence, without necessarily knowing what alternative will end up taking its place. Science does not advance only by all-or-nothing leaps from one theory to another. The "anomalies" that you mention can accumulate until an existing theory is rendered untenable *before* anything takes its place. I doubt that either Thomas Kuhn, or your buddy Frank (Sulloway), would agree that a theory cannot be discredited before being replaced.

The naked emperor

What you seem to be saying is this: "How dare you point out that the emperor isn't wearing any clothes until you have the power to place a new emperor on the throne!" Well, at some point the emperor's nakedness is just too obvious to ignore. It may not be polite to point out that the emperor is naked, and some will prefer not to notice; but sometimes the best way to bring about change is to call attention to all of the anomalies that don't fit the reigning theory at once, and make them clear to everyone.

That's what we've tried to do with the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt, and I think we're succeeding. The reference to "reasonable doubt" is deliberate understatement. Justice Stevens recognized it as such, and felt compelled to make an even stronger statement. He knows a naked emperor when he sees one, and would say no less. You may not agree that the emperor is naked, based on your reading of the evidence, but there's no rule in science against us presenting our case that we think he is.

Scott McCrea on Shakespeare's education

I was not impressed with Scott McCrea's article in *Skeptic*. His

book was reviewed negatively by Richard Whalen in the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* (Vol. 41, No. 4, Fall 2005), and so I never read it. The premise of (McCrea's) article that Oxford, unlike Shakspeare, did not get a grammar school education is incorrect. Robin Fox, University Professor of Social Theory at Rutgers University, points out in his forthcoming article, "Shakespeare's Education: The Grammar School Reconsidered" (*The Oxfordian*, Vol. XI, 2009), that *everyone* who got an education at the time, from the king down, had the same grammar school curriculum, and used the same texts. That includes Edward de Vere. McCrea makes much of the fact that Shakespeare seems to have been familiar with Lily's grammar of 1557. Oxford was age seven in 1557, and almost surely studied it. Fox is one of the most widely-read anthropologists in the world. He grew up in Yorkshire during the 1930s, and attended the modern-day descendent of a grammar school. He writes as follows:

"... the education of royalty and nobility was not simply modeled on the Grammar School, it was for at least the foundational years the same in all its details. Edward de Vere, after his father's death, was the ward of the same William Cecil who was at the heart of the group of St. John's men who formed the education of Prince Edward. Cox, the (future king's) first tutor, had drawn up the Eton curriculum, which he then followed. Can it be doubted that Oxford's education then followed the same pattern? He was raised in the household first of Sir Thomas Smith ... a remarkable man of learning and diplomacy, and, among other things, Provost of Eton. Between Smith and Cecil then, Oxford would have received

no less an education than did Prince Edward, and no less on the Grammar School model—particularly that of Eton. This would mean that Oxford too would have been drilled in his accidence, and from the authorized grammar of William Lily."

To read McCrea's article, one would think that Oxford's education began at age eight, when he matriculated at Cambridge. What does he think Oxford was doing until then? There is nothing about the evidence of Shakespeare's familiarity with grammar school texts that can't be explained just as easily by Oxford's authorship of all the plays. Fox's article points out that (Oxford's grandfather, the fifteenth earl) was instrumental in the founding of the grammar school at his ancestral seat of Earls Colne and (Oxford) was involved with its affairs.

You say that, "de Vere's partisans exalt his education at both the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford and believe that the plays could only have been penned by someone of such erudition." You give no quote. I doubt you can find a recent one. JT Looney never said that the author must have been "university-educated." You and McCrea seem ignorant of the fact that Oxford did not spend much time at Oxford or Cambridge University. Both of the degrees he received from them were honorary. Stratfordian Alan Nelson made much of this, trying to claim that Oxford was not really very well educated; but this will not fly. As a nobleman, he had outstanding tutors. A dearth of university references in the plays is hardly disqualifying. Oxford was educated first in rural Essex, and then mainly at the home of William Cecil and

at Court. You Strats can't have it both ways. If you're going to argue he didn't spend much time at Oxford and Cambridge, you can't then expect them to be reflected in the works.

Gray's Inn

Interestingly, McCrea has nothing to say about the one school where we have reason to believe Oxford did spend time. He enrolled at Gray's Inn, where he studied law. Scholars have long known that Shakespeare was steeped in the law. One reason so many anti-Stratfordians are lawyers is they recognize the Bard as one of their own. Sir George Greenwood, a distinguished lawyer and MP, analyzed his use of legal terms and metaphors in great detail, convincing Mark Twain that he had to be a lawyer. Stratfordians claim that his knowledge of law is imperfect, and no more than he could have gotten out of books. Mark Alexander demonstrated that this clearly is not so in his article, "Shakespeare's Knowledge of Law: A Journey through the History of the Argument" (*The Oxfordian*, IV, 2001, 51-121). (Alexander) says that Shakespeare *never* makes a mistake in his use of legal terms and metaphors. Those who claim otherwise are always in error. Nevertheless, Alexander concludes that, "What distinguishes Shakespeare's use of legal terms has nothing to do with the quantity of terms he uses, or his mere technical accuracy in legal matters: Shakespeare had a wide-ranging legal understanding integrated into his consciousness, the kind of consciousness that would draw on legal terms in non-legal contexts, where the apt legal metaphor of excellent understanding and quality is applied (111).

(Shahan cont.)

" There is no evidence Shakspeare had legal training, and even McCrea, apparently, has not tried to argue that he did. Strange that he would omit that from an article on how the educational backgrounds of different claimants are reflected in the works. Perhaps it is dealt with in his book?

Romans

McCrea says, "Shakespeare's borrowing from minor Roman writers comes exclusively from school texts and books of Latin adages and fragments young grammarians were forced to memorize. What's interesting is he doesn't stray far beyond these writers ..." This is not true. He was very widely-read in the Latin classics, and not only English translations. The Roman history plays are based largely on the Amyott (French) translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, which was not in the grammar school curriculum. An extant record in Lord Burghley's papers shows that a copy of it was purchased specifically for Oxford, at his request (and also a Geneva Bible), when he was twenty. Nobody knows how Shakspeare could have obtained a copy, or how he could have read it even if he did (despite McCrea's fantastic speculations that he learned French).

Ovid

McCrea gives short shrift to Ovid, merely noting that, "The most prominent of the [Latin poets Shakespeare borrowed from] was Ovid, many of whose works the author knew, and whose *Metamorphoses*, the Elizabethan classroom favorite, was routinely studied alongside the Golding translation (1567)." Shakespeare's knowledge and use of the *Metamorphoses* re-

quires a better explanation than that.

Ovid is universally recognized as Shakespeare's single most important source. He did not just know "many" of the works, as McCrea puts it. He knew all fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses* like the back of his hand. He used every one of them somewhere in the plays, and every one of the plays makes extensive use of them. Furthermore, Shakespeare clearly knew them not only in the Golding transla-

The Roman history plays are based largely on the Amyott (French) translation of Plutarch's Lives, which was not in the grammar school curriculum. An extant record in Lord Burghley's papers shows that a copy of it was purchased specifically for Oxford, at his request . . . when he was twenty. Nobody knows how Shakspeare could have obtained a copy, or how he could have read it even if he did — despite McCrea's fantastic speculations that he learned French.

tion, but also in the original Latin.

Being part of the grammar school curriculum hardly accounts for the extent of Shakespeare's knowledge. Oxford, on the other hand, was the nephew of Arthur Golding, and they both lived in Burghley's household (300 people, regarded as one of the finest colleges in all of Europe) when the Golding translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was produced. Some evidence suggests that Oxford

was probably involved in the work of translation. Golding dedicated one of the volumes to his 16-year-old nephew (Oxford).

Greek

McCrea says there's, "no evidence the author knew the (Greek) language." This is false. He clearly had knowledge of the Greek classics, and used them in the plays; this despite the fact that most had not yet been translated into English. Oxford would have learned Greek not at Cambridge, but from his childhood tutor, Sir Thomas Smith, an outstanding Greek scholar. See, for example, the article, "Shakespeare's Lesse Greek," by Andrew Werth at Washington State University (*The Oxfordian*, Vol. 5, 2002, 11-29). The allegation by Ben Jonson in the prefatory matter to the First Folio that Shakespeare had "small Latin and lesse Greek" is highly misleading.

Italy

McCrea has a hard time explaining how the author knew the plots of plays written in Italian, which hadn't yet been translated into English. This is no problem for Oxford, who clearly knew Italian and spent much time in Italy. McCrea never considers why the author was so enamored of Italy in the first place, setting numerous plays there. Several scholars of Italy have demonstrated that the knowledge of Italy in the plays is so precise that it could only have been known to someone who had traveled there.

If one looks at a map of all the Italian cities Oxford visited, that's where Shakespeare set his plays. None of the plays is set in any of the major cities Oxford did not visit. When he returned

to England, he set a new trend toward Italian manners, dress and culture at Court, and was known to foreign diplomats as the "Italianate Englishman."

French

McCrea says anti-Strats, "have a point when it comes to French," because "The Bard writes in that language in *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and scatters Gallic words and phrases throughout the Canon." We know that Oxford studied French daily at Cecil House, and his earliest extant letter, at age 13, is in perfect French.

"But," McCrea says, "William Shakespeare didn't need to go to university to pick up the tongue." Rather, "In the mid-1590s ... he lived in the same ward that was home to 'Petty France' (the French district), and could hardly have avoided them." So in his early thirties, along with everything else he was allegedly doing — acting regularly, managing a theatre company, writing plays at a furious pace, keeping tabs on business affairs and family in Stratford, preparing to purchase New Place, we are told that he just couldn't help bumping into Frenchmen who lived "in the same ward" and learning the language so well that he dropped words in "throughout the Canon," and was able to include convincing dialogue among members of the French royal family in *Henry V* — embellishments, jokes, obscenities and all — almost as if he had been there. Do you find this credible? McCrea notes that Shakspeare lived with the Mountjoys from 1602-4, but *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were written by 1599. Oops!

Shermer's bias and lack of information

You point out that Shakspeare's father was "middle-class" by Stratford standards, ignoring the fact that both of his parents, and also both of his daughters, were illiterate. That is highly relevant when talking about the developmental years of a literary creative genius. He grew up in an illiterate household! and never educated his daughters! What literary genius, while portraying women as well-educated in his plays, would neglect to teach his daughters to write, and leave no money for education in his will?

You say that, "Some anti-Stratfordians question Shakespeare's existence." I have never encountered any such person, nor have I ever seen anything like that in writing. Can you cite an example? If any such persons exist, they are not representative. Any theory has a right to be judged by the best arguments of its strongest proponents.

You say that, "the number of references to him from his own time [to Mr. Shakspeare of Stratford, or to the author Shakespeare, whoever he was, and how do you know?] could only be accounted for by a playwright of that name (unless de Vere used Shakespeare as a nom de plume, for which there is zero evidence)." Actually, all it would take would be *one* clear reference to Shakspeare as the author anytime before 1616 to put the authorship controversy to rest. Here's your big chance.

You seem unaware that George Puttenham, in *The Art of English Poesie*, named Oxford first on a list of courtiers who wrote well, but suffered it to be published without their own names to it. Puttenham clearly implied that

Oxford was an outstanding poet, who, due to his position in life, published anonymously, or under pseudonyms.

Schurink

You also seem unaware that Fred Schurink of the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne turned up clear evidence in 2006 that "Shakespeare" was seen as a pseudonym at the time of the First Folio. Schurink, a confirmed Stratfordian, noticed oddities in references to Shakespeare in Thomas Vicars' manual of rhetoric, published in three different editions in the 1620s. In the 1624 edition he lists four outstanding English writers, omitting Shakespeare. In the 1628 edition, he included the following correction: "To these I believe should be added that famous poet who takes his name from 'shaking' and 'spear,' ..." The odd format of this reference implies that the name was seen as a made-up or pen name.

The explanation offered is that Vicars knew the Stratford man wasn't the author, and didn't want to imply acceptance of him in the first edition of 1624, so he left him out. But by the time he published the 1628 edition, he had figured out a way to include a reference to Shakespeare — in a way that would signal the name was a pseudonym (Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter, Vol. 44: No. 1, Spring 2008). The fact that the name was often hyphenated on the works also strongly implies that it was a pseudonym.

There is also the evidence of the Sonnets. The author himself says that he does not expect his name to be remembered (#81), does not want it to be remembered (#72), and that the Youth shouldn't be seen to mourn for

(Shahan cont.)

him after he dies (#71). None of this makes any sense, unless the author's true identity was not yet known at the time.

Diana Price

You say that "although Shakespeare skeptics note that there are no manuscripts, receipts, diaries or letters from [Shakspeare or Shakespeare, either one], they neglect to mention that we have none of these for Marlowe, either." It is simply untrue that we've neglected to compare the evidence of a literary background between Shakspeare and other writers of his time, including Marlowe. That's one of the main things that Diana Price did in her book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography* (Greenwood Press, 2001). Apparently you haven't read it.

It's orthodox scholars who never bothered to systematically compare the kinds of literary evidence extant for all of the writers of the period. Price found that Shakspeare was the only one of twenty-five writers of the time for whom she could find none of ten different kinds of evidence suggesting a literary career. He is an extreme outlier in this sense.

Marlowe's situation was very different from Shakspeare's. He died young, unmarried, disgraced, murdered, and an accused atheist. Who would have kept his papers? Why? Shakespeare was supposedly the "soul of the age!" His acting company became the "King's Men" at the Court of King James I. He divided his time between London and Stratford — a situation conducive to correspondence — and his home remained in his family for generations after he died. He retired to Stratford

in his late-forties, resting on his laurels, supposedly famous.

Surely someone to whom he wrote should have kept one letter. Other letters survived. There are records of people being interested in his son-in-law's medical records, and purchasing them, apparently without ever inquiring about any papers of Shakspeare's.

Trevor-Roper

You prefer the views of a theater professor to those of a Supreme Court Justice, but what about the views of a top Oxford historian about what we should expect to find? As stated in the Declaration, "Hugh Trevor-Roper, Regius Professor of History at Oxford University, found Shakespeare's elusiveness 'exasperating and almost incredible ... After all, he lived in the full daylight of the English Renaissance in the well-documented reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I, and ... since his death has been subjected to the greatest battery of organised research that has ever been directed upon a single person. And yet the greatest of all Englishmen, after this tremendous inquisition, still remains so close to a mystery that even his identity can still be doubted.'" ("What's in a Name?" *Réalités*, November 1962.)

Trevor-Roper was the British intelligence officer who tracked Hitler during WWII, and wrote the highly-acclaimed book, *The Last Days of Hitler*. I have much more respect for his views than McCrea's.

Spawned from the same germ

Now let's look at another of McCrea's basic premises. He claims that, "...all versions of the

true author were spawned from the same germinal belief in the inadequacy of Shakespeare's education," This is false. It's just a cheap magician's trick to make all of the other kinds of evidence disappear so that he does not have to deal with them. Reading his article, he never names, much less quotes, any Oxfordian since Looney, who published his book in 1920. McCrea gives no indication of having read Looney.

Looney had never heard of Oxford when he developed his profile of the author, using deductive logic to infer his characteristics from the works. He came up with eighteen characteristics of the author, only one of which relates to education. One thing he did *not* claim about the author's education is that he necessarily attended a university!

McCrea ignores all of the other traits that Looney deduced from the works, all eighteen of which fell instantly into place as soon as he discovered Oxford for the first time.

Looney's book is, for its time, a masterpiece of empirical methods. Mortimer Adler, series editor of the Great Books Series, said it was one of the best books of the 20th century. You should read it before jumping to conclusions based on McCrea. The reasons for doubting Shakspeare go way beyond just education. McCrea ignores everything else. He seems stuck in a time warp, pretending Oxfordians have made no progress in almost ninety years, so he can just stereotype us, and then attack his own stereotype.

Simonton

The current issue of the *Mensa Research Journal* contains an

article titled, "Shakespeare's small Latin and less Greek: Scientific perspectives on education, achieved eminence, and the authorship controversy," by Dean Keith Simonton, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Davis (Vol. 40(2), 2009, 22-26). Simonton is regarded as one of the world's leading experts on creativity and genius. He's a member of my academic advisory board, and wrote the article at my request. After reviewing the evidence, he wrote the following conclusion, the first part of which supports your position, but the second part of which poses major problems for you:

On the Stratfordian side, high levels of formal education and exceptional scholastic success are by no means required for extraordinary achievement as a creative writer, and especially not as a poet. Certainly a college degree is not a requisite. Indeed, in the arts and humanities a college degree is predictive of less success. To be sure, some college education is generally better than none at all, but this does not mean that someone with only a high school degree cannot reach the highest ranks. In fact, for the creators in the Cox (1926) sample, those with just high school were better off than those with master's or doctoral degrees (Simonton, 1983). Hence, the fact that Shakspeare seems not to have gone to Cambridge or Oxford tells us very little according to these results. The only real question is whether he obtained a sufficiently good education at the grammar school, and the answer to this issue will probably never be known with confidence.

On the anti-Stratfordian side, any dearth of formal training should be compensated by consid-

erable self education. Not only are creative writers unusually prone to be omnivorous and voracious readers, but the amount of that reading is positively associated with achieved eminence. And this stipulation is the crux of the matter. The fact is that we have no direct evidence whatsoever that the Stratford man was a man of letters. Not one letter that he wrote, nor any book that he owned or read, has ever been found. Not one thing about Shakspeare's will suggests that it was written by a man who had lived the life of a writer, much less the writer Shakespeare. His own children were illiterate, a

Oxford was apparently an omnivorous and voracious reader. He was a patron of writers, musicians and artists, who held him in the highest regard. Twenty-five works were dedicated to him, some praising his literary achievements. No work was dedicated to Shakespeare.

surprising outcome if Shakspeare was spending numerous hours reading the historical and literary works that underlie his plays and poems. Worse, one has to wonder whether even the best education available at the local grammar school would suffice for the man to become as well-read as he needed to be. Shakespeare betrays considerable competence in modern languages, including French, and especially Italian. To become broadly read outside English and Latin literature may not have been possible given the grammar school training most likely offered at the Stratford of Shakspeare's youth.

Omnivorous Oxford

Right, this is the crux of the matter, not whether Shakspeare may have attended Stratford's grammar school. Oxford was apparently an omnivorous and voracious reader. He was a patron of writers, musicians and artists, who held him in the highest regard. Twenty-five works were dedicated to him, some praising his literary achievements. No work was dedicated to Shakespeare.

How likely is it that Shakspeare became a voracious reader in childhood, before entering grammar school, with illiterate parents? Early childhood education is very important to the development of a literary creative genius, and Shakspeare did not live in an environment conducive to such development. But as the Declaration says, "This is not to say that a commoner, even in the rigid, hierarchical social structure of Elizabethan England, could not have managed to do it somehow; but how could it have happened without leaving a single trace? Orthodox scholars attribute the miracle to his innate "genius," but even a genius must *acquire* knowledge ... Academic experts on characteristics of geniuses see little reason to think that Mr. Shakspeare was a genius." Simonton is one of the "experts" referred to.

Attached is a book review [see SO Newsletter, Vol. 37, No. 3, Fall 2001, 13] of Simonton's *Origins of Genius, Darwinian Perspectives on Creativity* (Oxford University Press, 1999), focusing on implications for authorship. The book spells out in detail the developmental characteristics that one would expect to find in a literary creative genius. The review first describes these characteristics, and then examines the extent to which each applies

(Shahan cont.)

to Oxford and Shakspeare. Oxford clearly has all of them, and he has them in spades.

Shakspeare has none of them. The results of Simonton's work on genius couldn't point more strongly toward Oxford, or away from Shakspeare. I expect that you will find it both interesting, and relevant. Seen in this context, whether or not Shakspeare attended grammar school seems like a red herring. What about all the other prerequisites to the development of genius? It's easy to frame an issue such that only one's own research paradigm seems relevant. That's typical of academics who see only through the lens of the own discipline.

I will also send you separately a copy of the article, "Shakespeare in Stratford and London:

Ten Eyewitnesses Who Saw Nothing," by Ramon Jiménez (Shakespeare Oxford Society Fiftieth Anniversary Anthology, 1957-2007, 74-85). It is one very important article. If Shakespeare were really the author, it could not have been written. These are examples of the solid academic research that backs up everything we say in the Declaration.

If you are still interested in sponsoring a debate, I suggest that it be between Scott McCrea, and Oxfordian Mark Anderson, author of "Shakespeare" by Another Name. I'm still willing to help bring that about, and will welcome your involvement if you can put in the time to become well-informed.

Stick to what you know

Otherwise, please stick to what you know. You make wonderful

contributions when you have done your homework; but a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, especially when it is mostly on one side of an issue.

Note: Prof. Simonton's article in the current issue of the *Mensa Research Journal* is available by subscription or purchase. The *Mensa Research Journal* website is at: <http://www.mensafoundation.org/Sites/foundation/Navigation-Menu/Publications/Journal/Current-issue/CurrentIssue.htm>

John Shahan is Chairman of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition (www.DoubtAboutWill.org), and principal author of the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare. He is a former vice president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and has served on the editorial board of The Oxfordian. His main areas of interest in the authorship controversy are how paradigm shifts take place, and the nature of creativity and genius.

Concordia call for papers

Prof. Daniel Wright, Director of The Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon has issued a call for papers for the annual conference to be held April 8-11, 2010 at the university. Deadline for papers is October 31, 2009.

The theme for the conference is "The Queen in/and Shakespeare". Wright said:

Papers should focus on significant observations of what likely are allusions to the Queen in the Shakespeare canon with an emphasis on our ability, with the application of sound literary critical tools, to determine their significance in order to assist us in identifying the relationship - if any - of the Crown, in the person of Elizabeth, to the writer who called himself / herself

Shakespeare. This is a rich topic, about which much has been written, but as authorship skeptics, we have a fresh perspective with which to re-focus the world's attention in our efforts to reveal the hidden mystery and majesty of this body of work - and provide a pathway to the goal of enlarged understanding by forging into the canon, aided by juried scholarship, with an eye to better discerning and disclosing what these plays say about sovereignty - and the English Sovereign.

The conference website at: <http://www.authorshipstudies.org/conference/papers.cfm> gives the following directions for submission:

To apply for consideration for a place on the 2010 conference agenda, applicants should mail two hard copies of a proposed

paper — of approximately 30-45 minutes reading length — accompanied by an annotated bibliography of all sources cited. In lieu of a complete paper . . . the submission of two hard copies of a detailed abstract and annotated bibliography (is the minimum necessary). A current curriculum vitae or professional biography with a record of all publications and a history of conference presentations should accompany submissions of papers or abstracts. Candidates will be notified by late November if their proposals have been accepted. Mail submissions to: Prof. Daniel Wright, Director, The Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre, 2811 NE Holman, Concordia University, Portland, OR 97211-6099.

(SOS President cont'd from p. 2)

report on the ongoing project I have referred to as the Posthumous Sonnets Project. In recognition of the 400th anniversary of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, the SOS Board of Trustees has declared 2009 to be the Year of the Sonnets.

I talked about the Posthumous Sonnets Project during my presentation at the annual conference in White Plains last October and encouraged SOS members and others undertake a cooperative research effort. Since then I have launched a posthumous sonnets blog at www.ShakespearesSonnets1609.wordpress.com and have formed an informal posthumous sonnets group (PSG) to brainstorm ideas, compare notes, and test hypotheses and possible scenarios. The deliberations of the PSG have been quite useful and I want to thank participants for their valuable input.

We haven't completed our work but I believe we have hit on many key pieces of evidence that support the hypothesis that the book of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* published by Thomas Thorpe in 1609 went to press after the poet's death. The idea of this project, ultimately, is initiate a complete communications effort behind the posthumous sonnets hypothesis before the end of this year.

The most important element of the communications plan is the publication of a research paper or monograph that lays out a compelling case for posthumous publication. We also expect to issue a series of press releases, craft several shorter articles for publication in various newspapers and magazines, circulate our findings online

via blogs and even YouTube videos, conduct interviews with the media, and go forth aggressively to deliver presentations and lectures on this topic at Shakespeare-related conferences and seminars, along with community organizations, libraries, high schools and colleges. I plan to present the findings of the research on our annual joint conference scheduled for this November in Houston.

I believe this research – and the PR effort behind it – has enormous potential for positively shaping the Shakespeare authorship debate in the years to come. It's essential that we take advantage of the news "hook" provided by the 400th anniversary to make the best case we can for posthumous publication.

Making the case for posthumous publication

In looking into the posthumous publication topic, I have been somewhat surprised that the posthumous case has not yet been fully developed. Several writers have touched on the posthumous publication topic – including Thomas Looney in his landmark *Shakespeare Identified*. But it is often treated on an offhand manner, almost as a throw-away item worthy of only a few supporting arguments. In effect, I think the posthumous publication issue has been given short shrift over the years and deserves much more scholarly focus.

Biographers of the Stratfordian persuasion cannot even contemplate the idea that the 1609 book of sonnets was published after the death of the poet – no matter how much compelling evidence is staring them in the face. Nor have many Stratfordian skeptics over the years been motivated to

compile the strongest possible case for posthumous publication. The notion of posthumous publication is anathema to Stratfordians and most anti-Stratfordians for one simple reason: establishing that the poet William Shakespeare died before 1609 would eliminate just about every authorship candidate with two exceptions – Marlowe (died 1593) and Oxford (died 1604). Taking all of the available evidence into account, Oxford's death in 1604 fits the posthumous publication theory like a glove. Marlowe – although dead by 1609 – would appear to have died much too early to be the author of the sonnets, not to mention many other works of Shakespeare.

Every other major authorship candidate was still alive in 1609 and for several years thereafter: Roger Manners, fifth earl of Rutland (died 1612); Henry Neville (died 1615); William Shakspeare of Stratford (died 1616); Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (died 1621); Francis Bacon (died 1626); William Stanley, sixth earl of Derby (died 1642). The 1609 posthumous publication theory would eliminate all of these candidates from consideration.

Oxfordians, in particular, should be keen to make the posthumous publication of the sonnets a central plank in the case for Oxford's authorship – hence this Posthumous Sonnets Project. One of the arguments we're developing relates specifically to the Stratfordian paradigm. My observation about the Stratfordian authorship theory for many years is that most so-called Stratfordians are emotionally – almost religiously — attached to their theory of authorship. This strong belief in the theory

(SOS cont.)

prevents Stratfordians from seriously considering the substantial evidence that contradicts their theory. Theirs is a firmly held belief – similar in many respects to faith in the pre-Copernican geocentric model of the solar system.

Given this firmly held belief in the Stratfordian theory, there are many blind spots that keep Stratfordians from seeing evidence that tends to undermine their belief. Stratfordians will see the evidence against the Stratford theory only when they believe there is ground for reasonable doubt. Until then, they will continue to ignore any and all countervailing evidence.

This gives rise to the following imaginative scenario: Imagine that this “booke called Shakespeares Sonnettes” was registered and published exactly as we have it today, only 10 years later — in 1619 instead of 1609. I present this scenario in the spirit of opening minds so the evidence compiled for posthumous publication has a fighting chance of not being reflexively resisted and ignored.

What would have to change about this book of sonnets if it had been published in 1619 instead of 1609? Clearly, if published in 1619 – three years after the death of William of Stratford – those of the Stratfordian persuasion would readily accept this as a posthumous publication. Every argument, every piece of evidence that Oxfordians present for posthumous publication in 1609 would be admitted without objection by Stratfordians for a 1619 publication.

Posthumous publication in 1619 would explain, for Stratfordians

and Oxfordians alike, all of the following:

- The absence of a dedication by the poet himself, even though William Shakespeare wrote dedications for his two narrative poems “Venus & Adonis” and “The Rape of Lucrece”. Shakespeare knew how to write a dedication.
- If still alive, a poet would normally contribute some kind of dedication in a publication containing his poetry. It’s highly unusual not to have a dedication from the poet.
- The generic title of the book – Shakespeare’s Sonnets – suggests that this is the complete set of sonnets by Shakespeare and that we should not expect to see any more sonnets from this poet.
- The apparent absence of the poet from the entire publication process, that helps to explain the number of errors contained in the text, including, for example, the inexplicable repetition of the phrase “My sinful earth” in “Sonnet 146” and the absence of a concluding couplet in “Sonnet 126”.
- The total silence of the poet after the publication of the sonnets. If the sonnets were pirated – the consensus view among Stratfordians – surely a living poet who was as famous and favored by powerful patrons as the Stratfordians insist would be in a position to complain and/or correct the record about the sonnets. The total silence of the poet after publication speaks compellingly to the posthumous theory. Katherine Duncan-Jones tries to make the case that Shakespeare approved the publication and was even involved in the publication process to some degree. But she can’t provide any evidence to support this notion. Duncan-

Jones suggests that Shakespeare had fled to Stratford to avoid a plague outbreak in London and therefore couldn’t contribute a dedication. This strikes me as a feeble attempt to overcome the obvious absence of the poet from the entire project.

- The dating of the composition of the sonnets would also support the posthumous theory. Most scholars believe the sonnets were composed in the early-to-mid 1590s, with a few sonnets written in the first few years of the seventeenth century. Curiously, few if any scholars believe any of the sonnets were written or revised after 1603/1604.
- Many references in the sonnets themselves to the poet’s advanced age, his anticipation of his impending death, and his expectation that his name would be forgotten while the name of his beloved would enjoy “immortal life.”
- Finally, I’ll just mention the coup-de-grace, the one piece of evidence that has yet to be adequately explained or refuted by Stratfordians: the reference to the poet in the dedication as “our ever-living poet.” There is no serious argument to be made against the obvious interpretation that “our ever-living poet” means the poet, William Shakespeare, was dead by 1609. Stratfordians have been trying to explain this phrase away for centuries. If the sonnets had been published in 1619 instead of 1609, Stratfordians would not have to twist themselves into rhetorical knots to rationalize this straightforward description of the poet. They could accept the phrase as meaning what it so patently means: The poet is already dead. Stratfordian Donald Foster admitted as much in a 1987 Proceedings of the Modern Language Association 102 article “Master W. H.: R.I.P.” He said:

"In a fairly extensive search, I have not found any instance of ever-living used in a Renaissance text to describe a living mortal, including, even, panegyrics on Queen Elizabeth . . . though it does appear sometimes in eulogies for the dead." (42-54) Jonathan Bate is even more concise. In *The Genius of Shakespeare*, Bate wrote: "'Ever-living' was an epithet applied to dead poets, not living ones. The point was that they were dead, but they lived eternally through their work." (63)

The above litany does not include all of the evidence and arguments we're considering and I have only provided a very cursory overview of the supporting information. I just wanted to give members a sense

of this project is attempting to do. My goal is to assemble the best evidence so we can make the following claim: Posthumous publication is the only viable explanation for all of the evidence. Some theories — such as pirated publication — can explain some of the evidence. But we can't cherry-pick the evidence. We need to lay it all out there and come up with a reasonable and responsible explanation for all of the evidence. We must find the cleanest, simplest explanation for the available evidence.

All things considered, I believe posthumous publication of the sonnets is the explanation for all of the evidence associated with the publication of "a booke

called Shakespeares Sonnettes" in 1609. We're hard at work to make that case in the most compelling way possible. If you have any ideas, pertinent quotes, or supporting research that you think should be included in this project, please let me know. I'm eager to hear from others who have researched this topic over the years. No sense reinventing the wheel if others have already assembled some compelling evidence and arguments on behalf of the posthumous sonnets theory.

Matthew Cossolotto, President
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(*Ado* cont'd from p. 27)

You Like It, holiday plays meant to be performed out of doors in good weather. Far more than we could ever be in a theater, here at Boscobel we are in the Old English holiday world of merry-making where there is no past or future. One enters into it, has as good a time as possible, and leaves it when it's time to return to the workaday world of clocks and calendars. In this world there is no past or future, so costumes can relate to any period. It's the audience who, oddly dressed in T shirts and shorts, seem tourists from another time.

Much Ado is a comedy, of course, so out under the summer sky these professionals played it broadly and yet not so broadly that the tenderness is lost, for

this is one of the most delicately tender of the Shakespeare romances. The actors who perform the roles of Beatrice and Benedick are more than up to the challenge, Jason O'Connell in particular bringing a wonderfully silly vision of Benedick as a louche narcissist who literally falls all over himself when he finds himself falling in love, while Nance Williamson is all anyone could wish as the as the sharp-tongued but tender-hearted Beatrice. "Everybody plays the fool, one time, there's no exception to the rule," goes the old song, and Shakespeare, and this wonderfully intuitive version of Benedick express this timeless message, so welcome on a warm and timeless mid-summer eve.

The director of *Much Ado*, John Christian Plummer, is an Oxfordian — with a TV series based on Mark Anderson's biography, *Shakespeare by Another Name*, up his sleeve — and although I don't see how knowing that affects a particular performance, if in any way it inspired this excellent version of this wonderful play, then efforts to get the Oxford story told have borne some truly excellent fruit.

Stephanie Hughes is an educator and writer who lives in Nyack, NY. She is a former editor of the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* and the SOS journal, *The Oxfordian*. Her work can be viewed on her blog, *Politic Worm* at <http://politicworm.com>. The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival is at <http://hvshakespeare.org>.

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