URGENT APPEAL

THE SOS NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT TO INCREASE DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH INTO THE AUTHORSHIP QUESTION

Renew your annual membership
Buy a half-price membership for a friend
Donate to our research program and other efforts

Your membership dues help support the publication of this newsletter and The Oxfordian. Please renew or support the publication of this newsletter and The Oxfordian.

Gift memberships/recruit a member:
Each new person you interest in the work of the SOS makes our Society stronger, more vibrant and more diverse. Please take advantage of our special program which provides a one-year membership, with all its privileges, at half price. It's a wonderful gift for the friend to whom you've been talking about the Society, a great way to encourage an associate to "try us out" and the most effective way we know to increase our size and impact.

DONATIONS:
The SOS relies on donations to provide the funds needed to produce our publications and engage in other public education activities throughout the year. This year we are focusing on funds for the following activities:

• $2,000 to cover the cost of giving issues of The Oxfordian to educators and libraries.
• $5,000 to award research grants to scholars to investigate aspects of the Authorship Question.
• $1,000 to bring a prominent scholar as guest speaker at the SOS Conference.

The Society welcomes your planned gifts which will enable our work to continue in the future. Planned gifts can be made to the Society's Endowment, its Research Program, or general operations.

WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP GIVE YOU?
It identifies you as a proud believer in the facts—not the conventional fiction—about Shakespeare.

It shows that you are eager to learn more about the topic—and are interested in contributing to the development of new information on the authorship and the Shakespearean canon.

It is a way for you to engage with others who are also actively interested in the subject.

It provides publications and activities that you enjoy (The Newsletter, The Oxfordian, the Blue Boar Book Store, the Annual Conference), including—in the future—new benefits now on the drawing board. Among the new programs being developed is a structured research grant program (which continues and improves the informal grant program the Society has had for years), a tour of Oxfordian sites in England and Shakespearean sites in Italy, receptions and other events for members only.

It offers you an opportunity to help shape the future of the SOS and the authorship debate by becoming a member of our Board of Directors and serving on a Board Committee. We need your skills and welcome your involvement. Contact a board member to get started.

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Oxfordians Mourn Passing of Richard Roe
Prof Daniel Wright, Ph.D.
Director, The Richard Paul and Jane Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre, Concordia University

I am sad to announce the death of Dick Roe, who died December 2, 2010 in Pasadena, CA. He and his wife Jane, who survives him, were grand and active Oxfordians, as so many of us know.

Dick just published, last year, his breakthrough work of a lifetime, The Shakespeare Guide to Italy, one of the most important studies in the Shakespeare Authorship Question. I was honored to attend a reception for Dick in Pasadena at the release of his book last year. All of us, I know, are pleased, given this sad news, that Dick was able to receive the enthusiastic accolades of friends and supporters before his death.

We are fortunate that he was able to undertake, and see through to completion, this titanic accomplishment, the result of decades of travel, investigation and meticulous research, jaw-dropping in its significance.

Distinguished Scholarship

For this achievement Dick was slated to receive, in person, the Concordia University’s Vero Nihil Verius Award for Distinguished Scholarship at the forthcoming Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference in April. Of course, the award will still be bestowed in tribute to his great achievements. This is a man whose accomplishments the academic world must trumpet to all who are unaware of his life achievements.

As most of you know as well, Dick and Jane—who loved Concordia University and its fierce commitment to educate, for all time, students in the fine points of the Shakespeare Authorship Question—made permanent their legacy, last year, as leaders in the inquiry, by bestowing on the university almost half a million dollars to create the Richard Paul and Jane Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre. For Dick’s commitment to present and future generations, in this endeavor and so many others, we can all be thankful.

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A Conversation with Richard Roe

Ramon Jiménez

For nearly twenty years Richard Roe has been speaking and writing about his research into the settings and circumstances of ten Shakespeare plays that take place in Italy. This past spring Oxfordians and others interested in the Shakespeare Authorship Question were excited to learn that he had completed his long-awaited book, Shakespeare’s Guide to Italy: Then and Now. In anticipation of publication by HarperCollins in the Fall of 2011, a limited number of copies have been privately printed and distributed.

An exceptionally handsome volume, the Guide is illustrated with more than two dozen maps and diagrams and over ninety photographs, forty of them the author’s own. Roe examines words, passages and stage directions in ten plays, explaining their meanings and pinpointing the plays’ locations in Italy and France.

I spoke with Roe in June at his Pasadena home.

RJ: You and your wife Jane were active members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society for many years. What stimulated you to undertake your own research?

ROE: I was avid about the whole subject, probably because I was a heretic myself. And so I identified with that. I felt a necessity. I didn’t consider it research. I just wanted to see what I could see.

RJ: What led you to this particular subject—the Italian settings of the plays?

ROE: I was a B-17 pilot stationed in Italy during the war. Naturally, I fell in love with it. It’s an irresistible place. But it was only after we’d been traveling a while that we went back. Mrs. Roe was an avid French scholar. So, while she went to the Sorbonne in Paris and other places, I went to Italy. So we each had an independent vacation. And then joined hands. We did that every year. Wonderful.

RJ: Had you done this type of research and writing before?

ROE: Never. As a lawyer, I’d written a lot of stuff. But only judges and the opposition would read it.

RJ: You’ve been investigating the Italian plays for a long time. What kept you going?

ROE: I think I mentioned in the book that I was astonished that every place that is mentioned in the plays as being in Italy turned out to be an authentic reference. The playwright deliberately chose things that were unimportant, but absolutely unique. They were anchors to his plays, in terms of credibility. So, finding the right places was a joy, an absolute joy.

RJ: You’ve spoken about your research at various conferences and published several articles. What made you decide to put them in a book?

ROE: I hadn’t thought about a book. But, one evening, at a dinner gathering at the Athenaeum, the faculty club at Cal Tech, I made a remark about Edward de Vere. After dinner some people came up to me and asked me about him. One of those people, a dear friend as it turned out, insisted that I should collect my research in a book. I went home and thought about it, and decided “why not?” So that’s the genesis of the book. It took forever, which it should. It’s got a lot of stuff in it. And it was a thrilling journey.

RJ: There are several dramatic moments in your book—occasions when you suddenly discovered a significant fact. The one I recall most vividly is in your chapter on All’s Well That Ends Well, when you identified the piazza in Florence where Helen and the others are standing in Act III.


RJ: It’s incredible that you actually found a building near with the sign of St. Francis on it, which is how the Widow described her lodging-house. And it was a building that had been there since the sixteenth century. It would be hard to refute that.

Dick devoted the last 25 years of his life to his interest in Shakespeare, becoming an expert on the Bard’s Italian Plays. One of the many original achievements of Dick’s life was the completion of his book The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Then & Now, which will be published by HarperCollins in the Fall of 2011. Dick was also honored this year by Concordia University, Oregon, with the dedication of The Richard P. and Jane L. Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Center.

Dick is survived by his wife Jane; by his children, Cameron, Betzi, Richard and Hilary; and by his 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He lost his younger son, Richard Matthew, in 2003 to cancer.

Richard “Dick” Roe was greatly admired and loved by his family and his many friends, and was warmly regarded and respected by his professional colleagues and the scholarly community, not only in California, but across the USA and internationally. Even-tempered, fair, generous and always interesting, Dick will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

On December 20, 2010 Dick was laid to rest at Forest Lawn in a private family ceremony. The Roe Family will hold a memorial gathering on February 13, 2011, 2-5 PM at the Cal Tech Athenaeum, Pasadena, in his honor.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made in memory of Richard P. Roe to the benefit of Foothill Vocational Opportunities, c/o Jody Short, 789 Fair Oaks Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103.

In anticipation of the upcoming publication of The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Then & Now, by Richard P. Roe, an award-winning actor, author and playwright.

Over 1900 people have now signed the Declaration—an increase of 100 since April. Seventy-nine percent are college graduates, and 35% have advanced degrees. Current and former college/university faculty members now total 330 (18%). The largest number of faculty by field is those in English literature (22%), followed by theater arts (12%), the arts (9%), natural sciences (8%), math, engineering & computer sciences (7%), other humanities (6%), medicine & health care (6%), social sciences (6%), education (5%), management (5%), history (4%), law (4%), psychology (13%).

Nicholson and Newcomb have both been added to the list of “Notable signatories” at the SAC website, along with Professor James Fisher, Head of the Department of Theatre at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, for a total of twenty-three notables.

Reasonable Doubt.”

Newcomb, now in his fourteenth season with the OSF, in addition to many other Shakespearean venues, said that he, too, was proud to be signing the Declaration, and that “the works themselves defy the story—the myth that the Stratford man was the author.”

Former SAC board member Earl Showerman, a long-time supporter of the OSF, organized the ceremony. Handing the beautifully-framed poster of the Declaration to Nicholson, he added: “While the academy remains prejudicial against any serious consideration of the Shakespeare authorship question, the theater-arts community has proven far more open-minded, and has demonstrated courage, leadership and creativity in pursuing what is arguably one of the great literary mysteries of our time.”

The other signatories to this copy of the Declaration are Chris Coleman, Artistic Director, Portland Center Stage; Canadian actor and playwright Keir Cutler, Ph.D.; Christopher DuVal, Assistant Professor of Performance, University of Idaho; Livia Genise, Artistic Director, Camelot Theatre, Talent, Oregon; Felicia Londré, Ph.D., Professor of Theatre, University of Missouri at Kansas-City; Stephen Moser, Artistic Director, Pacific Repertory Theatre, Carmel, California; Mary Tooze, music, theatre arts and library patron, Portland, Oregon; and Hank Whittemore, award-winning author, actor and playwright.

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18th Earl of Oxford, was a bastard son of South-ampton and Elizabeth Trentham. These two points, bisexuality and bastardy, are the reasons why Ox-ford had the need to use an alias. John used many Shakespeare plays, poems and sonnets, as well as the anonymous Will Folke’s, His Ava and the ex-ploits of Antonio Perez at the Court of Elizabeth to develop this theory.

We then heard Michael Cecily (the 18th Baron Burghley, Earl of Exeter, Marquess of Exeter, and a descendent of William Cecily) on “Revisiting the 1st Baron Burghley’s Precepts for the Well Order-ing and Carriage of a Man’s Life.” This collection of precepts was written by William Cecily for his son Robert and printed in bound form in 1637 (it may also have been an earlier printing in 1616). In any case, it has been known (of privately) in the Burghley household since at least 1582). These precepts are parodied in Polonius’s speech to his son Laertes in Hamlet, and it is easy to see how Edward de Vere, brought up at Cecil House, would have known of them.

Next on the schedule was a panel discussion on Henry IV, Part I, which of the hardier of us had seen performed the night before. This was hosted by Professor Felicia Londré and featured the actors we saw as King Henry, Prince Hal, and the Earl of Worcester (the last being James Newcomb). Again, this discussion was quite informative.

The conference closed with the traditional awards banquet. Presentations memorialized the late Verily Anderson and Robert Brazil. The Oxford-ers of the Year Award was presented in ab-sentia to Richard Roe in view of his incredible work in discovering the Italian influences and allu-sions in Shakespeare, soon to be revealed to all in his new book, hopefully early this year.

All in the thought, this was one of our most memorable conferences ever. Stay tuned for next year’s con-fERENCE, currently being planned for Washington, DC. The thoughtful and well-delivered presenta-tions, together with the Shakespeare Festival many of the actors and theater personnel participated in the conference) made the sometimes difficult and expensive trip to Ashland more worthwhile.

Richard Roe

Continued from page one

The significance of this man’s impact on the world, in so many realms, is beyond measure. We can all but hope for so much as a fraction of this legacy ourselves when it comes time to total up the good we have done for humanity and the benefit our lives have made for others. I hope you will join with me in celebrating the life of a remarkable scholar and a man who—as all who knew him can say—was the consummate expression of what it means to be a gentleman. He was truly a man among men.

Hilary Roe Metternich writes:

Richard died on December 1, 2010 in Pasadena in his home after a short illness. He was born in Los Angeles in 1922 to Beatrice Lenore Hart Roe of Kansas and William Ernest Roe of New York. The family settled in Southern California in the early part of the 20th century. His father worked as a mining engineer. Dick served in World War II as a B-17 bomber pilot with the 15th Air Force in the European Theatre and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the American Oak leaf Cluster for services to his country. After the war, he com-pleted his university education at UC Berkeley, where he received his BA in History.

In 1946, Dick married the love of his life, Jane Bachhuber, whom he met while at UC Berkeley. He supported his young family with a variety of jobs while attending Western State College of Law, Los Angeles, on the GI Bill, graduating summa cum laude.

In 1952, Dick became a victim of the, at that time, totally epi-demically, paralyzed and spent several months in an iron lung. After a long recovery, he established his own law practice, Roe & Reiss, in downtown Los Angeles. Dick became widely respected both locally and nationally as an expert on matters of real property, mortgages, and savings and loan mergers and acquisitions. Dick was also responsi-ble for the complex legal work that established the first shopping mall in California, as well as merg-ing two savings and loan associations, the first time in the history of the industry.

Dick and Jane Roe took pride in their five chil-dren and made Pasadena their home. Over many years, they supported a variety of institutions they especially loved, notably the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, the Pacific Asia Museum, Descanso Gardens, the Pasadena Symphony, the Huntington Hospital, and in honor of their hand-i-capped grandson, Foothill Vocational Opportuni-ties.

ROE: Once you’ve seen it you’re stuck with it, aren’t you. One thing that makes me chuckle is if anybody challenged me, I could just show them the photograph.

RJ: Is there one experience that you especially rel-ished?

ROE: My answer would be Sabbioneta.

RJ: You’re speaking about the town near Mantua that you visited at the suggestion of a fellow-traveler?

ROE: Yes. A charming town, not far from the Po River. It had a great history of its own, primarily 16th century. But there had been a settlement there for hundreds of years. It was of historical interest for a number of reasons, but principally because of its proximity to the great Po River. I had not done any research on it until I got there and found it to be remarkable.

RJ: What made it such a special experience for you?

ROE: It was totally unexpected. I had not intended to go to Sabbioneta. But when I heard the guide say “Duke’s Oak,” not only was I stunned, I real-ized the playwright had been in Sabbioneta him-self. This was confirmed as I was wandering about its streets and looking at its buildings, and later when I learned more about what a renowned model city it had been – and was called “Little Athens”! All the pieces locked into place. The features of the town were increasingly obvious as the unnamed place that is the location of A Midsummer Nights Dream.

RJ: That is remarkable. The locale of the play has never been established, and this identification will surely provoke Stratfordian scholars. I suppose that most of the people whom you approached in Italy and France were not familiar with the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Is that right? How did they react to your questions?

ROE: That’s true. Shakespeare, even now, among the literati in Italy, doesn’t count for much.

They’ve got such a wealth, 2000 years and more, of their own literature. They just never took up the Englishman, even though he was writing about their country.

RJ: What has been the reaction to your research among the Stratfordians?

ROE: It’s a foolish heresy, and according to Stratfordians, I’ve probably written a fool’s tale. The Stratfordians are rather, what? – “slippery.” They will not offer rebuttals, they will not discuss. They do nothing but cast stones. When they mention me at all, they insult me, literally insult me. A lot of that is true in the academic world, by the way.

Unless one says something they are certain of al-ready, one is called a fool.

RJ: Your photographs and maps are just superb. Some of them are sure to become standard illustra-tions for future editions of the plays.

ROE: I’m not a photographer, but I wanted the public to see something that they were tempted to pick up and read. My first draft had very few illus-trations in it. But I learned that this generation looks at the pictures first, and then reads the book. Whereas in my generation you read the book, and if there were pictures, fine. I decided that I wasn’t writing for my generation, so I used the same tech-nique that authors use today, that is, lots of visuals.

RJ: The President of the Shakespeare Oxford Soci-ety has asked me to tell you that the Board of Trus-tees has voted to make you and Jane honorary members. Also, the Joint Conference Committee of the SOS and the Shakespeare Fellowship has named you Oxfordian of the Year.

ROE: That’s very sweet—and a great honor. Last year it was Justice Stevens of the United States Supreme Court, a man of great prestige. So I’m very flattered that this year they would select me.

RJ: Are you planning another book?

ROE: I have my doubts that I’ll do anything fur-ther. I’m 88 years old. My goal in putting together Shakespeare’s Guide to Italy was to liberate peo-ple from old canons and hearsay so they could ponders the authorship issue for themselves. I be-lieve everyone can now do that. It will be interest-ing to see what happens next.
The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series: William Shake- speare: Othello, the Moor of Venice

Fully Annotated from an Oxfordian Perspective by Ren

Draya and Whalen Triumph with new Oxfordian Othello

by-line basis. In keeping with the best of the skep- tical tradition, Whalen and Draya draw heavily upon orthodox authorities, so smoothly and im- pressively that the argument supporting de Vere as the true Bard seems to flow naturally from tradi- tional Shakespearean criticism.

More controversially, the Oxfordian Othello represents, but indirectly, a stem rebuke to our modern myth that sheer human imagination without the benefit of experience or education, can accomplish almost anything. There are those who would portray Shakespeare the writer as the great- est human sponge who ever lived. The myth is on full display in some of the more recent orthodox editions of the plays. Shakespeare, it is explained, was a voracious reader capable of absorbing and retaining vast bodies of book learning shortly after its publication in English, French, or Italian, then could practically overlook these knowledge so seamlessly and casually into the greatest dramatic and poetic works the world has ever seen. The third Arden edition of Othello (2006), annoys me the vener- able E.A.J. Honigmann, is especially guilty of this, although Honigmann is among those critics who are sometimes cited approvingly by Whalen and Draya. This explanation for the miracle of human genius risks reducing Shakespeare to the level of idiot savant.

Thankfully, self-importance is nowhere to found in the work of Whalen and Draya. For them, Shake- speare is what counts, along with the extent to which orthodox scholarship can be reasonably linked to a new proposed author.

Thanks to Bonner's presentation of his research, I have long since managed the first act of the play, and am looking forward to the second act. I also applaud the actors in the performance who, of course, could not wear rain ponchos and hats and had to endure performing in the wet stage (one actor did slip once, but recov- ered immediately without even dropping his line).

Sunday, September 19

Sunday morning began with a presentation by Wil- liam Ray on “Proofs of Oxfordian Authorship in the Shakespearean Apocrypha.” William con- centrated on “Sweet Cytherea,” which appears as sonnet IV in The Passionate Pilgrim. After show- ing how this poem is very similar to Venus and Adonis as well as to the “Echo Verses” by Edward

Othello is the second release in the projected Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, the first being Macbeth in 2007. Both are co-edited and annotated by Richard Whalen, co-general editor of the series with Dr. Daniel Wright of Con- cordia University. His co-editor/annotator for editor of the series with Dr. Daniel Wright of Con- cordia University. His co-editor/annotator for

Draya and Whalen Triumph with new Oxfordian Othello

Thankfully, self-importance is nowhere to found in the work of Whalen and Draya. For them, Shake- speare is what counts, along with the extent to which orthodox scholarship can be reasonably linked to a new proposed author.

The thoughtful and well-delivered presentations, made the sometimes difficult and expensive trip to Ashland more than worthwhile.

The next presentation, by Bonner Cutting, was an impressive look at censorship in the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages and how playwrights and poets were often punished (sometimes severely) for any- thing deemed injurious to the state or to religion (which was often the same thing as the state). Bon- ner presented case after case of these writers (such as Jonson, Marston, Marlowe, Kid, and Nashe).

However, one name seems to be missing from this list. Why wasn’t Shakespeare ever punished in this way for what he wrote (sometimes seemingly more injurious to the state). Could this be because he was, in reality, the high rank 17th Earl of Ox- for? Of course it could, says Bonner (and I agree).

Bonner also discussed the mysterious 1000 pound annuity awarded to Edward de Vere in 1586, suggesting that this award could have been for some state reason, such as to support the writing of plays with political meanings.

After a break, we heard John Hamill on “Bisexu- ality, Bastardy, Avisa, and Antonio Perez Revis- ited.” This was a good summary of points made by John in presentations at past conferences, offering an alternative theory to the Prince Tudor theory to explain why Edward de Vere needed to write under a pseudonym. This theory presents evidence gleaned from the plays, poems and sonnets, that indicates that the author of the plays was bisexual. John proposes that de Vere and Southampton were lovers and were also in a bisexual relationship with Elizabeth Trentham, Oxford’s second wife. The result of this triangle was that Henry de Vere, the

William Farina

The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series: William Shake- speare: Othello, the Moor of Venice

Fully Annotated from an Oxfordian Perspective by Ren
Hamlet" was based on an excerpt from Katherine’s upcoming book, Shakespeare Suppressed. Kathe- nrie detailed severalusions to Hamlet that prove it had to have been written well before the accep- ted Straffordian date of 1600-1.

After a break Tom Regnier discussed many as- pects of law contained in Hamlet, concentrating on ecclesiastical law, the law of homicide, and the law of property and inheritance. This showed how edu- cated the author of the play was in the law and that he could, in Tom’s words, “think like a lawyer.” Dr. Sam Saunders then spoke on “The Odds on Hamlet’s Odds” in which he expanded on a prior presentation some years ago at Concordia on the curious mention of the wager on the duel between Hamlet and Laertes and whether the odds quoted were fact accurate. Sam showed that they were accurate, but could only have been calculated by someone who had a good knowledge of how swordplay was practiced in Renaissance England and who had read the works of Cardano. This fits the picture we have of Edward de Vere.

The Friday presentations concluded with Helen Gordon on “The Symbols in Hamlet and in Portraits of Oxford and Southampton: An Oxfordian Revolution.” Helen showed examples of Freema- son and Rosicrucian symbolism in Hamlet, par- ticularly the graveyard scene, and in several Eliza- beatha portraits. She finished with an expanded discussion of how previous work on how Ox- ford imbedded the names and mottoes of himself, Southampton, and Elizabeth in the dedication to the play. We broke for dinner and then attended the OFS presentation of Hamlet, for which we had been well prepared by the presentations earlier in the day.

Saturday, September 18
Saturday morning began with the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and then we heard from Hank Whittomene on “The Birth and Growth of Prince Hal: Why Did Oxford Write The Falstaff Plays?” Hank explored this play, which seems to be an earlier ver- sion of the Shakespeare plays about Henry IV and Henry V. Hank showed some evidence that this play might have been written by Oxford in 1574 to “catch the conscience of the queen” and com- memorate the birth of Henry Wriothesley in 1573 (who would be the unknowned son of Oxford and the queen). In Famous Victories, the 11th Earl of Oxford (ancestor of Edward de Vere) introduces Prince Hal at court and seems to be a father figure to him throughout the play. Hank notes that the 11th Earl does not appear in the later canonical Shakespeare plays and the character Fal- staff assumes the father figure role.

Marie Merkel then continued the presentations regarding Henry IV. Part 1 (which we would see later that evening) with her talk on “The Day that Jack Staff Broke Jack Scoggins’ Head.” Marie discussed an anonymous morality play called Jack Jugger, which was entered in the Stationer’s Reg- istry in 1562-3. This play, which Marie argues was by Edward de Vere, has many elements in it which later appear to be part of the character of Falstaff and which provide some early descriptions of events that happen in the Henry IV plays by Shake- speare, particularly in reference to Falstaff. This early play can also help explain why the character of Falstaff was originally named Oldcastle in a four-act edition of the play, an allusion to the Lo- lard martyr Sir John Oldcastle. After a break Lynne Kositsky entertained us with her presentation on “The Young Adult Novel Min- erva’s Voyage and its Relationship to True Reper- tory and Minerva Britanna.” Lynne read some ex- cerpts from her recent novel Minerva’s Voyage, showing some allusions in the novel to the works mentioned in the title of her talk and how they are important in explaining possible sources of The Tempest.

We then had a panel discussion on Hamlet (which most of us had seen the night before) hosted by Professors Rich Draya and Jack Snow- worth and featuring the actors who had portrayed Hamlet, Polonius, and Claudius. This was very enjoyable and informative.

After a nice lunch, we reconvened for the after- noon “entertainment.” This part of the conference was open to the general public (actually we had to buy tickets for it) and was intended to “get the word out” about the purposes of our two societies. The theatrical entertainment began with Robin Goodrin Nordli, a well-known actress with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, performing her one- woman show, Bard Babies. It was wonderful seeing Robin perform excerpts from Shakespeare featur- ing the female characters she has previously per- formed in OFS productions in a part-comical and part-emotional way. Keir Cutter also presented his one-man show Is Shakespeare Dead?, which he had performed for us last year at the Houston Conference. This is an appears lost or forgotten. Nevertheless, OUP editor Michael Neill is given occasional credit by Whalen and Draya. All the orthodox editions are uninspiring- ly silent on possible connections between Shake- speare’s works and the author’s life, or for that matter, the author’s own life and the books he was so clearly drawing upon. All either ignore the authorship question or dismiss it out of hand. The Oxfordian theory from its inception, stripped of dubious ciphers, anagrams, and specu- lative issues pertaining to royal succession, has al- ways in essence been a forceful, two-pronged ar- gument.

The Oxfordian Othello seizes upon both from the outset. First, Edward de Vere, love him or hate him, lived a very Shakespearean life in all of its tragedy, comedy, history, and poetry, including his own acknowledged status as a poet-playwright among contemporaries.

Second, the often startling, documented connec- tions between de Vere’s biography and Shake- speare’s universally acknowledged source materi- als are seemingly endless. These arguments are not infallible, but for many they are persuasive. Any- one who ignores or attempts to downplay them leaves the definite impression that they are trying to run away from something.

But the Whalen-Draya team run away from noth- ing; indeed they may even upset some Oxfordians. For example, noting the homoerotic over-tones in Iago’s III.3 exchanges with Othello, their footnote reminds us that “Oxford was accused of homo- sexual acts, a crime in Elizabethan Ingland, and was probably bis-sexual.” Thus, an Oxfordian read- ing of the play instantly aligns itself with a grow- ing and legitimate school of orthodox interpre- tation in this regard.

On the very first prefatory page of the new OUP, we are met with a bold justification for the project:

“For readers and theatergoers, the result is a better under- standing of the author’s intention and design and a greatly enhanced understanding and appreciation of the plays as literary masterpieces.

Finally, after 54 years, I have lived to see a criti- cal edition of a Shakespeare play state this simple truth.

The editors then pour forth examples by the bucket. A few will here suffice. De Vere, in real life (like Othello), in a fit of disillusion and probably with encouragement from elsewhere, falsely ac- cused his young first wife of infidelity, then later repented. Never mind what actually happened; the important thing is that the evidence perceived in this manner and documented for all time. During Othello’s bitter lament to Iago in IV.4, footnotes 54-60 remind the reader of this infamous scandal. No other editions do this.

Another example: in II.iii Cassio’s ridiculously overwrought reaction to being demoted is clearly explained with respect to de Vere’s own damaged reputation, as well as the impressive fact that he once wrote a published poem on this theme. This is an error in history—or lack of knowledge of the play’s Latinized name of a very real and still-existing Venetian thoroughfare. These are but a few exam- ples of the literary-biographical links found in this new edition.

The Oxfordian theory from its inception, stripped of dubious ciphers, anagrams, and speculative issues pertaining to royal succession, has always in essence been a forceful, two-pronged argument.

As for source material, everyone acknowledges that Shakespeare drew upon the un-translated Ital- ian of Cinthio, the Euphuistic innovations attrib- uted to John Lyly, and the courtly manners of Castiglione. What no one outside the authorship debate acknowledges is that Edward de Vere had the means and wherewithal to access all of these specific sources directly. Even de Vere’s harshest critics admit that he was an “Italianate English- man” who traveled to Italy, could speak Italian and owned Italian books; moreover, as the editors point out, Cinthio’s volume has been traced to the library inventory of de Vere’s guardian, Lord Burghley. De Vere himself had also personally sponsored and written an introduction to a Latin translation of Castiglione. Lyly’s connections with de Vere are so extensive as to call into question whether Lyly was more stenographer than wellspring. Odd Shakespearean coinages such as “mammering” are...
perfomarily acknowledged in other Othello editio-ns as the supposed influence of Lyly, but never as resulting from the cozy association between Lyly and de Vere. The Oxfordian edition takes a different view, emphasizing the influence of the commedia dell’arte and its Mysteries: An Oxfordian contention that the real Bard was de Vere himself.

My only criticisms are slight. The Oxfordian theory is unapproachable by the rest of us. For one, it seems to be a great overstatement in orthodox circles that Shakespeare the writer maybe, just maybe, had de Vere’s life in mind when writing or, worse heresy yet, might have glanced at one of his credited, published poems. Of course, anyone who dares to ask such things is immediately ridiculed. No matter, it is much easier (and more realistic) to postulate that the real Bard was de Vere himself.

The only criticisms are slight. The Oxfordian Othello gives short shrift to other group-theory possibilities. Shakespeare’s plays, one that seems to be getting lost in the misty mists of time. This year’s conference, to mixed approval of the attendees (most of us were very pleased). Friday afternoon was devoted to presentations on Hamlet (which we would be seeing that evening). We began with Dr. Roger Stritmatter on “What is the True Compositional Order of the Texts of Hamlet?” Following up on the earlier presentation by Jack Shuttleworth, Roger also discussed the difference between the various texts we have (Q1, Q2, and F), this time with an eye toward determining the order in which they were written. Roger presented good evidence that the proper order should be Q1, then F, and then Q2 (with the 230 extra lines in Q2 added in 1601-2 just before this version appeared in print in 1643 and thus best representing the author’s final intentions). Roger also offered a theory on why 80 lines of Q2 were cut before F appeared in 1623. The next presentation, by Katherine Chiljan, on “Twelve ‘Too Early’ Allusions to Shakespeare’s

At $16.95, the price is right; in fact, today’s open-minded Shakespeare teacher, student, or enthusiast, no longer looking for a better value in a ridiculously oversaturated market. Included are bibliographies and extensive appendices, plus splendid essays by the editors, including one by Dr. Drayna on the widely underappreciated musical depth of Othello, and how this too connects with Edward de Vere, but not with William of Stratford. Would that all tenured university English professors spend their time so constructively. Even if the Oxfordian theory one day should prove incorrect, data such as these are still important because they lay out how critical thinking should be done, even when occasionally moving in mistaken directions. If, on the other hand, the Oxfordian theory should prove to be correct, then volumes like this will be viewed as landmarks in the history of literary criticism. As for myself, I now intend to go right out and acquire the Oxfordian Maidel, this time on my own dime.

Newsletter Editor Interviewed on KSNM 570 AM Las Cruces

Southwest Senior is a syndicated radio talk show broadcast by KSNM 570 AM Las Cruces, NM. It is hosted by Southwest Senior newspaper owner-publisher, Keith Whelpley. December 7 2010 Whelpley interviewed Dr. Michael Egan, editor of the Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter. During a wide-ranging discussion Whelpley touched on Egan’s association with the SOS.

ME I understand you also have an interest in Shakespeare.

ME Yes, I do, a very big one. Professionally I would describe myself as a Shakespeare scholar. My modest claim to fame is that I have written a book published in 2006 attributing an anonymous Elizabethan play manuscript to Shakespeare. It’s a new Shakespeare play.

ME A new play by Shakespeare?

ME That’s my claim, yes.

ME What do other scholars think of your idea?

cuckolded him). This seems to be a strange pairing. However Professor Roger Prior of the University of Belfast, who was to attend the conference, to mixed approval of the attendees (most of us were very pleased). Friday afternoon was devoted to presentations on Hamlet (which we would be seeing that evening). We began with Dr. Roger Stritmatter on “What is the True Compositional Order of the Texts of Hamlet?” Following up on the earlier presentation by Jack Shuttleworth, Roger also discussed the difference between the various texts we have (Q1, Q2, and F), this time with an eye toward determining the order in which they were written. Roger presented good evidence that the proper order should be Q1, then F, and then Q2 (with the 230 extra lines in Q2 added in 1601-2 just before this version appeared in print in 1643 and thus best representing the author’s final intentions). Roger also offered a theory on why 80 lines of Q2 were cut before F appeared in 1623. The next presentation, by Katherine Chiljan, on “Twelve ‘Too Early’ Allusions to Shakespeare’s
Dr. Martin Hyatt then spoke on “Teaching Heavy Ignorance Afloat to Fly” (the title comes from a line in sonnet 78). In this talk Hyatt continued his discussion of the use of bird symbolism in plays and sonnets, which he spoke about at the conference in Houston. Shakespeare and contemporary writers used the symbolism of birds and associated mythology in their works. Marty pointed out that the two “booksends” of Stratfordian literary biography are Greene’s Greatworth of Wit in 1592 and the prefatory material in the First Folio of 1623. In both, Shakespeare is compared with a bird (a crow in Greene and a swan by Ben Jonson). Using bird and mythological symbolism as well as some consideration of numerological beliefs and forms used at the time, Hyatt points out that the use of these comparisons to birds has unexpected results relating to Shakespeare’s authorship. After another informative performance by Mignarda, we enjoyed a special opening reception, where good food and conversation were at hand. Most conference attendees then walked over to the Elizabethan Theatre of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to see the production of The Merchant of Venice, where we could think about what had been presented about this play earlier. This production was very well received by everyone.

Friday, September 17

After the Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Fellowship on Friday morning, the conference presentations continued with Richard Whalen on “Goats and Monkeys!” Othello’s Outburst Recalls a Fresco in Bassano, Italy.” Richard described some research by a Stratfordian professor which again suggests that Shakespeare had to have visited northern Italy. In Act IV of the play, Othello cries out “Goats and monkeys!” as he leaves the stage after striking Desdemona (who he believes has

and the Strange Case of Gaspar Ribeiro” Dr. Earl Showman described an article by Stratfordian Brian Pullan identifying a Portuguese converso, named Gaspar Ribeiro, living in Venice in the 1560s, who may well have been a model for Shylock. Ribeiro was found guilty of making a usurious loan of 3000 ducats in 1567, and there are several parallels between his life and the life of Shylock, as demonstrated in The Merchant of Venice. In addition, Ribeiro was a patron of the Santa Maria Formosa Catholic church, which Edward de Vere was known to have attended while in Venice in 1575. Besides providing insight into another source for the play, the story of Ribeiro again shows the detailed knowledge of Italy (and particularly Venice) that the author of The Merchant of Venice amassed, virtually requiring him to have actually spent significant time there.

After another break we heard from Cheryl Eagan-Donovan on “Shakespeare’s Ideal: Sexuality and Gender Identity in The Merchant of Venice.” In this play, Shakespeare gives us cross-gendered characters, with male and female actors playing boy and girl roles, for which he was fined. This particular excerpt focused on Richard’s relationship with Portia and Antonio both competing for the love of Bassanio. Do they represent different aspects of a romantic ideal, conflicting aspects of the author’s own identity, or both? Cheryl also sees Portia modeled on Edward de Vere’s second wife, Elizabeth Trentham. At the end of her presentation Cheryl showed us another excerpt from her upcoming documentary based on Mark Anderson’s book, Shakespeare by Another Name. This particular excerpt focused on Richard Roe and his new book on Shakespeare and Italy (more about this later).

literature and source material which fit Edward de Vere but not William of Stratford.

In his presentation on “Shakespeare’s Shylock and the Strange Case of Gaspar Ribeiro” Dr Earl Showman described an article by Stratfordian Brian Pullan identifying a Portuguese converso, named Gaspar Ribeiro, living in Venice in the 1560s, who may well have been a model for Shylock. Ribeiro was found guilty of making a usurious loan of 3000 ducats in 1567, and there are several parallels between his life and the life of Shylock, as demonstrated in The Merchant of Venice. In addition, Ribeiro was a patron of the Santa Maria Formosa Catholic church, which Edward de Vere was known to have attended while in Venice in 1575. Besides providing insight into another source for the play, the story of Ribeiro again shows the detailed knowledge of Italy (and particularly Venice) that the author of The Merchant of Venice amassed, virtually requiring him to have actually spent significant time there.

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such specialized information. Just his knowledge of literature alone is staggering—a lot better than mine, frankly. And I’m an English professor. He must have had access to a great library, extremely scarce in Elizabethan England. Books were few and expensive. No, the author had to have come from a privileged background. He must have been a highly educated aristocrat—one of the wolfish ears surrounding Elizabeth, as Wiliam Whitman put it. That’s the only reasonable answer.

KW And this Earl of Oxford fits the bill?

ME Almost perfectly. He was one of the most sen-
or lords in the country, a trained lawyer with de-
grees from both Oxford and Cambridge, was a fine poet and dramatist who owned his own theatrical troupe, travelled Europe extensively, especially Italy, was notoriously bisexual (which Shakespeare was, as we can tell from his sonnets), and had a va-
iety of experiences which seem to be reflected in Shakespeare’s plays.

KW Shakespeare was a bisexual?

ME Sure, one of his most famous sonnets is writ-
ten to a pretty boy he describes as “the master-
mostress of my passion.”

KW Okay, but why would he want to conceal his identity?

ME Keith, again you put your finger on one of the key problems, in my opinion. The usual answer is that in those days playwrighting was considered to be an activity beneath a lord, so he’d have to find a stand-in. A front man, someone to take the rap, as it were. Theaters were sleazy, associated with whores and thieves, and so forth. So someone like a stand-in. A front man, someone to take the rap, as it were. Theaters were sleazy, associated with whores and thieves, and so forth. So someone like de Vere would need a pseudonym.

KW So William Shakespeare is a pseudonym?

ME That’s the argument, and it was once said pub-
licly of de Vere, whose family crest featured a lion brandishing a spear, that “by countenance shakes a spear.” But on the other hand, as far as we can tell, Shakespeare’s plays were extremely popular at court and his company often performed before the queen herself. A famous story has her praised with Henry IV, which features Falstaff, that she asked Shakespeare to write a play showing the fat knight in love. This is the origin of The Merry Wives of Windsor. My point however is, if the au-
thor was really Edward de Vere or some other no-
bible, he might well have quietly told the queen that he was the true author. But there’s no evidence he ever did.

KW And now you edit a Shakespeare journal, I understand.

ME Two, actually. One is called The Oxfordian, for the Shakespeare Oxford Society. William Nei-
derkorn of the New York Times called it the best academic journal of its kind in the USA. I’m proud to say. I also edit the Oxford Society’s quarterly newsletter.

Anyone who is interested in the Shakespeare Au-
thorship question should just google “Shakespeare Oxford Society” and follow the links.

Theater Professionals Sign Declaration of Reasonable Doubt in Ashland

John Shahan

In a public ceremony in Ashland, Oregon, home of the prestigious Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), several prominent theater professionals recently signed a hard copy postet of the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Iden-
tity of William Shakespeare. This is the fourth Declaration signing event featuring prominent au-
thorship doubters since April of 2007. Over 1900 people have now signed online at the website of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition, founded to legimize the Authorship Question.

The September 18th event featured Paul Nichol-
son, Executive Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and one of the most prominent Shake-
peare festival directors in America, plus James Newcomb, long-time actor with the OSF Com-
pany.

Addressing an audience of more than 100 doub-
ters, Nicholson said that “The Shakespeare author-
ship question is a great mystery, and I love great mysteries…” Then he added that he was “proud to have the opportunity to sign the Declaration of

I welcome hearing from any of you who have ideas on what the Society can be doing. You can reach me at rnewcomb@osf.com. We have many committees that you can be a part of, and I would also encourage anyone who is interested in a posi-
tion on the Board of Trustees to get in touch with me as well. This is your Society, after all.

We are continuing to make plans for next fall’s conference in Washington, DC. No date or exact location has been determined yet, but it will most likely be shortly after the release of Anonymous (or maybe even coincide with the release date). Hav-
ing the conference in Washington, DC offers good possibilities for public events in conjunction with the Folger Library. Further details of the con-
ference will be forthcoming via websites of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship, as well as on-line sources such as SOS Online News (shakespeareoxfordersociety.wordpress.com). Elizaforum and Quateth. I’m sure it will be something you will not want to miss.

It will certainly be an exciting year for the SOs. Together, we can really make a difference!

Ashland: A Great Conference

The Sixth Annual Joint Conference of the Shake-
peare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society convened September 16, at the Ashland Springs Hotel in beautiful Ashland, OR, home of the renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

The festival is world-class and probably the pre-
miere repertory theater in the US. The amazing theater experience provided to conference reg-
istrants was a marvelous addition and served as a backdrop to the presentations.

After the introductions, the talented duo of Ron Andrico and Donna Stewart, better known as Mignardis, treated us to an hour of fine music. Ron plays lute with expertise and Donna is an accom-
plished mezzo-soprano. They performed songs and

music of the 16th century, many of them connected with the 17th Earl of Oxford.

Prof. Tom Gage (“The Bone in the Elephant’s Heart”) then discussed the much-neglected Arabo-
Islamic influences on the Renaissance. Much Greek thought was transmitted through Arab and Islamic translations, rather than through Roman literature (the Romans read and used Greek sources, but did not translate them into Latin). Prof-
essor Gage went through many examples in the fields of literature, mathematics, and medicine (the title of the paper referring to a refutation by al-Razi of Galen’s theory of elephant’s hearts). Of course Shakespeare was indebted to this kind of Islamic influence. Elizabethan England had a mixed rela-
tionship with the Arab world and some of this comes through in the plays of Shakespeare. In re-
gard to the plays being presented during the con-
dference, Gage pointed out how Launcelot Gobbo in The Merchant of Venice may in fact be an Arab (Shylock calls him “Hagar’s offspring,” he im-
pregnates a moor, and he is a servant of a Jew who could not have Christian servants) and how John of Gaunt, Sir Walter Blunt, and the Earl of Worchester (characters in Richard II and Henry IV, Part I) were allied with Muslims in a famous batt-
tle against Christians (not described in the plays).

After a break for lunch, we heard Dr. Tom Hunter on “The Invention of the Human in Shy-
lock.” This was an expansion of some previous presentations by Tom refuting the theory that The Merchant of Venice is an anti-Semitic play de-
signed to pander to London audiences, but rather a deeply philosophical allegory grounded in Renais-
sance Humanism.

Shylock is not the evil Jew rejecting “Christian values,” but a man whose tragedy is his rejection of his own Jewish values. Along the way, Tom pointed out examples of knowledge of Hebrew

Continued p. 23
to do just that, particularly the release (currently
The coming year will offer us many opportunities
they were written.
write them, as it sheds light on the life and times
portion of the evidence needed to do so. External
limit of linguistic analysis by computer. Despite
confidence that their method can safely iden-
证据, topical references, and the circumstances
and personal experiences of the putative author
will remain important factors in any question of
authorship.
The noted economist John Maynard Keynes, who
was a scholarship winner in mathematics and clas-
sics at Cambridge and the author of a dissertation
on probability, is said to have remarked that he was
“not prepared to sacrifice realism to mathematics.”
We would do well to follow his example.

Announcing the first Oxfordian edition of
William Shakespeare’s
Othello
With an introduction and line notes from an Oxfordian perspective
By Ren Draya of Blackburn College and Richard F. Whalen, co-general editor of the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series
From Horatio Editions—Lumina Press Available direct from Lumina for $16.95 Credit-card orders 9a-4p (ET) by telephone at 866 229 9244 or at www. lumina.com/store/Othello or email to orders@lumina.com
Othello is the second play in the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, following Macbeth (2007). Forthcoming are edi-
tions of Hamlet and Anthony and Cleo-
patra.

Letters to the Editor
Oxford and Golding
To the Editor:
I am glad that Dr. Altoruccio (May 2010 SOS news-
letter) confirms my conclusion published in the Fall 2007 Shakespeare Matters (“A Deeper Look at the Arthur Golding Canon”) that Golding wrote the three early histories issued in his name. I also agree that Oxford had nothing to do with Phaer’s translation of the Annals. But there is good evi-
dence that Oxford wrote Ovid’s Fastes of Nenia (1560), an earlier work than Arthur Brooke’s
Romus and Jupiter, per my paper in The Oxfordian, 2007 (“Did Oxford Make His Publishing Debut in 1560 at ‘TH’?”).
Robert R. Prechter, Jr.

AQ Stirs up Biblical Scholars
To the Editor:
The Shakespeare controversy has enough traction
that it is even brought up in the Biblical Archaeol-
ogy Review, of all places.
The current issue (Nov/Dec 2010 Vol. 36 No. 6)
of Biblical Archaeology Review has an essay under
its First Person section on “Shakespeare, the Earl of Oxford and Morton Smith,” written by the edi-	or, Hershel Shanks. It compares the Authorship question with a similar current controversy on the authenticity of a different Gospel of Mark (there-
fore the reference in the article to this document as
“Secret Mark”)—and leaves both controversies as unresolved.
The article provides a brief description of the
Shakespeare Authorship question using Shapiro’s
Contested Will as the source. However, the article
maintains a fairly balanced view. Shanks states in
the article that, “The claim that Shakespeare could
not have written those plays is certainly under-
standable. As one early scholar put it: ‘There is
nothing in the writings of Shakespeare that does not
argue the long and early training of the schoolman,
the traveler, and the associate of the great and learned. Yet there is nothing in the known life of Shakespeare that shows he had any of these qualities.’” Shanks does quote some of
Shapiro’s views on why there is a controversy: “Shapiro sums up this argument: “There is an un-
bridgeable rift between the facts of Shakespeare’s
life and what the plays and the poems reveal about
the author’s education and experience.” The arti-
 cle goes on to say: “A leading, if not the leading
candidate for the author of Shakespeare’s plays is
Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. He was
clever, well educated, well traveled and the events
of his life bear a fascinating resemblance to events
in Shakespeare’s plays.” Shanks seems frustrated
when he says that “Shapiro summarizes the current
state of the debate: ‘It seems like endless trench
warfare’.” It reminds him of the controversy over
the “Secret Mark.”
The article goes on to describe the similarities
with the “Secret Mark” debate: “I admit the para-
allels are inexact, but the evidence against Smith
[who discovered the new Gospel of Mark and is
accused of forging it] sounds a lot like the evi-
dence that Shakespeare could not have written the
plays and that Edward de Vere did.” The article
ends with a flexible view of the issue and leaves
the conclusion open: “Like the Shakespeare con-
troversy, ‘Positions are fixed and the debate has
proven to be futile or self-serving.’ In the end,
Shapiro finds the debate ‘both impressive and de-
moralizing.’ The same may be said of the Secret
Mark debate.”
John Hamill

Brief Chronicles Publishes Second Is-
sue Online
To the Editor:
The second issue of Brief Chronicles has been pub-
lished online at www.briefchronicles.com with ten
papers and five book reviews from contributors in
the US, Canada, England and Germany.
“Thaat the inaugural issue was exceptional for its
research,” said Roger Strumter, general editor,
it’s shown by Gale Publishing’s selection of Earl
Showman’s paper on the Greek origins of Much
Ado About Nothing for inclusion in its reference
text, Shakespeare Criticism, due out in spring
2011.
Highlights of the second issue include a paper
that proposes a new authorship candidate for The
Arte of English Poesie while a second defends the

President’s Letter and Ashland Conference Report
Richard Jeftsich
As your newly elected president I extend my
greetings to all the members of the Shake-
speare Oxford Society. It was very nice
seeing many of you at the recently concluded Ash-
land Conference and I hope to see
more of you at the upcoming Joint Conference this
fall in Washington, DC.
The Shakespeare Authorship Conference continues
to gain ground in the popular press and otherwise
in the public mind. I have always maintained that
the biggest obstacle to accepting the idea that the
works were not written by William of Stratford and
that they were in fact written by Edward de Vere is
not being exposed to the evidence.
We need to continue to bring the Question before
the public and explain why it does matter who
wrote them, as it sheds light on the life and times
of the author and helps to explain how and why
they were written.
The coming year will offer us many opportunities
to do just that, particularly the release (currently
scheduled for September 23, 2011) of the new
game Anonymous, directed by Roland Emmerich.
Although this film will not doubt be very con-
troversial and “sensational” and will promote theo-
ries of the Authorship not shared by all of us, it
will still provide us with the ability to promote the
certainty of Edward de Vere. There will be a lot
of press coverage of this film and people will be
asking questions. It is up to us to be there to an-
swer them.
The Society will be planning multiple events
to try to capitalize on all this new publicity. However,
such planning will require support by the mem-
bership, particularly financially.
I thank all of you who have renewed your mem-
bership or contributed to the Society and I urge
everyone else to renew their membership, attempt
to recruit new members, and consider making a
financial contribution. We have a wonderful op-
portunity coming up which we cannot afford to
miss.
Contested Will. University Professor James Shapiro’s book, matter. There is also a detailed response to Colum-
ized literary historians for centuries,” stated Strit-
A Hundreth Sundry Flow-
provides a more accurate dating of
originally proposed in the 1850s.

Othello
Shakespeare and Garrick
piction of a carefully designed enigma.”

Another paper investigates the peculiarities of Shakespeare’s frontispiece engraving in the First Folio, the author, John Rollett, finding, “What is
usually taken to be a poorly drawn portrait of the playwright turns out to be a skillfully executed de-
piction of a carefully designed enigma.”

The second issue concludes with book reviews of Shakespeare and Garrick by Vanessa Cunning-
ham; Othello, a new critical edition by Ren Draya; The Lame Storyteller by Peter Moore; and Shake-
peare’s Lost Kingdom by Charles Beaumclerk.

Indexed by the MLA International Bibliography and the World Shakespeare Bibliography, Brief Chronicles is an annual journal of Shakespeare research, authorship studies and the Tudor and Ja-
cobean periods, with an inter-disciplinary Editorial Board of scholars in Economics, English, History, Law, Psychiatry, and Theater.

Sincerely,
Gary Goldstein
Managing Editor
Brief Chronicles

Editor’s Note: The newsletter congratulates Brief Chronicles and reminds readers that the 2010 issue of The Oxfordian is also currently available. TOX features articles by Robin Fox, MacDonald Jack-
son, Peter MacIntosh, Sabrina Feldman, Derran Charlton, Marie Merkel and others. Order your issue today from sosoffice@optonline.net / 914 962 1717, or take a subscription and support the movement.

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Submissions
The newsletter is open to research, articles, books and book reviews, letters and news items bearing on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Contributions should be concise as possible and supported by appro-
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Stylometric Confusion
In the face of such methodological shortcomings, conflicting opinions, and dueling analyses, what is one to think? An obvious explanation is that to-
day’s orthodox scholars, including all the stylomet-
icians here mentioned, are working with the wrong paradigm, and are handicapped by the con-
fines of the conventional Shakespearean dating system. (Craig and Kinney are familiar with the Oxfordian argument, and mention it several times, once even citing an article in The Oxfordian.) In addition, very few scholars of any period have given any consideration to the idea of a substantial corpus of Shakespearean juvenilia. We can be sure that Shakespeare did not always write like Shake-
peare.

For those who find the evidence for Oxford as Shakespeare to be broader, stronger, and more rea-
sonable than the Stratford theory, the case for co-
authorship is very weak. Even if we accept the or-
thodox dating of these plays, none of the alleged collaborators was a likely partner for the mature Oxford, who had been entertaining the Queen and her court for as long as 25 years. John Fletcher, for instance, was born in 1579 and did not begin writ-

ing plays until 1606, according to his entry in the ODNB, two years after Oxford died. And what
sense does it make for the 50-year-old Oxford, with more than 30 plays to his credit (several of them masterpieces), to collaborate with Thomas Middleton, an unknown writer in his early 20s who
wrote his first play, a collaboration, in 1602? Why

would Oxford allow a man with no name, and
no known work, like George Peele to write the long opening scene in Titus Andronicus, in which are introduced all the important characters in one of his most personal plays?

As modern research has demonstrated, Shake-
peare was a meticulous and persistent reviser of virtually all his plays over the course of a long ca-
areer. But the jumbled condition of his printed
works, most of which exist in two or more ver-
sions, reveals a patchwork of incompletely incor-
porated additions and deletions, as well as numer-
ous inconsistencies, misnamings, and misalign-
ments. There are several instances where the origi-
nal passage remains in the text alongside the revi-

sion. It is much more likely that the standard
 qualitative scenes that are attributed to co-authors are Shake-
peare’s original versions that have been incor-
porated by the editor or by a misalign-
ment or by compositor’s error, remained in the play after he
improved and refined the rest of it. Moreover, if he

1.4.46 “placed well into Middleton territory.”

Here again, the evidence suggests divided au-
thorship, but does not exclude Shakespeare’s au-
thorship of the entire play. Most modern studies of
the play divide it between Shakespeare and Mid-

tle, and both E. K. Chambers and Una Ellis-

Fermor regarded it as entirely Shakespeare’s, but

unfinished.

● Tests of six scenes in Henry VIII indicate that

John Fletcher wrote 3.1 and 5.2, and Shakespeare
the other four, as claimed by Vickers. Again,

scores for the two “Fletcher” scenes were no far-
ther from the Shakespeare centroid than scores for

more than a dozen text blocks from canonical
Shakespearean plays. As with Titus and Timon, the
tests do not exclude Shakespeare’s authorship
of the entire play.

● Scores for tests of two scenes in The Two Noble

Kinsmen attributed by Vickers to Fletcher (2.2,
3.6), and one assigned to Shakespeare (1.1) all fell

within the cluster for the author predicted. But, as

before, neither of the scores for the two “Fletcher”

scenes deviated as far from the Shakespeare cen-
troid as did more than a dozen scores for blocks of
genuine Shakespeare text. Nor was the score for

the Shakespeare scene farther from the Fletcher
centroid than numerous scores for scenes from

plays by Fletcher alone.

These results are suggestive of co-authorship, but

they should be considered in the context of similar
tests in the undisputed portion of the canon. Using

data obtained about his use of function words from

the entire “core” of 27 Shakespeare plays, Craig
and Kinney compared them to 62 segments of

2000 words each in six individual Shakespeare plays and 55 such segments from six other plays

reliably attributed to five other authors—all twelve

plays chosen at random. Of the 62 authentic

Shakespeare segments tested, only 50 were cor-
correctly classified as Shakespeare’s work. (For in-

stance, one of the eight segments tested in A Mid-
summer Night’s Dream and three of the seven in

Love’s Labour’s Lost were classified as “non-
Shakespearean.”) Of the 55 non-Shakespearean

segments tested, seven were not attributed to the
correct author. Thus, the success rate for these

segments was 87%, and for the Shakespeare plays it

was only 81%. A testing method that is incorrect
by its own standards 13% to 19% of the time may be

termed suggestive, but hardly definitive.
these passages were by Shakespeare. This is the view of most editors and critics. The analysis of The Spanish Tragedy (Q 1592) consisted of tests of the five passages of the Additions, comprising less than 500 lines, that appeared in the edition of 1602. These have been attributed to Dekker, Webster, Shakespeare and, most often, to Ben Jonson. Craig and Kinney found sufficient similarities in the frequency of common function words and of simple lexical words between the Additions to The Spanish Tragedy and the Shake- speare canon to come to the carefully-stated con- clusion that the "readiest explanation" was that Shakespeare was the author of the Additions. But in his recent book on Kyd, Lucas Eme calls the attribution of the Additions to Shakespeare "groundless." What a shame that Craig and Kinney didn’t test the rest of the play! There are plenty of questions about its author, and the attribution to Kyd rests on shaky grounds. The senior Ogburns questioned about its author, and the attribution to Shakespeare’s, He based his opinion on a stylometric analysis of his known style. This leads them to conclude that “a scene or an act will become uniquely identifiable.”

**Sir Thomas More**

Craig and Kinney tested the approximately 1200 words in Additions II (Hand D) and III (Hand C) in the manuscript of Sir Thomas More against texts from the Shakespeare canon, as well as those by other dramatists, such as Dekker, Jonson and Web- ster. The results were clearly consistent with Shakespeare’s authorship of these additions, and no one else’s. This led the authors to conclude that “the threshold from conjecture to genuine prob- ability has been crossed,” a point again supported by Egan’s analysis citing remarkable verbal paral- els. Craig and Kinney assert that this “creates a presumption in favor of the proposition that the handwriting of Hands C and D is the same as that in the six extant signatures of Shakespeare of Strat- ford, and that this is now “among the surest facts of his biography.” Considering the skepticism that many experts have expressed that the six ex- tant signatures of Shakespeare of Stratford rep- resent the efforts of a fluent, or even literate, writer, it is hard to believe that anyone could assert such a thing with a straight face. Although Craig and Kinney’s conclusions are not unusual, they contra- dict those of Eliott and Valenza, who applied their “new optics methodology” to the Hand D portion of Sir Thomas More and published their results in an article earlier this year. They concluded that it belonged “more in the high Apocrypha than in the Canon.” Indeed, Arthur Kinney himself wrote ten years ago that “the author of Addition II shares nothing whatever poetically with Shakespeare.”

**Shakespeare Co-Author?**

In one chapter Craig and Kinney report the results of their tests of the claims of Sir Brian Vickers in Shakespeare Co-Author (2002) that four plays in the canon—Titus Andronicus, Timon of Athens, Henry VIII, and The Two Noble Kinsmen—are products of collaboration between Shakespeare and George Peele (TA), Thomas Middleton (Timon), and John Fletcher (HF and TNK). They consider these particular authorship questions “a convenient series of problems where the solution is known to a degree of certainty.” But they apparently tested only for the similarity in the use of function words by Shakespeare and the alleged co-author. They report the following results:

- **Tests of the five longest scenes in Titus Androni- cus** indicate that Peele wrote the long opening scene, and Shakespeare the other four, as asserted by Vickers. But according to the scatter plot for these scenes, the score for the “Peele” scene is no farther from the Shakespeare canon than the scores for several dozen text segments from undis-puted Shakespeare plays. The remaining eight scenes, three of which Vickers attributed to Peele, are too short to be tested. Scholarly opinions about the percentage of Titus attributable to Shakespeare range from zero to 100. In the most recent Arden edition, Jonathan Bate declared that “the whole of Titus is by a single hand” and that he now believes Shakespeare’s. He based his opinion on a stylometric analysis by A. Q. Morton, who commented that the probability that Peele wrote any part of Titus was “less than one in ten thousand million.” Although he is noted for his habit of borrowing from other writers, there is no record of Peele ever collaborat- ing with anyone.

- **Tests of the four longest scenes in Timon of Athens** indicate that Middleton wrote the second scene, and Shakespeare the other three, as claimed by Vickers. But again, the score for the “Middle- ton” scene is no farther from the Shakespeare cen- tron than scores for some text segments from un-disputed Shakespeare plays. At least one score for a Shakespeare text block (Romets and Juliet 1.2.6

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**Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter January 2011**

**Ramon Jiménez**


A rthur F. Kinney, the venerable editor of English Literary Renaissance, and Hugh Craig, an English professor at the Univer- sity of Newcastle in Australia, have teamed up with two of their graduate students to produce a group of essays that focus on the authorship ques- tions surrounding more than a dozen plays and parts of plays both in and out of the Shakespeare canon. More than half of the play-texts examined appeared in Shakespeare’s First Folio. Two oth- ers—Edward III and The Two Noble Kinsmen—were added to the canon in the last thirty years. Four other anonymous plays and fragments make up the balance.

Citing Georges Braque’s remark that “One’s style is one’s inability to do otherwise,” the authors claim that writers leave subtle and persistent traces of a distinctive style through all levels of their syntax and lexicon, the former being the writer’s arrangement of words, and the latter his vocabulary or word stock. Their objective is to “resolve a number of questions in the Shake- speare canon, so that the business of interpretation, which is so often stymied by uncertainty of author- ship, can proceed.” Their studies supply consid- erable additional evidence of Shakespeare’s par- ticipation or lack of it in the selected texts, but in most cases that evidence falls short of resolving the question.

Kinney and Craig lay out their case for the absolute individuality of verbal expression with considerable biological detail. This leads them to conclude that “a scene or an act will become uniquely identifiable.”

**How Reliable is Stylometrics? Two Orthodox Scholars Investigate**

4. On two scatter plots, graphically display the indi- vidual scores for each test for each segment of 2000 words. The result is a mixed bag of conclusions, many of which confirm today’s scholarly consensus about how works with the use of the same words in an anonymous work or disputed section of text. It may be summarized in this series of steps:

3. Conduct the same two tests for similar 2000- word blocks from an anonymous play or question- able fragment, and superimpose the scores on the scatter plots for the proposed author of the text.

2. For each segment, obtain a numerical score for the author’s use and non-use of a group of the 200 most common functional words occurring in Early Modern English, such as and, you and though, that have syntactical rather than semantic uses.

1. Select an appropriate “control group” of an au- thor’s acknowledged plays and divide it into 2000- word segments, regardless of speech, act or scene divisions.
what Shakespeare wrote and what he didn’t, but many others that conflict with recent studies by other scholars who also use methods of stylistic analysis. These include Sir Brian Vickers, Thomas Merriam, Eric Sams, and Ward Elliott and Robert McHaffie. In spite of their use of an array of statistical tools, such as Principal Component Analysis, the _test_, the “Zeta” test, and discriminant analysis, Craig and Kinney’s conclusions raise the same doubts and questions as other methods of determining authorship that rely on detailed textual analysis.

One problem is the selection of the “control group” from a dramatist’s accepted work to develop the criteria to apply to questionable texts. In the case of Shakespeare, the authors chose 27 “core” plays—excluding in their entirety the three

Their analysis of 1 Henry VI conflicts with the recent conclusion of Sir Brian Vickers that Thomas Kyd was the author of the play.

Henry VI plays, the Folio King Lear, Macbeth, Measure for Measure, The Taming of the Shrew, Henry VIII, The Two Noble Kinsmen, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus, and Pericles. Also excluded are Edward III, Edmund Ironside, and Richard II. Part One (Thomas of Woodstock), each of which has been attributed to Shakespeare in full-length studies by a reputable modern scholar. Admittedly, many of these plays, or parts of them, remain in dispute, and are the actual subjects of Craig and Kinney’s analyses. But to exclude the entirety of half-a-dozen of Shakespeare’s earliest plays when attempting to establish his linguistic peculiarities is to limit and distort the definition of his style. This is particularly important in the case of Shakespeare because much of the apocrypha, the disputed texts, would obviously be his earliest work.

Shakespeare and Marlowe

The authors apply their function- and lexical-word tests to each of the three _Henry VI_ plays, using as their baseline the results from a control group of six undisputed Shakespeare plays—three histories and three comedies, that “he wrote about the same time.” Test results for Part 3 were sufficiently vague to cause them to discontinue any further analysis, but the results for Parts 1 and 2 suggested that portions of each play were not by Shakespeare. In the case of Part 1, their tests confirm the opinions of numerous commentators, including Maloney, Wilson, Cairncross and Taylor, that the Temple Garden of Oxford and the scenes involving John Talbot and his son were Shakespeare’s work. But Acts 1, 3, and 5, and three scenes in Acts 2 and 4 were the work of another writer or writers.

Although they acknowledge that a third dramatist was probably involved, most likely Thomas Nashe, the authors assert that Marlowe was Shakespeare’s earliest collaborator, and that he and Shakespeare worked together on _Parts 1 and 2 of Henry VI_. Marlowe was responsible for, at least, “the middle part” of _Part 1_, involving the scenes as well as the Cade rebellion scenes in Part 2. This analysis of _Henry VI_ conflicts with the recent conclusion of Sir Brian Vickers that Thomas Kyd was the author of the play. In _Licht of Vickers’ attribution, Craig and Kinney compared _1 Henry VI_ to a Kyd corpus of _The Spanish Tragedy_ and _Coriolanus_, and found “no affinities between Kyd and 1 Henry VI_. After expanding the Kyd corpus to include Soliman and Perseda, they found that “the 1 Henry VI segments remained firmly in the non-Kyd cluster.”

Three Anonymous Plays

The anonymous Arden of Faversham (1592) is the play in the Shakespearean Apocrypha that has most often been ascribed to him, although it has been assigned to fewer other authors. The most recent attribution was by Sir Brian Vickers, who agreed with T. S. Eliot that the author was Thomas Kyd. Arden was extravagantly praised and ascribed to Shakespeare by A. C. Swinburne, and more recently MacDonald Donald. Jackson has published several papers suggesting that Shakespeare had a major hand in it, most assuredly in scene 6 and scene 8, the admirable “quarrel scene.” Craig and Kinney tested the author’s use of lexical words against the Shakespeare pattern obtained from the 27-play control group. The results suggest that Shakespeare was responsible for scenes 4, 5, 6, 7 and 16, but the scores for the two longest scenes (1 and 15), and most of the rest of them, fall clearly out of the Shakespeare cluster. Further tests “gave no support for the idea that Marlowe or Kyd were collabora tors in writing Arden of Faversham.” Craig and Kinney’s scores for scene 8 place it in the “non-Shakespearean” category, in direct disagreement with Jackson.

Ascriptions to Oxford

In 1931 Arden was confidently attributed to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, by Eva Turner Clark, who cited dozens of identical words, phrases and dramatic devices in it that were echoed in subsequent Shakespeare plays, especially Richard III and the Henry VI trilogy. She argued persuasively that it was at court in early 1579 under the title _Murderous Michael_ by the Earls of Oxford and Surrey and Lords Thomas Howard and Frederick Windsor, the latter being the son of Oxford’s half-sister Katherine. The first edition of the supposed play of the play, _Holinshed’s Chronicles_, had been published less than two years earlier.

The chapter on the anonymous _Edmond Ironside_ reviews all the literature on the play, focusing especially on that since 1982, when Eric Sams published his extensive study claiming that it was Shakespeare’s apprentice work, and his alone, in about 1588. Most other commentators have de rided Sams’ attribution and instead asserted that the author was heavily indebted to Shakespeare. The function-word and lexical-word tests that Craig and Kinney applied to _Edmond Ironside_ suggest that none of it was by Shakespeare.

Furthermore, no tests of similar tests comparing the _Ironside_ sections against plays by Lyly, Peele, Greene, Marlowe and seven other playwrights produced no positive results. Thus, the authorship of _Ironside_, dated by most scholars in the 1590s, remains a mystery to everyone except those who follow Sams’ convincing attribution to Shakespeare.

The authors subject the two major episodes of _Edward III_—the so-called Counter parts (1.2 through 2.2) and the French campaign scenes (3.1 through 4.3)—to the same function-word and lexical-word tests. Each segment makes up a third of the play, and their results indicate that Shakespeare wrote the Countess segment, echoing a conclusion arrived at by most critics. But the authors’ results for the French campaign segment fail to support Shakespeare’s authorship. Further tests of word usage in both segments against that in undisputed plays by Marlowe, Peele and Kyd did not “support the idea that they wrote either segment.” Craig and Kyd in fact consign two-thirds of _Edward III_ to an unknown collaborator with Shake
what Shakespeare wrote and what he didn’t, but many others that conflict with recent studies by other scholars who also use methods of stylistic analysis. These include Sir Brian Vickers, Thomas Merriam, Eric Sams, and Ward Elliott and Robert N. Shoemake. In spite of their use of an array of statistical tools, such as Principal Component Analysis, the t test, the “Zeta” test, and discriminant analysis, Craig and Kinney’s conclusions raise the same doubts and questions as other methods of determining authorship that rely on detailed textual analysis.

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Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter January 2011

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Sir Thomas More

Craig and Kinney tested the approximately 1200 words in Additions II (Hand D) and III (Hand C) in the manuscript of Sir Thomas More against texts from the Shakespeare canon, as well as those by other dramatists, such as Dekker, Jonson and Webster. The results were clearly consistent with Shakespeare’s authorship of these additions, and no one else’s. This led the authors to conclude that "the threshold from conjecture to genuine probabili-ty of attribution of this sort is much higher than the point again supported by Egan’s analysis citing remarkable verbal paral-lels. Craig and Kinney assert that this "creates a presumption in favour" of the proposition that the handwriting of Hands C and D is the same as that in the six extant signatures of Shakespeare of Strat-ford, and that this is now "among the surest facts of his biography." Considering the skepticism that many experts have expressed that the six extant signatures of Shakespeare of Stratford repre-sent the efforts of a flautist, or even literate, writer, it is hard to believe that anyone could assert such a thing with a straight face. Although Craig and Kinney’s conclusions are not unusual, they contra-dict those of Elliott and Valenza, who applied their “new optics methodology” to the Hand D portion of Sir Thomas More and published their results in an article earlier this year. They concluded that it belonged “more in the high Apocalypse than in the Canon.” Indeed, Arthur Kinney himself wrote ten years ago that “the author of Addition II shares nothing whatever poetically with Shakespeare.”

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In one chapter Craig and Kinney report the results of their tests of the claims of Sir Brian Vickers in Shakespeare Co-Author (2002) that four plays in the canon—Titus Andronicus, Timon of Athens, Henry VIII, and The Two Noble Kinsmen—are products of collaboration between Shakespeare and George Peele (TA), Thomas Middleton (Timon), and John Fletcher (HF and TNK). They consider these particular Modern authorship questions "a convenient series of problems where the solution is known to a degree of certainty." But they apparently tested only for the similarity in the use of function words by Shakespeare and the alleged co-author. They report the following results:

- Tests of the five longest scenes in Titus Andronicus indicate that Peele wrote the long opening scene, and Shakespeare the other four, as asserted by Vickers. But according to the scatter plot for these scenes, the score for the “Peele” scene is no farther from the Shakespeare centred than the scores for several dozen text segments from undisputed Shakespeare plays. The remaining eight scenes, three of which Vickers attributed to Peele, are too short to be tested. Scholarly opinions about the percentage of Titus attributable to Shakespeare range from zero to 100. In the most recent Arden edition, Jonathan Bate declared that “the whole of Titus is by a single hand” and that he is “an author’s use of two types of common words—in his known works with the use of the same words in an anonymous work or disputed section of text. It may be summarized in this series of steps:

1. Select an appropriate “control group” of an au-thor’s acknowledged plays and divide it into 2000-word segments, regardless of speech, act or scene divisions.

2. For each segment, obtain a numerical score for the author’s use and non-use of a group of the 200 most common functional words occurring in Early Modern English, such as and, you and through that have syntactical rather than semantic uses.

3. For each segment, obtain a numerical score for the author’s use and non-use of a group of 500 selected lexical words. These are the words in a writer’s vocabulary that have semantic meaning.

4. On two scatter plots, graphically display the individual scores for each test for each segment of 2000 words.

5. The result is two scatter plots, on which a cluster of points indicates that the author’s use and non-use of the 200 functional words. On the other scatter plot, the cluster indicates the author’s use and non-use of the 500 selected lexical words. The statistical center of each cluster is the centroid.

6. Conduct the same two tests for similar 2000-word blocks from an anonymous play or question-able fragment, and superimpose the scores on the scatter plots for the proposed author of the text.

7. The physical distance of the scores for the sub-ject segment of text from the centroid of the se-lected author’s cluster, and the size of the sample, indicate the degree of probability that he wrote it.

Results

The result is a mixed bag of conclusions, many of which confirm today’s scholarly consensus about

Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter January 2011

How Reliable is Stylometrics? Two Orthodox Scholars Investigate

Ramon Jiménez


Arthur F. Kinney, the venerable editor of English Literary Renaissance, and Hugh Craig, an English professor at the University of Newcastle in Australia, have teamed up with two of their graduate students to produce a group of essays that focus on the authorship ques-tions surrounding more than a dozen plays and parts of plays both in and out of the Shakespeare canon. More than half of the play-texts examined appeared in Shakespeare’s First Folio. Two other-ers—Edward III and The Two Noble Kinsmen—were added to the canon in the last thirty years. Four other anonymous plays and fragments make up the balance.

Citing Georges Braque’s remark that “One’s style is one’s inability to do otherwise,” the authors claim that writers leave subtle and persistent traces of a distinctive style through all levels of their syntax and lexicon, the former being the writer’s arrangement of words, and the latter his vocabulary or word stock. Their objective is to "resolve a number of questions in the Shake-speare canon, so that the business of interpretation, which is so often stymied by uncertainty of authorship, can proceed." Their studies supply consid-erable additional evidence of Shakespeare’s par-ticipation or lack of it in the selected texts, but in most cases that evidence falls short of resolving the question.

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Contested Will book, matter. There is also a detailed response to Columbia University Professor James Shapiro’s book, Contested Will, the first academic examination of the Shakespeare Authorship controversy since alternate candidates to the traditional Bard were originally proposed in the 1850s.

In addition, we are publishing new research that provides a more accurate dating of King Lear’s composition using the play’s topical allusions to eclipses of the sun and moon. Of equal import, is a proposed resolution of a long-standing myth regarding the office of Lord Great Chamberlain during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, which contains new archival discoveries.

Another paper investigates the peculiarities of Shakespeare’s frontispiece engraving in the First Folio, the author, John Rollett, finding, “What is usually taken to be a poorly drawn portrait of the playwright turns out to be a skilfully executed depiction of a carefully designed enigma.”

The second issue concludes with book reviews of Shakespeare and Garrick by Vanessa Cunning-ham; Othello, a new critical edition by Ren Draya; The Lame Storyteller by Peter Moore; and Shakespeare’s Lost Kingdom by Charles Beauclerk.

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Sincerely,
Gary Goldstein
Managing Editor
Brief Chronicles

Editor’s Note: The newsletter congratulates Brief Chronicles and reminds readers that the 2010 issue of The Oxfordian is also currently available. TOX features articles by Robin Fox, MacDonald Jackson, Peter MacIntosh, Sabrina Feldman, Derrr Charlton, Marie Merkel and others. Order your issue today from sosoffice@optonline.net / 914 962 1717, or take a subscription and support the movement.

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Stylistic Confusion
The evidence provided suggests divided authorship, but does not exclude Shakespeare’s authorship of the entire play. Most modern studies of the play divide it between Shakespeare and Middleton, but both E. K. Chambers and Una Ellis-Ferrero regarded it as entirely Shakespeare’s, but unfinished.

Tests of six scenes in Henry VIII indicate that John Fletcher wrote 3.1 and 5.2, and Shakespeare the other four, as claimed by Vickers. Again, scores for the two “Fletcher” scenes were no farther from the Shakespeare centroid than scores for more than a dozen text blocks from canonical Shakespearean plays. As with Timon and Titus, the tests do not exclude Shakespeare’s authorship of the entire play.

Scores for tests of two scenes in The Two Noble Kinsmen attributed by Vickers to Fletcher (2.2, 3.6), and one assigned to Shakespeare (1.1) all fell within the cluster for the author predicted. But, as before, neither of the scores for the two “Fletcher” scenes deviated as far from the Shakespeare centroid as did more than a dozen scores for blocks of genuine Shakespeare text. Nor was the score for the Shakespeare scene farther from the Fletcher centroid than numerous scores for scenes from plays by Fletcher alone.

These results are suggestive of co-authorship, but they should be considered in the context of similar tests in the undisputed portion of the canon. Using data obtained about his use of function words from the entire “core” of 27 Shakespeare plays, Craig and Kinney compared them to 62 segments of 2000 words each in six individual Shakespeare plays and 55 such segments from six other plays reliably attributed to five other authors—all twelve plays chosen at random. Of the 62 authentic Shakespeare segments tested, only 50 were correctly classified as Shakespeare’s work. (For instance, fourteen of the eight segments tested in A Midsummer Night’s Dream and three of the seven in Love’s Labour’s Lost were classified as “non-Shakespearean”.) Of the 55 non-Shakespearean segments tested, seven were not attributed to the correct author. Thus, the success rate for these segments was 87%, and for the Shakespeare plays it was only 81%. A testing method that is incorrect by its own standards 13% to 19% of the time may be termed suggestive, but hardly definitive.
The coming year will offer us many opportunities. As it sheds light on the life and times of Richard Joyrich, we would do well to follow his example. Craig and Kinney and their fellow practitioners of stylistics, stymometry, etc. may have reached the limit of linguistic analysis by computer. Despite their confidence that their method can safely identify the work of an individual author, it seems clear that this type of analysis can never be more than a portion of the evidence needed to do so. External evidence, topical references, and the circumstances and personal experiences of the putative author will remain important factors in any question of authorship.

The noted economist John Maynard Keynes, who was a scholarship winner in mathematics and classics at Cambridge and the author of a dissertation on probability, is said to have remarked that he was ‘not prepared to sacrifice realism to mathematics.’ We would do well to follow his example.

Letters to the Editor
Oxford and Golding

To the Editor:
I am glad that Dr. Altrocchi (May 2010 SOS newsletter) confirms my conclusion published in the Fall 2007 Shakespeare Matters (“A Deeper Look at the Arthur Golding Canon”) that Golding wrote the three early histories issued in his name. I also agree that Oxford had nothing to do with Phaër’s translation of the Aenid. But there is good evidence that Oxford wrote Ovid’s Fable of Narcissus (1560), an earlier work than Arthur Brooke’s Romeo and Juliet, per my paper in The Oxfordian, 2007 (“Did Oxford Make His Publishing Debut in 1560 as ‘T.H.’?”).

Robert R. Prechter, Jr.

AQ Stirs up Biblical Scholars

To the Editor:
The Shakespeare controversy has enough traction that it is even brought up in the Biblical Archeology Review, of all places.

The current issue (“Did Oxford Make His Publishing Debut in 1560 as ‘T.H.’?”). The article goes on to describe the similarities of the Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, following Macbeth (2007). Forthcoming are editions of Hamlet and Anthony and Cleopatra.

Richard Jeyrich

President’s Letter and Ashland Conference Report

The Shakespeare Authorship Question continues to gain ground in the popular press and otherwise in the public mind. I have always maintained that the biggest obstacle to accepting the idea that the works were not written by William of Stratford and that they were in fact written by Edward de Vere is not being exposed to the evidence.

We need to continue to bring the Question before the public and explain why it does matter who wrote them, as it sheds light on the life and times of the author and helps to explain how and why they were written. The coming year will offer us many opportunities to do just that, particularly the release of Shakespeare’s Othello (scheduled for September 23, 2011) of the new movie Anonymous, directed by Roland Emmerich. Although this film will not doubt be very controversial and “sensational” and will promote theories of the Authorship not shared by all of us, it will still provide us with the ability to promote the candidacy of Edward de Vere. There will be a lot of press coverage of this film and people will be seeing many of you at the upcoming Joint Conference this fall in Washington, DC.

The Shakespeare Authorship Conference and I hope to see more of you at the upcoming Joint Conference this fall in Washington, DC.

Brief Chronicles Publishes Second Issue Online

To the Editor:
The second issue of Brief Chronicles has been published online at www.briefchronicles.com with ten papers and five book reviews from contributors in the US, Canada, England and Germany.

That the inaugural issue was exceptional for its research,” said Roger Strumter, general editor, “is shown by Gale Publishing’s selection of Earl Showerman’s paper on the Greek origins of Much Ado About Nothing for inclusion in its reference text, Shakespeare Criticism, due out in spring 2011.”

Highlights of the second issue include a paper that proposes a new authorship candidate for The Arte of English Poesie while a second defends the views on why there is a controversy: “Shapiro sums up this argument: ‘There is an unbridgeable rift between the facts of Shakespeare’s life and what the plays and the poems reveal about the author’s education and experience.’” The article goes on to say: “A leading, if not the leading candidate for the author of Shakespeare’s plays is Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. He was clever, well educated, well traveled and the events of his life bear a fascinating resemblance to events in Shakespeare’s plays.” Shanks seems frustrated when he says that “Shapiro summarizes the current state of the debate: ‘It seems like endless trench warfare’. It reminds him of the controversy over the ‘Secret Mark’.” The article goes on to discuss the similarities with the “Secret Mark” debate: “I admit the parallels are inexact, but the evidence against Smith [who discovered the new Gospel of Mark and is accused of forging it] sounds a lot like the evidence that Shakespeare could not have written the plays and that Edward de Vere did.” The article ends with a flexible view of the issue and leaves the conclusion open: “Like the Shakespeare controversy, ‘Positions are fixed and the debate has proven to be futile or self-serving.’ In the end, Shapiro finds the debate ‘both impressive and demoralizing.’ The same may be said of the Secret Mark debate.”

John Hamill
I welcome hearing from any of you who have ideas on what the Society can be doing. You can reach me at jshahan.com. I have many committees that you can be a part of, and I would also encourage anyone who is interested in a position on the Board of Trustees to get in touch with me as well. This is your Society, after all.

We are continuing to make plans for next fall’s conference in Washington, DC. No date or exact location has been determined yet, but it will most likely be shortly after the release of Anonymous (or maybe even coincide with the release date). Having the conference in Washington, DC offers good possibilities for public events in conjunction with the Folger Library. Further details of the conference will be forthcoming via websites of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship, as well as on-line sources such as SOS Online News (shakespeareoxfordsociety.wordpress.com), Elizaforum and Phaeton. I’m sure it will be something you will not want to miss.

It will certainly be an exciting year for the SOS. Together, we can really make a difference!

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**Theater Professionals Sign Declaration of Reasonable Doubt in Ashland**

**John Shahan**

In a public ceremony in Ashland, Oregon, home of the prestigious Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), several prominent theater professionals recently signed a hard copy poster of the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare. This is the fourth Declaration signing event featuring prominent authors and doubters since April of 2007. Over 1900 people have now signed online at the website of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition, founded to legitimize the Authorship Question.

The September 18th event featured Paul Nicholson, Executive Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and one of the most prominent Shakespeare festival directors in America, plus James Newcomb, long-time actor with the OSF Company.

Addressing an audience of more than 100 doubters, Nicholson said that “The Shakespeare authorship question is a great mystery, and I love great mysteries…” Then he added that he was “proud to have the opportunity to sign the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt.”

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**Ashland: A Great Conference**

The Sixth Annual Joint Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society convened September 16, at the Ashland Springs Hotel in beautiful Ashland, OR, home of the renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

The festival is world-class and probably the premier repertory theater in the US. The amazing theater experience provided to conference registrants was a marvelous addition and served as a backdrop to the presentations.

After the introductions, the talented duo of Ron Andrico and Donna Stewart, better known as Mgnurd, treated us to an hour of fine music. Ron plays lute with expertise and Donna is an accomplished mezzo-soprano. They performed songs and music of the 16th century, many of them connected with the 17th Earl of Oxford.

Prof. Tom Gage (“The Bone in the Elephant’s Heart”) then discussed the much-neglected Arabo-Islamic influences on the Renaissance. Much Greek thought was transmitted through Arab and Islamic translations, rather than through Roman literature (the Romans read and used Greek sources, but did not translate them into Latin). Prof. Gage went through many examples in the fields of literature, mathematics, and medicine (the title of the paper referring to a refutation by al-Razi of Galen’s theory of elephant’s hearts). Of course Shakespeare was indebted to this kind of Islamic influence. Elizabethan England had a mixed relationship with the Arab world and some of this comes through in the plays of Shakespeare. In regard to the plays being presented during the conference, Gage pointed out how Launcelot Gobbo in The Merchant of Venice may in fact be an Arab (Shylock calls him “Hagar’s offspring,” he impersonates a Moor, and he is a servant of a Jew who could not have Christian servants) and how John of Gaunt, Sir Walter Blunt, and the Earl of Worcester (characters in Richard II and Henry IV, Part I) were allied with Muslims in a famous battle against Christians (not described in the plays).

After a break for lunch, we heard Dr. Tom Hunter on “The Invention of the Human in Shylock.” This was an expansion of some previous presentations by Tom refuting the theory that The Merchant of Venice is an anti-Semitic play designed to pander to London audiences, but rather a deeply philosophical allegory grounded in Renaissance Humanism.

Shylock is not the evil Jew rejecting “Christian values,” but a man whose tragedy is his rejection of his own Jewish values. Along the way, Tom pointed out examples of knowledge of Hebrew
literature and source material which fit Edward de Vere but not William of Stratford. In his presentation on “Shakespeare’s Shylock and the Strange Case of Gaspar Ribeiro” Dr Earl Shoemaker described an article by Stratfordian Brian Pullan identifying a Portuguese converso, named Gaspar Ribeiro, living in Venice in the 1560s, who may well have been a model for Shylock. Ribeiro was found guilty of making a usurious loan of 3000 ducats in 1567, and there are several parallels between his life and the life of Shylock, as demonstrated in _The Merchant of Venice_. In addition, Ribeiro was a patron of the Santa Maria Formosa Catholic church, which Edward de Vere was known to have attended while in Venice in 1575. Besides providing insight into another source for the play, the story of Ribeiro again amassed, virtually requiring him to have actually spent significant time there.

After another break we heard from Cheryl Eagan-Donovan on “Shakespeare’s Ideal: Sexuality and Gender Identity in _The Merchant of Venice_.” In this play, Shakespeare gives us cross-dressing women who are strong and challenge traditional ideas of the time of gender identity. Antonio, Portia, and Bassanio are involved in a kind of love triangle with Portia and Antonio both competing for the love of Bassanio. Do they represent different aspects of a romantic ideal, conflicting aspects of the author’s own identity, or both? Cheryl also sees Portia modeled on Edward de Vere’s second wife, Elizabeth Trentham. At the end of her presentation Cheryl showed us another excerpt from her upcoming documentary based on Mark Anderson’s book, _Shakespeare by Another name_. This particular excerpt focused on Richard Roe and his new book on Shakespeare and Italy (more about this later).

Dr. Martin Hyatt then spoke on “Teaching Heavy Ignorance Afloat to Fly” (the title comes from a line in sonnet 78). In this talk Hyatt continued his discussion of the use of bird symbolism in plays and sonnets, which he spoke about at the conference in Houston. Shakespeare and contemporary writers used the symbolism of birds and associated mythology in their works. Marty pointed out that the two “bookends” of Stratfordian literary biography are Greene’s _Greatworth of Wit_ in 1592 and the prefatory material in the First Folio of 1623. In both, Shakespeare is compared with a bird (a crow in Greene and a swan by Ben Jonson). Using bird and mythological symbolism as well as some consideration of numerological beliefs and forms used at the time, Hyatt points out that the use of these comparisons to birds has unexpected results relating to Shakespeare’s authorship. After another informative performance by Mignarda, we enjoyed a special opening reception, where good food and conversation were at hand. Most conference attendees then walked over to the Elizabethan Theatre of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to see the production of _The Merchant of Venice_, where we could think about what had been presented about this play earlier. This production was very well received by everyone.

Friday, September 17
After the Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Fellowship on Friday morning, the conference presentations continued with Richard Whalen on “Goats and Monkeys!” Othello’s Outburst Recalls a Fresco in Bassano, Italy.” Richard described some research by a Stratfordian professor which again suggests that Shakespeare had to have visited northern Italy. In Act IV of the play, Othello cries out “Goats and monkeys!” as he leaves the stage after striking Desdemona (who he believes has

ME Frankly, right now not too many are impressed. But then they haven’t read my book, and I sort of think not really don’t blame them because it’s 2000 pages of very close textual argument. Unfortunately that’s what you have to do to make this kind of case. In the academic fish tank the sharks are always circling. I had to make sure that every angle was covered, every fact checked, every judgment supported by evidence.

KW Does anyone agree with you?
ME Sure, there’s a slowly growing acceptance. I have had a very friendly reception in certain quarters, especially among the Oxford Movement.

KW The Oxfordian movement?
ME The biggest issue in Shakespeare studies today is what’s called the Authorship Question, or AQ. There’s actually a lot of doubt, and a lot of debate, about whether Shakespeare actually wrote the plays attributed to him.

KW Oh, you mean like Francis Bacon.
ME Like Francis Bacon. Only no one seriously thinks Bacon wrote Shakespeare anymore. That idea long since faded when people compared Bacon’s writing style and Shakespeare’s. They’re just too different for anyone to think they’re by the same person.

KW Well, if Bacon didn’t write Shakespeare, who did?
ME You put your finger on the whole question. If Shakespeare of Stratford didn’t write Shakespeare, who did? There are actually more than 50 possible candidates, including Queen Elizabeth herself, though the leading one is Edward de Vere, the seventeenth earl of Oxford. His supporters are called Oxfordians.

KW So the Oxfordians think Oxford wrote Shakespeare. Why is he the leading candidate?
ME Well, you have to go back to the first question, did Shakespeare really write Shakespeare? And the best way to answer this is to just look at the _Collected Works_ without any preconceptions about its author. Right off you have to say that this is obviously the work of a brilliant intellect, a man immensely well-read and highly educated. He knows almost everything about everything and is familiar with the most recent advances in virtually every field of human knowledge, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, biology, history and political science, Latin and Greek literature, he speaks demotic French and Italian and understands the finest intricacies of Elizabethan law. And all this is couched in the largest and most inventive vocabulary in the history of literature, by far.

KW But Shakespeare was a genius. He could have learned this and developed his knowledge and vocabulary on his own.
ME That’s the common sense objection, and it’s often made. But if you think about it for a moment you’ll see it doesn’t work. Because there are certain things Shakespeare knows about that he couldn’t have guessed, no matter how brilliant. He had to have witnessed them at first-hand. I mean things like how nobles speak to one another and their servants, and how the servants answer. He’s been in castles and carriages and held silver goblets and knows how royalty feasts and courts and marries and dies. You can’t guess these things, you have to have been there. But Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon was a commoner.

KW Well, okay.

ME He also knows about court politics, how political decisions are made, how conspiracies are built and executed, how to mount a dynastic coup, what monarchical depositions look and sound like. He knows about upper-class sports such as falconry, fox hunting and bowls. He remembers how soldiers talk the night before a battle, how officers think and plan, understands cowardice and bravery, even seems to have experienced a shipwreck. He knows northern Italy with the deep intimacy of a long-term visitor.

KW It still could have been Shakespeare.

ME Not at all, that’s the point! My friend Robin Fox likes to say you can be born a genius but you can’t make this kind of case. In the academic fish tank the sharks are always circling. I had to make sure that every angle was covered, every fact checked, every judgment supported by evidence.
perfunctorily acknowledged in other Othello edi-
tions as the supposed influence of Lyly, but never as
resulting from the corroboration between
Lyly and de Vere, one so emphatically underscored
in the Oxfordian edition (e.g., in III.i, foot-note 71).
Despite the salutary pervasive influence of the
commedia dell’arte on the play, a feature first no-
ticed by orthodox scholars, then effortlessly incor-
porated into the Oxfordian analysis.

As an additional bonus, this Othello includes
provocative factually rare data found elsewhere,
such as a lost, anonymous court production from
1579 titled A Moor’s Masque, in which de Vere
was performer and possibly writer too (page 285).
After a few hundred examples like this, Stratfordi-
sans might begin to ask a few questions, not about
Shakespeare, but about some of the self-pro-
claimed, official guardians of his legacy. For one,
seems to be a great unmentionable in orthodox
circles that Shakespeare the writer maybe, just
maybe, had de Vere’s life in mind when writing or,
worst heresy yet, might have glanced at one of his
credibly, published poems. Of course, anyone who
dares to ask such things is immediately ridiculed.
No matter, it is much easier (and more realistic) to
postulate that the real Bard was de Vere himself.

My only criticisms are slight. The Oxfordian
Othello gives short shrift to the group-author the-
ory for Shakespeare’s plays, one that seems to be
getting more and more耳朵ed. That is to say, there
may have been one main genius behind the canon,
one we think of as Shakespeare’s voice, but there
were also probably many other authorial hands
involved over a very long period of gestation.

Even orthodox scholars seem to be moving to-
wards this very reasonable and moderate view.

Without acknowledging this, Oxfordians risk
falling into a similar trap as Stratfordians, that Ed-
ward de Vere was some kind of superhuman, a
creative writing machine, and by extension, com-
pletely unapproachable by the rest us.

Another small problem in the introduction to this
edition is that, like most virulent anti-Stratfordian
literature over the last century, the editors are very
likely to find a better value in a ridiculously
oversaturated market. Included are bibliographies
and extensive appendices, plus splendid essays by
the editors, including one by Dr. Draya on the
widely underrated picturesque musical depth of Othello,
and how this too connects with Edward de Vere,
but not with William of Stratford. Would that all
tenured university English professors spend their
time so constructively. Even if the Oxfordian the-
ory one day should prove incorrect, data such as
these are still important because they lay out how
critical thinking should be done, even when occa-
nionally moving in mistaken directions.

If, on the other hand, the Oxfordian theory
should prove to be correct, then volumes like this
will be viewed as landmarks in the history of lit-
erary criticism. As for myself, I now intend to go
right out and acquire the Oxfordian Macbeth, this
time on my own dime.

Newsletter Editor Interviewed on
KSNS 570 AM Las Cruces

Southwest Senior is a syndicated radio talk
talk show broadcast by KSNS 270 Las Cruces,
NM. It is hosted by Southwest Senior news-
paper owner-publisher, Keith Whelpley.

December 7 2010 Whelpley interviewed Dr.
Michael Egan, editor of the Shakespeare Oxford
Newsletter. During a wide-ranging discussion
Whelpley touched on Egan’s association with the
SOS.

ME I understand you also have an interest in
Shakespeare.

ME Yes, I do, a very big one. Professionally I
would describe myself as a Shakespeare scholar.
My modest claim to fame is a book I published in
2006 attributing an anonymous Elizabethan play
manuscript to Shakespeare. It’s a new Shake-
spere play.

ME A new play by Shakespeare?

ME That’s my claim, yes.

ME What do other scholars think of your idea?

At $16.95, the price is right; in fact, today’s open-
minded Shakespeare teacher, student, or enthusiast
must be on a house facing the piazza in the center of
Bassano, a town just up the river from Padua
which offers quite a few parallels to Othello’s
speech in the play. By the way, Bassano is where
the famous Bassano family of musicians originally
came from (the family was originally known as the
Piva family and changed their name upon moving
to Venice to honor their native town). Professor
Prior argues that Shakespeare had to have been
present in Bassano (and elsewhere in northern It-
aly), but invents a complicated scenario to place
William of Stratford there. It is, of course, easy
to place Edward de Vere there at the proper time.

Richard then went on to discuss another possible
source for the “goats and monkeys” reference. This
was an illustration in a 14th-century Psalter (which
interestingly contains all kinds of erotic imagery).
It is a little difficult to show any good connection
between this Psalter and the 17th Earl of Oxford,
but it seems even more unlikely that William of
Stratford could have seen it.

The next presentation was by Dr. Frank Davis
on “The ‘Unlearned’ versus the ‘Learned’ Shake-
spere.” Frank initially presented examples of
various scholars’ opinions on whether Shakespeare
was learned or unlearned. It seems that the early
commentators, beginning with Ben Jonson, were
of the opinion that Shakespeare was unlearned, but
that beginning around 1903 commentators begin to
admit that Shakespeare must have had a good clas-
sical education. Frank went on to discuss whether
the Stratford Grammar School would have su-
ficed. Finally, Frank continued the discussion he
has presented before on the signatures of various
writers and actors of the time. And, of course,
William of Stratford comes off looking quite bad
in this context. However, Frank does conclude that it
was possible for someone with limited ability to
read and write to be a professional actor.

After this, we were treated to a KSNM 570 AM Las
Cruces interview with Dr. Roger Stritmatter on “What is
the True Composition Order of the Texts of Ham-
et?” Following up on the earlier presentation by
Jack Shuttleworth, Roger also discussed the differ-
ences between the various texts we have (Q1, Q2, and
F), this time with an eye toward determining
the order in which they were written. Roger pre-
sented good evidence that the proper order should
be Q1, then F1, and then Q2 (with the 230 extra
lines in Q2 added in 1601-2 just before this version
appeared in print in 1604 and thus best represent-
ing the author’s final intentions). Roger also of-
fered a theory on why 80 lines of Q2 were cut be-
fore F appeared in 1623.

The next presentation, by Katherine Chaljan, on
“Twelve ‘Too Early’ Allusions to Shakespeare’s

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Hamlet" was based on an excerpt from Katherine’s upcoming book, *Shakespeare Suppressed*. Kathe- niple detailed her revisions to *Hamlet* that proved it had to have been written well before the accep- stradfordian date of 1600. After a break Tom Rogers discussed many as- pects of law contained in *Hamlet*, concentrating on ecclesiastical law, the law of homicide, and the law of property and inheritance. This showed how edu- cated the author of the play was in the law and that he could, in Tom’s words, “think like a lawyer.” Dr. Sam Saunders then spoke on “The Odds on Hamlet’s Odds” in which he expanded on a prior presentation some years ago at Concordia on the curious mention of the wager on the duel between Hamlet and Laertes and whether the odds quoted were in fact accurate. Sam showed that they are accurate, but could only have been calculated by someone who had a good knowledge of how swordplay was practiced in Renaissance England and who had read the works of Cardano. This fits the picture we have of Edward de Vere. The Friday presentations concluded with Helen Gordon on “The Symbols in Hamlet and in Portraits of Oxford and Southampton: An Oxfordian Read- ing of *Hamlet*.” Helen showed examples of Freema- son and Rosicrucian symbolism in *Hamlet*, par- ticularly the graveyard scene, and in several Eliza- bethan portraits. She finished with an expanded description of two of her previous work on how Ox- ford imbedded the names and mottos of himself, Southampton, and Elizabeth in the dedication to the first folio. We broke for dinner and then attended the OSF production of *Hamlet*, for which we had been well prepared by the presentations earlier in the day.

Saturday, September 18

Saturday morning began with the annual meeting of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and then we heard from Hank Whittemore on “The Birth and Growth of Prince Hal: Why Did Oxford Write *The First Part of Henry the Fifth*?” Hank ex- plored this play, which seems to be an earlier ver- sion of the Shakespeare plays about Henry IV and Henry V. Hank showed some evidence that this play might have been written by Oxford in 1574 to “catch the conscience of the queen” and com- memorate the birth of Henry Wriothesley in 1573 (who could be the unknowledged son of Oxford and the queen). In *Famous Victories*, the 11th Earl of Oxford (ancestor of Edward de Vere) introduces Prince Hal at court and seems to be a father figure to him throughout the play. Hank noted that this is the 11th Earl does not appear in the later canonical Shakespeare plays and the character Fal- staff assumes the father figure role. Marie Merkel then continued the presentations focusing on comparing Henry IV, Part 1 (which we would see later that evening) with her talk on “The Day that Jack Staff Broke Jack Scoggin’s Head.” Marie discussed an anonymous morality play called *Jack Jugger*, which was entered in the Stationer’s Reg- istry in 1562-3. This play, which Marie argues was by Edward de Vere, has many elements in it which later appear to be part of the character of Falstaff and which provide some early descriptions of events that happen in the Henry IV plays by Shake- speare, particularly in reference to Falstaff. This early play can also help explain why the character of Falstaff was originally named Oldcastle in a quarto edition of the play, an allusion to the Lollard martyr Sir John Oldcastle. After a break Lynne Kosikosky entertained us with her presentation on “The Young Adult Novel Mi- nerva’s Voyage and its Relationship to True Reper- tory and Minerva Britannia.” Lynne read some ex- cerpts from her recent novel *Minerva’s Voyage*, showing some allusions in the novel to the works mentioned in the title of her talk and how they are important in explaining possible sources of *The Tempest*. We then had a panel discussion on *Hamlet*, (which most of us had seen the night before) hosted by Professors Red Draya and Jack Whalen and featuring the actors who had portrayed Hamlet, Polonius, and Claudius. This was very enjoyable and informative. After a nice lunch, we reconvened for the after- noon “entertainment.” This part of the conference was open to the general public (actually they had to buy tickets for it) and was intended to “get the word out” about the purposes of our two societies. The theatrical entertainment began with Robin Goodrin Nordli, a well-known actress with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, performing her one- woman show, *Birds Babes*. It was wonderful seeing Robin perform excerpts from Shakespeare featur- ing the female characters she has previously per- formed in OSF productions in a part-comical and part-emotional manner. Keir Cutler again presented his one-man show *Is Shakespeare Dead?*, which he had performed for us last year at the Houston Conference. This is an appears lost or forgotten. Nevertheless, OUP editor Michael Neill is given occasional credit by Whalen and Draya. All the orthodox editions are unsatisfy- ing silent on possible connections between Shake- speare’s works and the author’s life, or for that matter, the then author’s life and the books he was so clearly drawing upon. All either ignore the authorship question or dismiss it out of hand. The Oxfordian theory from its inception, stripped of dubious ciphers, anagrams, and specu- lative issues pertaining to royal succession, has al- ways in essence been a forceful, two-pronged argu- ment.

The Oxfordian theory from its inception, stripped of dubious ciphers, anagrams, and speculative issues pertaining to royal succession, has always in essence been a forceful, two-pronged argument.

The Oxfordian theory from its inception, stripped of dubious ciphers, anagrams, and speculative issues pertaining to royal succession, has always in essence been a forceful, two-pronged argument. As for source material, everyone acknowledges that Shakespeare drew upon the un-translated Italian of Cinthio, the Eucharist innovations attrib- uted to John Lyly, and the courtly manners of Castiglione. What no one outside the authorship debate acknowledges is that Edward de Vere had the means and wherewithal to access all of these specific sources directly. Even de Vere’s harshest critics admit that he was an “Italianate English- man” who traveled to Italy, could speak Italian and owned Italian books; moreover, as the editors point out, Cinthio’s volume has been traced to the library inventory of De Vere’s guardian, Lord Burghley. De Vere himself had also personally sponsored and written an introduction to a Latin translation of Castiglione. Lyly’s connections with de Vere are so extensive as to call into question whether Lyly was more stenographer than wellspring. Odd Shakespearean coinages such as “mamming” are
Draya and Whalen Triumph with new Oxfordian Othello

Thankfully, self-importance is nowhere to be found in the work of Whalen and Draya. For them, Shakespeare is what counts, along with the extent to which orthodox scholarship can be reasonably linked to a new proposed author.

Othello is the second release in the projected Oxfordian Shakespeare Series, the first being Macbeth in 2007. Both are co-edited and annotated by Richard Whalen, co-general editor of the series with Dr. Daniel Wright of Concordia University. His co-editor/annotator for Othello, Dr. Ren Draya of Blackburn College, represents a small but growing number of English professors who approach the authorship debate and the Oxfordian theory with respect and open-mindedness.

The release of this volume is especially invigorating as it comes in the wake of Shapiro’s Con-testedWill. Until recently nothing like the Oxfordian Othello existed.

Now, a brand new and exciting phase of Oxfordian scholarship appears to be opening up. In contrast to the banal intonations from orthodox circles, the new Shakespearean scholarship offers a tremendous injection of resonance into interpretation of the text. One may disagree with this or that footnote, but is never bored.

Another beauty of this new series is that it presents many alternative readings, opening up new horizons, especially for newcomers. Othello first appeared as a 1622 quarto, then again a year later in the First Folio. Since these versions differ significantly, Draya and Whalen opt for a revised version of the 1864 Globe edition, melding the best elements of both. This reminds readers that Shakespeare’s plays were typically works-in-progress, with changes and additions introduced by printers, actors, censors, and (dare we say?) co-authors.

A sound editorial touch is apparent throughout, with cross-references to other editions on a line-by-line basis. In keeping with the best of the skeptical tradition, Whalen and Draya draw heavily upon orthodox authorities, so smoothly and impressively that the argument supporting de Vere as the true Bard seems to flow naturally from traditional Shakespearean criticism.

More controversially, the Oxfordian Othello represents, but indirectly, a stern rebuke to our modern myth that sheer human imagination without the benefit of experience or education, can accomplish almost anything. There are those who would portray Shakespeare the writer as the greatest human sponge who ever lived. The myth is on full display in some of the more recent orthodox editions of the plays. Shakespeare, it is explained, was a voracious reader capable of absorbing and retaining vast bodies of knowledge shortly after its publication in English, French, or Italian, then could practically integrate this knowledge seamlessly and causally into the greatest dramatic and poetic works the world has ever seen. The third Arden edition of Othello (2006), annotated by the venerable E.A.J. Honigmann, is especially guilty of this, although Honigmann is among those critics sometimes cited approvingly by Whalen and Draya.

This explanation for the miracle of human genius risks reducing Shakespeare to the level of idiot savant.

Thankfully, self-importance is nowhere to be found in the work of Whalen and Draya. For them, Shakespeare is what counts, along with the extent to which orthodox scholarship can be reasonably linked to a new proposed author.

The thoughtful and well-delivered presentations, made the sometimes difficult and expensive trip to Ashland more than worthwhile.

Sunday, September 19

Sunday morning began with a presentation by William Ray on “Proofs of Oxfordian Authorship in the Shakespearean Apocrypha.” William concentrated on “Sweet Cytherea,” which appears as sonnet IV in The Passionate Pilgrim. After showing how this poem is very similar to Venus and Adonis as well as to the “Echo Verses” by Edward de Vere, William demonstrated that the poem contains many code words or allusions to Edward de Vere and Elizabeth. William also mentioned Oxford’s poem Grief of Mind, which uses the rhetorical devices of anadiplosis (repeating phrases from the end of a line in the next line of the poem) and anaphora (using the same words at the beginning of a series of lines). William pointed out that Shakespeare uses these rhetorical devices in some of the plays and that Edward de Vere seems to be the only other (if he was not Shakespeare) Elizabethan poet to use this technique. During his presentation, William showed an amazing number of portraits of Elizabeth (perhaps all of them that are known) showing her as she aged, which the audience greatly appreciated.

The next presentation, by Bonner Cutting, was “Let the Punishment Fit the Crime.” This was an impressive look at censorship in the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages and how playwrights and poets were often punished (sometimes severely) for anything deemed injurious to the state or to religion (which was often the same thing as the state). Bonner presented case after case of these writers (such as Jonson, Marston, Marlowe, Kid, and Nashe). However, one name seems to be missing from this list. Why wasn’t Shakespeare ever punished in this way for what he wrote (sometimes seemingly more injurious to the state)? Could this be because he was, in reality, the high rank 17th Earl of Oxford? Of course it could, says Bonner (and I agree). Bonner also discussed the mysterious 1000 pound edition of Othello (1680) that was linked to a new proposed author. For Edward de Vere in 1586, suggesting this title had been for some state reason, such as to support the writing of plays with political meanings.

After a break, we heard John Hamill on “Bisexuality, Amity, Avisa, and Antonio Perez Revisited.” This was a good summary of points made by John in presentations at past conferences, offering an alternative theory to the Prince Tudor theory to explain why Edward de Vere needed to write under a pseudonym. This theory presents evidence gleaned from the plays, poems and sonnets, that indicates that the author of the plays was bisexual. John proposes that de Vere and Southampton were lovers and were also in a bisexual relationship with Elizabeth Trentham, Oxford’s second wife. The result of this triangle was that Henry de Vere, the
The significance of this man’s impact on the world, so in many realms, is beyond measure. We can all but hope for so much as a fraction of this legacy ourselves when it comes time to total up the good we have done for humanity and the benefit our lives have made for others. I hope you will join with me in celebrating the life of a remarkable scholar and a man who—as all who knew him can say—was the consummate expression of what it means to be a gentleman. He was truly a man among men.

Hilary Roe Metternich writes:

Richard died on December 1, 2010 in Pasadena in his home after a short illness. He was born in Los Angeles in 1922 to Beatrice Lenore Hart Roe of Kansas and William Ernest Roe of New York. The family settled in Southern California in the early part of the 20th century. His father worked as a mining engineer. Dick served in World War II as a B-17 bomber pilot with the 15th Air Force in the European Theater and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with Oak leaf Cluster for services to his country. After the war, he completed his university education at UC Berkeley where he received his BA in History. In 1946, Dick married the love of his life, Jane Bachhuber, whom he met while at UC Berkeley. He supported his young family with a variety of jobs while attending Southwestern School of Law, Los Angeles, on the GI Bill, graduating summa cum laude. In 1952, Dick became a victim of the polo epidemic, which was paralyzing and spent several months in an iron lung. After a long recovery, he established his own law practice, Roe & Rellas, in downtown Los Angeles. Dick became widely respected both locally and nationally as an expert on matters of real property, mortgages, and savings and loan mergers and acquisitions. Dick was also responsible for the complex legal work that established the first shopping mall in California, as well as merging two savings and loan associations, the first time in the history of the industry.

Dick and Jane Roe took pride in their five children and made Pasadena their home. Over many years, they supported a variety of institutions they especially loved, notably the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, the Pacific Asia Museum, Descanso Gardens, the Pasadena Symphony, the Huntington Hospital, and in honor of their handi- capped grandson, Foothill Vocational Opportunities. ROE: Once you’ve seen it you’re stuck with it, aren’t you. One thing that makes me chuckle was if anybody challenged me, I could just show them the photograph.

RJ: Is there one experience that you especially relished?

ROE: My answer would be Sabbioneta.

RJ: You’re speaking about the town near Mantua that you visited at the suggestion of a fellow-traveler.

ROE: Yes. A charming town, not far from the Po River. It had a great history of its own, primarily 16th century. But there had been a settlement there for hundreds of years. It was of historical interest for a number of reasons, but principally because of its proximity to the great Po River. I had not done any research on it until I got there and found it to be remarkable.

RJ: What made it such a special experience for you?

ROE: It was totally unexpected. I had not intended to go to Sabbioneta. But when I heard the guide say “Duke’s Oak,” not only was I stunned, I realized the playwright had been in Sabbioneta himself. This was confirmed as I was wandering about its streets and looking at its buildings, and later when I learned more about what a renowned model city it had been – and was called “Little Athens”!

All the pieces locked into place. The features of the town were increasingly obvious as the unclaimed place that is the location of A Midsummer Nights Dream.

RJ: That is remarkable. The locale of the play has never been established, and this identification will surely provoke Stratfordian scholars. I suppose that most of the people whom you approached in Italy and France were not familiar with the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Is that right? How did they react to your questions?

ROE: That’s true. Shakespeare, even now, among the literate in Italy, doesn’t count for much. They’vegot such a wealth, 2000 years and more, of their own literature. They just never took up the Englishman, even though he was writing about their country.

RJ: What has been the reaction to your research among the Stratfordians?

ROE: It’s a foolish heresy, and according to Stratfordians, I’ve probably written a fool’s tale. The Stratfordians are rather, what? – “slippery.” They will not offer rebuts, they will not discuss. They do nothing but cast stones. When they mention me at all, they insult me, literally insult me. A lot of that is true in the academic world, by the way. Unless one says something they are certain of already, one is called a fool.

RJ: Your photographs and maps are just superb. Some of them are sure to become standard illustrations for future editions of the plays.

ROE: I’m not a photographer, but I wanted the public to see something that they were tempted to pick up and read. My first draft had very few illustrations in it. But I learned that this generation looks at the pictures first, and then reads the book. Whereas in my generation you read the book, and if there were pictures, fine. I decided that I wasn’t writing for my generation, so I used the same technique that authors use today, that is, lots of visuals.

RJ: The President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society has asked me to tell you that the Board of Trustees has voted to make you and Jane honorary members. Also, the Joint Conference Committee of the SOS and the Shakespeare Fellowship has named you Oxfordian of the Year.

ROE: That’s very sweet—and a great honor. Last year it was Justice Stevens of the United States Supreme Court, a man of great prestige. So I’m very flattered that this year they would select me.

RJ: Are you planning another book?

ROE: I have my doubts that I’ll do anything further. I’m 88 years old. My goal in putting together Shakespeare’s Guide to Italy was to liberate people from old canons and hearsay so they could ponder the authorship issue for themselves. I believe everyone can now do that. It will be interesting to see what happens next.
For nearly twenty years Richard Roe has been speaking and writing about his research into the settings and circumstances of ten Shakespeare plays that take place in Italy. This past spring Oxfordians and others interested in the Shakespeare Authorship Question were excited to learn that he had completed his long-awaited book, Shakespeare’s Guide to Italy: Then and Now. In anticipation of publication by HarperCollins in the Fall of 2011, a limited number of copies have been privately printed and distributed.

An exceptionally handsome volume, the Guide is illustrated with more than two dozen maps and diagrams and over ninety photographs, forty of them the author’s own. Roe examines words, passages and stage directions in ten plays, explaining their meanings and pinpointing the plays’ locations in Italy and France.

I spoke with Roe in June at his Pasadena home.

RJ: You and your wife Jane were active members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society for many years. What stimulated you to undertake your own research?

ROE: I was avid about the whole subject, probably because I was a heretic myself. And so I identified with his authorship. OE: I was a B-17 pilot stationed in Italy during the war. Naturally, I fell in love with it. It’s an irresistible place. But it was only after we’d been traveling a while that we went back. Mrs. Roe was an avid French scholar. So, while she went to the Sorbonne in Paris and other places, I went to Italy. So we each had an independent vacation. And then joined hands. We did that every year. Wonderful.

RJ: Had you done this type of research and writing before?

ROE: Never. As a lawyer, I’d written a lot of stuff. But only judges and the opposition would read it.

RJ: You’ve been investigating the Italian plays for a long time. What kept you going?

ROE: I think I mentioned in the book that I was astonished that every place that is mentioned in the plays as being in Italy turned out to be an authentic reference. The playwright deliberately chose things that were unimportant, but absolutely unique. They were anchors to his plays, in terms of credibility. So, finding the right places was a joy, an absolute joy.

RJ: You’ve spoken about your research at various conferences and published several articles. What made you decide to put them in a book?

ROE: I hadn’t thought about a book. But, one evening, at a dinner gathering at the Athenaeum, the faculty club at Cal Tech, I made a remark about Edward de Vere. After dinner some people came up to me and asked me about him. One of those people, a dear friend as it turned out, insisted that I should collect my research in a book. I went home and thought about it, and decided “why not?” So that’s the genesis of the book. It took forever, which it should. It’s got a lot of stuff in it. And it was a thrilling journey.

RJ: There are several dramatic moments in your book—occasions when you suddenly discovered a significant fact. The one I recall most vividly is in your chapter on All’s Well That Ends Well, when you identified the piazza in Florence where Helen and the others are standing in Act III.


RJ: It’s incredible that you actually found a building nearby with the sign of St. Francis on it, which is how the Widow described her lodging-house. And it was a building that had been there since the sixteenth century. It would be hard to refute that.

Dick devoted the last 25 years of his life to his interest in Shakespeare, becoming an expert on the Bard’s Italian Plays. One of the many original achievements of Dick’s life was the completion of his book The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Then & Now, which will be published by HarperCollins in the Fall of 2011. Dick was also honored this year by Concordia University, Oregon, with the dedication of The Richard F. and Jane L. Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Center.

Dick is survived by his wife Jane; by his children, Cameron, Beitz, Richard and Hilary; and by his 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Dick is survived by his wife Jane; by his children, Cameron, Beitz, Richard and Hilary; and by his 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He lost his younger son, Richard Matthew, in 2003 to cancer.

Richard “Dick” Roe was greatly admired and loved by his family and his many friends, and was warmly regarded and respected by his professional colleagues and the scholarly community, not only in California, but across the USA and internationally. Even-tempered, fair, generous and always interesting, Dick will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

On December 20, 2010 Dick was laid to rest at Forest Lawn in a private family ceremony. The Roe Family will hold a memorial gathering on February 13, 2011, 2-5 PM at the Cal Tech Athenaeum, Pasadena, in his honor.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made in memory of Richard P. Roe to the benefit of Foothill Vocational Opportunities, c/o Jody Short, 789 Fair Oaks Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103.
URGENT APPEAL
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Each new person you interest in the work of the SOS makes our Society stronger, more vibrant and more diverse. Please take advantage of this special program which provides a one-year membership, with all its privileges, at half price. It’s a wonderful gift for the friend to whom you’ve been talking about the Society, a great way to encourage an associate to “try us out” and the most effective way we know to increase our size and impact.

DONATIONS:
The Society relies on donations to produce our publications and engage in other public education activities throughout the year. This year we are focusing on funds for the following activities:

- $2,000 to cover the cost of giving issues of The Oxfordian to educators and libraries.
- $5,000 to award research grants to scholars to investigate aspects of the Authorship Question.
- $1,000 to bring a prominent scholar as guest speaker at the SOS Conference.

The Society welcomes your planned gifts which will enable our work to continue in the future. Planned gifts can be made to the Society’s Endowment, its Research Program, or general operations.

WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP GIVE YOU?
It identifies you as a proud believer in the facts—not the conventional fiction—about Shakespeare.

It shows that you are eager to learn more about the topic—and are interested in contributing to the development of new information on the authorship and the Shakespearean canon.

It is a way for you to engage with others who are also actively interested in the subject.

It provides publications and activities that you enjoy (the Newsletter, The Oxfordian, the Blue Boar Book Store, the Annual Conference), including—in the future—new benefits now on the drawing board. Among the new programs being developed is a structured research grant program (which continues and improves the informal grant program the Society has had for years), a tour of Oxfordian sites in England and Shakespearean sites in Italy, receptions and other events for members-only.

It offers you an opportunity to help shape the future of the SOS and the authorship debate by becoming a member of our Board of Directors and/or serving on a Board Committee. We need your skills and welcome your involvement. Contact a board member to get started.

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Oxshottians Mourn Passing of Richard Roe

Prof Daniel Wright, Ph.D.
Director, The Richard Paul and Jane Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre, Concordia University

I am sad to announce the death of Dick Roe, who died December 2, 2010 in Pasadena, CA. He and his wife, Jane, who survives him, were grand and active Oxfordians, as so many of us know.

Dick just published, last year, his breakthrough work of a lifetime, The Shakespeare Guide to Italy, one of the most important studies in the Shakespeare Authorship Question. I was honored to attend a reception for Dick in Pasadena at the release of his book last year. All of us, I know, are pleased, given this sad news, that Dick was able to receive the enthusiastic accolades of friends and supporters before his death.

We are fortunate that he was able to undertake, and see through to completion, this titanic accomplishment, the result of decades of travel, investigation and meticulous research, jaw-dropping in its significance.

Distinguished Scholarship
For this achievement Dick was slated to receive, in person, the Concordia University’s Vero Nihil Verius Award for Distinguished Scholarship at the forthcoming Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference in April. Of course, the award will still be bestowed in tribute to his great achievements. This is a man whose accomplishments the academic world must trumpet to all who are unaware of his life achievements.

As most of you know as well, Dick and Jane—who loved Concordia University and its fierce commitment to educate, for all time, students in the fine points of the Shakespeare Authorship Question—made permanent their legacy, last year, as leaders in the inquiry, by bestowing on the university almost half a million dollars to create the Richard Paul and Jane Roe Shakespeare Authorship Research Centre. For Dick’s commitment to present and future generations, in this endeavor and so many others, we can all be thankful.

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