The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard

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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.

ROE: Amazing isn't it? A true story. Goose-bump time.

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.

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 a such 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 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 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.

Draya and Whalen Triumph with new Oxfordian *Othello*

William Farina

The Oxfordian Shakespeare Series: William Shakespeare: *Othello, the Moor of Venice*
Fully Annotated from an Oxfordian Perspective by Ren Draya and Richard F. Whalen (Horatio Editions: Llumina Press)

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 *Contested Will*. 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 modified 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, copyists, 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 book learning shortly after its publication in English, French, or Italian, then could practically overnight integrate this knowledge seamlessly and casually 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 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.

Thankfully, self-importance is nowhere to 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. For comparative purposes I have consulted the Arden and Folger editions, those published by Oxford University Press (2008) and the second *Riverside* (1997). Its extensive notes on *Othello* by Frank Kermode are still relevant and insightful. As for the recent OUP release (not to be confused with the Oxfordian Series), despite its daunting font sizes and depth of detail, the meaning of the original text still often

appears lost or forgotten. Nevertheless, OUP editor Michael Neill is given occasional credit by Whalen and Draya. All the orthodox editions are unsatisfying silent on possible connections between Shakespeare's works and the author's life, or for that matter, between the 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 speculative issues pertaining to royal succession, has always in essence been a forceful, two-pronged argument.

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 connections between de Vere's biography and Shakespeare's universally acknowledged source materials are seemingly endless. These arguments are not infallible, but for many they are persuasive. Anyone 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 nothing, indeed they may even upset some Oxfordians. For example, noting the homoerotic over-tones in Iago's III.iii exchanges with Othello, their footnote reminds us that "Oxford was accused of homosexual acts, a crime in Elizabethan England, and was probably bi-sexual." Thus, an Oxfordian reading of the play instantly aligns itself with a growing and legitimate school of orthodox interpretation in this regard.

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

> For readers and theatergoers, the result is a better understanding 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 critical edition of a Shakespeare play state this simple truth.

The editors then pour forth examples by the bushel. A few will here suffice. De Vere, in real life (like Othello), in a fit of delusion and probably with encouragement from elsewhere, falsely accused his young first wife of infidelity, then later repented. Never mind what actually happened; the important thing is that the episode was publicly perceived in this manner and documented for all time. During Othello's bitter lament to Iago in IV.ii, 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. The same applies to Iago's famous speech in II.iii, warning Othello against loss of his "good name." With respect to Italian geography—always a big weapon in the Oxfordian arsenal—repeated references to the "Sagittary" are illuminated by footnotes about Venice. Conventional editions often claim that these refer to a make-believe inn, a plausible speculation until one learns that "Sagittary" is the Latinized name of a very real and still-existing Venetian thoroughfare. These are but a few examples 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 Italian of Cinthio, the Euphuistic innovations attributed to John Lyly, and the courtly mannerisms 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 Englishman" 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

perfunctorily acknowledged in other *Othello* editions as the supposed influence of Lyly, but never as resulting from the cozy association between Lyly and de Vere, one so emphatically underscored in the Oxfordian edition (e.g., in III.iii, foot-note 71). Ditto the subtle but pervasive influence of the *commedia dell'arte* on the play, a feature first noticed by orthodox scholars, then effortlessly incorporated into the Oxfordian analysis.

As an additional bonus, this *Othello* includes provocative factual data rarely 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, Stratfordians might begin to ask a few questions, not about Shakespeare, but about some of the self-proclaimed, official guardians of his legacy. For one, it 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, 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.

My only criticisms are slight. The Oxfordian *Othello* gives short shrift to the group-author theory for Shakespeare's plays, one that seems to be gaining steam in all quarters. 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 towards this very reasonable and moderate view.

Without acknowledging this, Oxfordians risk falling into a similar trap as Stratfordians, that Edward de Vere was some kind of superhuman, a creative writing machine, and by extension, completely 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 hard on the traditional Shakespeare ("…a sack holder…a man with a drooping moustache, arms akimbo, grasping a sack of wool…") Even hired front men, if indeed Will Shakspere was such, should have their rightful place acknowledged in the overall scheme of things. You cannot absolutely prove he was an intellectual zero, any more than you can prove he was not.

At $16.95, the price is right; in fact, today's open-minded Shakespeare teacher, student, or enthusiast is unlikely 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 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 land-marks in the history of literary 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 KSNM 570 AM Las Cruces

Southwest Senior is a syndicated radio talk show broadcast by KSNM 270 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.

KW 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 Shakespeare play.

KW A new play by Shakespeare?

ME That's my claim, yes.

KW What do other scholars think of your idea?

ME Frankly, right now not too many are impressed. But then they haven't read my book, and I sort of although 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 Oxfordian 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 commonsense 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 hefted 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 still have to be educated. The author of the plays knows things a small-town writer could never have known, no matter how brilliant. Nor is there any evidence Shakespeare had opportunities to acquire

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 earls surrounding Elizabeth, as Walt 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 senior lords in the country, a trained lawyer with degrees 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 variety 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 written to a pretty boy he describes as "the master-mistress 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 de Vere would need a pseudonym.

KW So William Shakespeare is a pseudonym?

ME That's the argument, and it was once said publicly of de Vere, whose family crest featured a lion brandishing a spear, that "thy 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 so pleased 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 author was really Edward de Vere or some other noble, 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 Neiderkorn 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 Authorship 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 poster of the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare. This is the fourth Declaration signing event featuring prominent authorship 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…" He then added that he was "proud to have the opportunity to sign the Declaration of

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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 Phaer's translation of the *Aeneid*. But there is good evidence that Oxford wrote *Ovids Fable of Narcissus* (1560), an earlier work than Arthur Brooke's *Romeus 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 (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 editor, Hershel Shanks. It compares the Authorship question with a similar current controversy on the authenticity of a different Gospel of Mark (therefore 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 understandable. 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 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 describe 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

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 Stritmatter, 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

traditional authorship of *A Hundreth Sundry Flowers*, two Elizabethan books which have mesmerized literary historians for centuries," stated Stritmatter. 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 skillfully executed depiction of a carefully designed enigma."

The second issue concludes with book reviews of *Shakespeare and Garrick* by Vanessa Cunningham; *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, Derran Charlton, Marie Merkel and others. Order your issue today from sosoffice@optonline.net / 914 962 1717, or take out a subscription and support the movement.

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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 appropriate evidence. Copyright remains with the author. Contributors' views, judgments and opinions are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, the Publications Committee, the Shakespeare Oxford Society or its members.

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How Reliable is Stylometrics? Two Orthodox Scholars Investigate

Ramon Jiménez

Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship by Hugh Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge University Press 2009)

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 questions 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 others—*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 lexis," 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 Shakespeare canon, so that the business of interpretation, which is so often stymied by uncertainty of authorship, can proceed." Their studies supply considerable additional evidence of Shakespeare's participation 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."

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." To accomplish such identification, they use "computational stylistics" to calculate the probability that a particular author wrote or did not write a particular body of text.

Roughly speaking, their method is to compare an author's use of two types of common words—function words and lexical 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 author'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 one of which a cluster of points indicates the author's typical use and non-use of the 200 function words. On the other scatter plot, the cluster indicates the author's typical 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 questionable 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 subject segment of text from the *centroid* of the selected 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

what Shakespeare wrote and what he didn't, but many others that conflict with recent studies by other scholars who also use methods of stylometric analysis. These include Sir Brian Vickers, Thomas Merriam, Eric Sams, and Ward Elliott and Robert Valenza. 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.

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 *Henry VI* plays, the Folio *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry VIII*, *The Two Noble Kinsman*, *Timon of Athens*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Pericles*. Also excluded are *Edward III*, *Edmond 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 scholars. 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.

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

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 Malone, Wilson, Cairncross and Taylor, that the Temple Garden scene 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 Joan of Arc, as well as the Cade rebellion scenes in *Part 2*.

This analysis of *1 Henry VI* conflicts with the recent conclusion of Sir Brian Vickers that Thomas Kyd was the author of the play. In light of Vickers' attribution, Craig and Kinney compared *1 Henry VI* to a Kyd corpus of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Cornelia*, 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 least six 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 P. 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 collaborators 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 acted 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 source 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 derided 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, the application 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 agree with Sams' convincing attribution to Shakespeare.

The authors subject the two major episodes of *Edward III*—the so-called Countess scenes (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. The 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 any of them wrote either segment. Craig and Kinney thus consign two-thirds of *Edward III* to an unknown collaborator with Shakespeare. They describe as "flawed" the studies of Wentersdorf (1960), Lapides (1980), Slater (1988) and Sams (1996), all of whom concluded that Shakespeare wrote the entire play.

Further complicating the issue are the findings of Sir Brian Vickers, who in late 2008 asserted that his analysis of three-word collocations in the "non-Shakespearean" portions of *Edward III* (1.1, 3, and 5) revealed that they were by Thomas Kyd. A few months later, Thomas Merriam, another advocate of Shakespearean co-authorship, published the results of his "multi-dimensional analysis of relative frequencies of function words" in the same "non-Shakespearean" passages of *Edward III*. He found that Shakespeare's collaborator was none other than Christopher Marlowe. But, contradicting all theories of co-authorship, Jonathan Hope (1994), using "socio-historical linguistic evidence," found little or no evidence of divided authorship in the play. He considers it likely that Shakespeare wrote all of *Edward III*. Michael Egan's analysis of *Edward III* in *The Tragedy of Richard II*, *Part One* (2006) shows conclusively that the two plays were written by the same author, whether he was Shakespeare or another.

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 sub-sequent Shakespeare plays*, *especially* Richard III *and the* Henry VI *trilogy.

King Lear and *The Spanish Tragedy*

Various critics have speculated about the passages that were added to the first quartos of these two plays, *Lear* being firmly in the Shakespeare canon, and *The Spanish Tragedy* attached by a tenuous thread to Thomas Kyd.

The authors found "a consistency in the distribution of some common function words" in both the Quarto *Lear* (1608) and the Folio *Lear* (1623), indicating that a single person (or persons) was responsible for the entirety of each text. When they then examined the approximately 900 words in F that did not appear in Q, they found that both function-word and lexical-word tests indicated that

these passages were by Shakespeare. This is the view of most editors and critics.

The analysis of *The Spanish Tragedy* (Q1 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 Shakespeare canon to come to the carefully-stated conclusion that the "readiest explanation" was that Shakespeare was the author of the Additions. But in his recent book on Kyd, Lucas Erne 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 attributed an "early version" of it to Oxford, with Kyd assigned to finish it. More recently, several scholars, especially C. V. Berney, have adduced substantial evidence that it is a Shakespeare play.

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 probability has been crossed," a point again supported by Egan's analysis citing remarkable verbal parallels. 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 Stratford, 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 represent 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 contradict 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 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 (*H8* 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 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 centroid 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 hand is 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 collaborating 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 "Middleton" scene is no farther from the Shakespeare centroid than scores for some text segments from undisputed Shakespeare plays. At least one score for a Shakespeare text block (*Romeo and Juliet* 1.2.6

to 1.4.46) "placed well into Middleton territory." Here again, the evidence 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-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 farther from the Shakespeare centroid than scores for more than a dozen text blocks from canonical Shakespeare 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, four 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.

Stylometric Confusion

In the face of such methodological shortcomings, conflicting opinions, and dueling analyses, what is one to think? An obvious explanation is that today's orthodox scholars, including all the stylometricians here mentioned, are groping blindly in the wrong paradigm, and are handicapped by the confines 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 Shakespeare.

For those who find the evidence for Oxford as Shakespeare to be broader, stronger, and more reasonable than the Stratford theory, the case for co-authorship is very weak. Even if we accept the orthodox 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 writing 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 mediocre playwright 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, Shakespeare was a meticulous and persistent reviser of virtually all his plays over the course of a long career. But the jumbled condition of his printed works, most of which exist in two or more versions, reveals a patchwork of incompletely incorporated additions and deletions, as well as numerous inconsistencies, misnamings, and misalignments. There are several instances where the original passage remains in the text alongside the revision. It is much more likely that the substandard scenes that are attributed to co-authors are Shakespeare's original versions that, by chance or by compositor's error, remained in the play after he improved and refined the rest of it. Moreover, if he

did collaborate with anyone, it would more likely have been with the playwrights in his employ, John Lyly and Anthony Munday. Or perhaps his son-in-law, the courtier-poet William Stanley, who in 1599 was reported to be writing "comedies for the common players."

Craig and Kinney and their fellow practitioners of stylistics, stylometry, 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.

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President's Letter and Ashland Conference Report

Richard Joyrich

As your newly elected president I extend my greetings to all the members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. It was very nice seeing many of you at the recently concluded Ashland Authorship Conference and I hope to see more of you at the upcoming Joint Conference this fall in Washington, DC.

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 (currently scheduled for September 23, 2011) of the new movie *Anonymous*, directed by Roland Emmerich. Although this film will no 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 asking questions. It is up to us to be there to answer 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 membership, particularly financially.

I thank all of you who have renewed your membership 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 opportunity coming up which we cannot afford to miss.

I welcome hearing from any of you who have ideas on what the Society can be doing. You can reach me at rjoyrich@aol.com. We 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 the 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!

Ashland: A Great Conference

The Sixth Annual Joint Conference of the Shakespeare 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 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 Mignarda, 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). Professor 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 impregnates 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 1*) 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 Showerman 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-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 Aloft 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 *Groatsworth 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

cuckolded him). This seems to be a strange pairing. However Professor Roger Prior of the University of Belfast, Ireland discovered a fresco that used to 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 Italy), 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' Shakespeare." 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 classical education. Frank went on to discuss whether the Stratford Grammar School would have sufficed. 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 a break we listened to Dr. Jack Shuttleworth on "*Hamlet* and its Mysteries: An Oxfordian Editor's View." Jack is now preparing an Oxfordian edition of *Hamlet* and spoke about some of the difficult questions that come up when trying to reconcile the various versions of the text that we have (two quartos and the first folio). There are many questions involving who actually produced these versions (the author, the players, a secretary, a copy editor, etc.). Jack discussed several differences between the alternative texts along with some conjectures as to what it might mean for the authorship question. Jack's edition of *Hamlet* should be available soon, and I look forward to seeing how he deals with all of these considerations.

We then had a nice panel discussion on *The Merchant of Venice* (which we had seen the night before) featuring Tom Hunter, Tom Regnier, and the actors we had seen in the roles of Shylock, Portia, and Gratiano.

After lunch we were treated to an address by Bill Rauch, the Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in which he detailed some of his experiences as a Shakespearean actor and director and how he ended up in his current position. He likes the idea of trying to present Shakespeare in a more contemporary (to us) fashion, which he had done in this year's productions of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Hamlet*, both of which we saw during 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 Composition Order of the Texts of *Hamlet*?" Following up on the earlier presentation by Jack Shuttleworth, Roger also discussed the differences 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 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 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

Hamlet" was based on an excerpt from Katherine's upcoming book, *Shakespeare Suppressed*. Katherine detailed twelve allusions to *Hamlet* that prove it had to have been written well before the accepted Stratfordian date of 1600-1.

After a break Tom Regnier discussed many aspects of law contained in *Hamlet*, concentrating on ecclesiastical law, the law of homicide, and the law of property and inheritance. This showed how educated 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 Revelation." Helen showed examples of Freemason and Rosicrucian symbolism in *Hamlet*, particularly the graveyard scene, and in several Elizabethan portraits. She finished with an expanded demonstration of her previous work on how Oxford imbedded the names and mottos of himself, Southampton, and Elizabeth in the dedication to the sonnets.

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 Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*?" Hank explored this play, which seems to be an earlier version 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 commemorate the birth of Henry Wriotheseley in 1573 (who Hank believes was the unacknowledged 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 Falstaff 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 Falstaff Broke Jack Scoggin's Head." Marie discussed an anonymous morality play called *Jack Juggler*, which was entered in the Stationer's Registry 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 Shakespeare, 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 Kositsky entertained us with her presentation on "The Young Adult Novel *Minerva's Voyage* and its Relationship to *True Repertory* and *Minerva Britanna.*" Lynne read some excerpts 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 Ren Draya and Jack Shuttleworth 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 afternoon "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, *Bard Babes.* It was wonderful seeing Robin perform excerpts from Shakespeare featuring the female characters she has previously performed in OSF productions in a part-comical and part-emotional way.

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

amazing adaptation of Mark Twain's book of the same name about the authorship question, with Keir portraying Twain. This show is a great introduction for newcomers to the authorship question.

These two performances were bookended by performances by Mignarda, complementing their prior appearances at the conference.

Following the entertainment we had a formal signing of a large presentation copy of the Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare by ten famous people from the theater and the arts. The signers included Paul Nicholson, the executive director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and James Newcomb, an actor with the Festival, who we would later see in the production of *Henry IV, Part I* (and who has attended prior SOS/SF Conferences). This was a very moving and important event.

In the evening, many of us braved rain and cold to see the outdoor performance of *Henry IV, Part 1*. It was well worth the slight inconvenience. I felt bad for the attendees who sat through the first act and then left at the intermission, because the sky immediately cleared up for 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 on the wet stage (one actor did slip once, but recovered immediately without even dropping his line).

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 ranking 17th Earl of Oxford? 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 it must 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 "Bisexuality, Bastardy, 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

18th Earl of Oxford, was a bastard son of Southampton and Elizabeth Trentham. These two points, bisexuality and bastardy, are the reasons why Oxford had the need to use an alias. John used many Shakespeare plays, poems and sonnets, as well as the anonymous *Willobie, His Avisa* and the exploits of Antonio Perez at the Court of Elizabeth to develop this theory.

We then heard Michael Cecil (the 18th Baron Burghley, Earl of Exeter, Marquess of Exeter, and a descendent of William Cecil) on "Revisiting the 1st Baron Burghley's Precepts for the Well Ordering and Carriage of a Man's Life." This collection of precepts was written by William Cecil for his son Robert and printed in bound form in 1637 (it may also have had 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 1*, which 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 Oxfordian of the Year Award was presented *in absentia* to Richard Roe in view of his incredible work in discovering the Italian influences and allusions in Shakespeare, soon to be revealed to all in his new book, hopefully early this year.

All in all, this was one of our most memorable conferences ever. Stay tuned for next year's conference, currently being planned for Washington, DC. The thoughtful and well-delivered presentations, 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 than 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 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 polio epidemic, was paralyzed 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 handicapped grandson, Foothill Vocational Opportunities.

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.

Actors Sign *Declaration*

Continued from p. 8

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 Moorer, Artistic Director, Pacific Repertory Theatre, Carmel, California; Mary Tooze, music, theatre arts and library patron, Portland, Oregon; and Hank Whittemore, 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 & computers (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.

Shakespeare Oxford Society

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 asap to insure that we have the resources needed to continue this work. See the form sent with this newsletter for individual, student and family membership options as well as ways to combine your membership with a tax-deductible gift. You may join by post, fax or the internet.

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 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 telling 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/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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