

**Rubin:** One J. Kelly Nestruck, [staffer at the *Toronto Globe and Mail*], decided prior to our conference that even though he himself has never done any serious study of the authorship question, even though he is obviously more interested in tweeting his way through the blogosphere than in actually examining new research in this field, and even though his wit far exceeds his grasp in such matters, that the authorship question would be an easy target and that I myself — president of the Canadian Theatre Critics Association and a professor of theatre with over 40 years of teaching and research experience — should be ridiculed and insulted as much as possible.

**Brackman:** [The author’s] jealousy, guilt, and love liaisons all afforded him a great intensity of life experience. Through the tapestry of his biography is revealed a great ambition for life, a longing for exploring one’s own self, a widening of one’s horizons, and an urge to fully challenge one’s talents; but we see also emotional intensity, not fleeing from the darker sides of one’s soul, doubtful internal debate, and emotional explosions. Altogether we certainly do not find a secure or stable ascetic view of existence, but instead a man with contradictory tendencies towards excess and self-sacrifice.

**Whalen:** In David Kathman’s analysis, faulty and doubtful conclusions follow from a statistical methodology that relies solely on the frequency of the “Shakespeare” and “Shakspere” spellings in literary and non-literary references in an attempt to support the Stratfordian belief that Shakspere wrote the works of Shakespeare. The true meaning of the raw data is richer and more telling when the contextual, historical, geographic and chronological factors are taken into account.

**Detobel:** Thus the name Chrétien de Troyes can be understood both as the name of a person and as applicable to a person and a literary program. So can the name William Shakespeare. The surname “Shakespeare” symbolizes the martial part. In John Lyly’s play *Campaspe* it is what the general Hephestion urges Alexander the Great to consider as his genuine duty: to shake a spear like Achilles.

**Warren:** Focusing on the authorship question from the point of view of the use of state power makes it possible to place the effort to hide Oxford’s authorship of the works of Shake-speare in the proper context. The use of state power for political reasons, then, played *the* critical role in why today so many people believe that William Shakspere, rather than Oxford, was the author of the plays and poems they love so dearly.

**Hughes:** While it is tempting to jump to a specific “point” in Shakespeare’s use of Falstaff as a Chaucerian-fashioned mask, the bard may not have reached any definitive conclusion himself, as to either Falstaff or Chaucer. Though not above borrowing some narrative elements from his exemplars, Shakespeare does not so much emulate Chaucer’s work as he reacts to it. This trend could indicate that Shakespeare attempted to come to terms with his understanding of Chaucer, rather than simply incorporating convenient plot devices and showing off his breadth of reading.

**Showerman:** More recently, Laurie Maguire has challenged the notion of Shakespeare’s “lesse Greek”: “It is a truth universally acknowledged that Shakespeare’s acquaintance with Greek myth and drama was mediated by Roman redactions: Seneca, Ovid, Virgil. Yet critics (with embarrassment, with apology, with a submerged sense of inconvenience) repeatedly note Hellenic dramatic influence in Shakespeare, an influence they are obliged to classify as an affinity.”

**Norwood:** Twain clearly sensed a kindred spirit in Shakespeare. By the time he wrote *Is Shakespeare Dead?*, Samuel Clemens was the voice of America, just as Shakespeare had been the voice of England and, indeed, the voice of the Renaissance. In his own remarkable rise from humble Midwestern origins to riverboat pilot to failed gold prospector to successful writer, Twain became America’s first modern celebrity. He was in the perfect position to assess the story of another self-made man.

**Malim:** Percy Simpson dismisses the “a poet for Scotland” claim as “puerile.” No doubt it might seem so in 1926, but in 1711 (and in 2011) the thought cannot be brushed off so lightly. The then very unpopular Union had only just (1707) come into existence, and we now see Scottish Nationalism as a renewed political force. There were plenty of Scots who understandably would wish to see Scottish national and cultural traditions preserved.

**Waugaman:** In contrast with Alexander’s admirable effort to place the date of *The Model*’s composition in the summer of 1599, his powers of logical inference seem to abandon him when it comes to Scott’s failure to name Shakespeare, or to refer to *The Arte [of English Poesie]* by name. Instead, he commends Scott’s “scholarliness” (liii), and emphasizes that “he is far more assiduous than many of his contemporaries are in citing his sources” (liii).

**Dudley:** Had *Shakespeare and the Digital World* been better grounded in these philosophies, the editors and contributors might have been more equipped to face what seems to me to be an inevitable conclusion: that the disruptive nature of these technologies and their ability to unleash our collective intelligence cannot help but reveal, undermine and erode the etherealized, virtual foundations of the field of orthodox Shakespeare studies. The center cannot hold when there is none.



Brief Chronicles: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Authorship Studies 17 (2015)

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