

# THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD FELLOWSHIP



## SPRING SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 9, 2022

*NOON TO 5:30 P.M.*

***U.S. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME***

## ZOOM PROGRAM

SCHEDULE OF PAPERS

ABSTRACTS

SPEAKER BIOS

## SCHEDULE OF PAPERS

NOON -- SOF PRESIDENT BOB MEYERS: WELCOME.

12:05 -- OPENING SESSION: CONFERENCE HOST -- JOHN HAMILL.

12:10 -- **PAPER 1.** KATHERINE CHILJAN:  
"FIRST FOLIO FRAUD"

12:55 -- **PAPER 2.** MICHAEL DELAHOYDE:  
"WHEN SHALL WE LAUGH IN OXFORD'S *MERCHANT OF VENICE*? NEVER."

1:30 -- **PAPER 3.** CHERYL EAGAN-DONOVAN:  
"AN ARCHIVAL JOURNEY INTO THE LIVES OF SOME LATE 16<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY  
17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY POETS: A LONDON RESEARCH TRIP REPORT "

2:00 -- **PAPER 4.** JAMES A. WARREN:  
"BUILDING AN OXFORDIAN LIBRARY"

2:30                   **BREAK**

3:15 -- SECOND SESSION: CONFERENCE HOST -- PROF. DON RUBIN

3:20 -- **PAPER 5.** ALEX MCNEIL:  
"AUTHORSHIP 101: WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE?"  
*A SPECIAL SESSION FOR THOSE NEW TO THE MOVEMENT*

3:50 -- **PAPER 6.** ROBERT PRECHTER:  
"DID THOMAS NASHE EXIST?"

4:20 -- **PAPER 7.** ROGER STRITMATTER:  
"POETIC FORM AS CODE IN THE FIRST FOLIO"

4:50 -- BEN AUGUST:  
"CREATING THE BLUE BOAR TAVERN"

5:10 -- JULIE BIANCHI:  
"THE 2022 SOF VIDEO CONTEST"

5:15 -- DON RUBIN: CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ABSTRACTS AND SPEAKER BIOS**  
*(THE PAPERS IN ORDER OF PRESENTATION)*



**PAPER 1. KATHERINE CHILJAN:**  
**“FIRST FOLIO FRAUD”**

**ABSTRACT:** Twenty Shakespeare plays were printed for the first time, along with 16 previously printed ones, in the First Folio of 1623. This publication of 36 Shakespeare plays was certainly the greatest literary event of that century, if not of all time. The title page featured the great author’s portrait, followed by a preface of letters and poetic tributes, and then 900 large pages of play texts.

At first glance, this grand book would inspire the 17<sup>th</sup> century reader’s awe, as well as excitement to learn something about the great author, who, before this book, was virtually unknown. Instead the preface confused the reader with lies and contradictions, gave no biography of the great author, and only hinted at his home town. This paper, based on a chapter of *Shakespeare Suppressed*, will analyze the Folio’s preface and the messages it tried to convey, which fostered the greatest hoax in literature.

**KATHERINE CHILJAN** is an independent scholar who has studied the Shakespeare Authorship Question for over three decades. In 2011, she wrote *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth about Shakespeare and his Works*, which earned her an award for distinguished scholarship at Concordia University. Chiljan has debated the topic with English professors at the Smithsonian Institution and the Mechanics’ Institute in San Francisco. She has written numerous articles on the topic and is a frequent guest on podcasts. In addition to her work with SOF, she is a member of the Board of Directors of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition.



**PAPER 2. MICHAEL DELAHOYDE:**  
**“WHEN SHALL WE LAUGH IN OXFORD’S *MERCHANT OF VENICE*? NEVER.”**

**ABSTRACT:** Recent rumblings about “cancelling” Shakespeare are founded on woefully superficial readings and ill-considered assumptions regarding his own attitudes vis-à-vis those of his culture. Apologies and laments are unnecessary: Shakespeare is not the sexist, racist, jingoistic anti-Semite that audiences and most critics, coasting along on generalizations about his

times and presuming he shares these prejudices, have decided he is. In the midst of a hideous, smug, self-satisfied, self-contained, and hypocritical Christian world that effortlessly stifles any outsider's voice comes "one of the greatest pleas for human tolerance in the whole of dramatic literature." As for the problematic classification of the play as a comedy, Shakespeare intentionally has every form of humor fall flat, and he extends his investigation into the limitations of comedy that he began in *Twelfth Night*. In this case, he poses the problem: can you have a good laugh when your land is ruled by a smug conspiracy of phony "Christian" economic tyrants who obliterate dissenting voices? That this is not the widespread consensus about the play means that we still are not adequately appreciating Shakespeare's genius. Nor have we yet recognized that faux "errors" and oddities appearing in the First Folio are intentional hints of more sophisticated knowledge, including at least one typesetting anomaly in *Merchant* that indicates a knowledge of Hebrew and Kabbalah.

**MICHAEL DELAHOYDE** is a Professor of English in his 30th non-tenured year at Washington State University teaching Shakespeare, Mythology, and interdisciplinary arts and humanities courses. He earned undergraduate degrees in English, Music, and Education at Vassar College in his hometown of Poughkeepsie, New York, and his Ph.D. in English Literature at the University of Michigan. Delahoyde has published articles on Chaucer, dinosaur films, children's toys, and meat ads, but solely on Oxford as Shakespeare during the current century. He served as Senior Editor for the MLA journal, *The Rocky Mountain Review*, for fourteen years and as Managing Editor of *Brief Chronicles* subsequently. He has conducted archival research in Italy thanks to SOF project grants, and has produced Oxfordian editions of *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Twelfth Night*. A less tedious audio biography is available at <https://michaeldelahoyde.org/about/>



**PAPER 3. CHERYL EAGAN-DONOVAN:  
"AN ARCHIVAL JOURNEY INTO THE LIVES OF SOME LATE 16<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY  
17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY POETS: A LONDON RESEARCH TRIP REPORT"**

**ABSTRACT:** My paper will present preliminary findings from my recent research trip to London through the generous support of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship research grants program. I will speak about my visits to the British Library, the Bodleian at Oxford and the archives at Dulwich College where I viewed and transcribed manuscripts pertaining to the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford and some of the other poets in his literary circle. I will discuss the Rawlinson manuscript collection at the Bodleian which includes some of Oxford's poetry; the Harleian and Lansdowne collections housed at the British Library; and the Edward Alleyn collection (including Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* and Henslowe's Diary and account books) at Dulwich College.

**CHERYL EAGAN-DONOVAN**, M.F.A., is a filmmaker and educator whose documentary, *Nothing Is Truer than Truth*, is available on Amazon Prime in the U.S. and Canada, and is being

released in Europe and the rest of the world as *Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Name*. The 2019 Oxfordian of the Year, Cheryl has served on the boards of The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, Women in Film & Video New England, and The Next Door Theater. She teaches writing, film, and literature at Lesley University and is currently working on a book for screenwriters, *Shakespeare Auteur: Creating Authentic Characters for the Screen*. She has also collaborated on a book about de Vere's bisexuality and *Shakespeares Sonnets* with scholar John Hamill, is a frequent lecturer at conferences and universities, and most recently presented her work at the 2021 National Council of Teachers of English annual convention.



**PAPER 4. JAMES A. WARREN:  
"BUILDING AN OXFORDIAN LIBRARY"**

**ABSTRACT:** A preview of twelve volumes (containing more than twenty books and more than 130 articles) from the first quarter century of the Oxfordian era (1920-1945) that I plan to bring back into print over the coming year. First to be published will be a seven-volume set of the complete Shakespeare writings of Percy Allen, the most important Oxfordian scholar after Looney himself. For all volumes I'll explain why these books are still important for the Oxfordian movement today as we work to establish Edward de Vere as the principal author of Shakespeare's works.

**JAMES A. WARREN** is the author of *Shakespeare Revolutionized: The First Hundred Years of J. Thomas Looney's "Shakespeare" Identified*, and the editor of the Centenary edition of Looney's book. He has given presentations at several Oxfordian conferences and was named the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship's Oxfordian of the Year in 2020. He is retired from the U.S. Foreign Service.



**PAPER 5. ALEX MCNEIL:  
"AUTHORSHIP 101: WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE?"  
A SPECIAL SESSION FOR THOSE NEW TO THE MOVEMENT**

**ABSTRACT:** An introduction to the Shakespeare Authorship Question (SAQ) highlighting the weaknesses and gaps in evidence concerning the candidacy of Will Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon as well as a summary of the case for Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, as author.

**ALEX MCNEIL** has a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D., *cum laude*, from Boston College Law School. Now retired, he served for 37 years as Court Administrator of the Massachusetts Appeals Court in Boston. He became interested in the authorship question after reading Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* in 1992. Since 2014 he has edited the quarterly *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* for the SOF. He wrote *Total Television*, a reference book on TV programs, four editions of which were published by Penguin Books. For the last 25 years he has hosted the Friday broadcast of "Lost and Found" on WMBR-FM in Cambridge, Mass., a show that features music of the 1960s and early 70s.



**PAPER 6. ROBERT PRECHTER:  
"DID THOMAS NASHE EXIST?"**

**ABSTRACT:** In response to questions in recent years about the existence of the Elizabethan writer Thomas Nashe, this paper will examine the documentary evidence for his existence. Documents examined will include his university records, a baptismal record, entries in Henslowe's diary, a handwritten letter expressing Nashe's concerns, a letter from George Carey to his wife saying he was with Nashe, a depiction of Nashe's physical appearance, an official reaction to *The Isle of Dogs*, two claims that Nashe was imprisoned in the Fleet, a summons for Nashe issued by London's aldermen and an official recall of Nashe's books. Also presented will be literary evidence for Nashe's existence—primarily from publications by Nashe and the Harvey brothers. The paper will draw from orthodox scholarship to come to a conclusion about the legitimacy of the documentary evidence and an answer to the question posed.

**ROBERT R. PRECHTER** is a well-known financial and stock market analyst. A graduate of Yale University, he is Executive Director of the Socionomics Institute and President of Elliott Wave International. He has written twenty books on finance and his book *Conquer the Crash* was a *New York Times* bestseller in 2002. He has also lectured on socionomics at Cambridge, Oxford, Trinity and MIT. He has spoken at several previous SOF conferences. His 2021 book on Elizabethan authorship is available at [www.oxfordvoices.com](http://www.oxfordvoices.com).



**PAPER 7. ROGER STRITMATTER:  
"POETIC FORM AS CODE IN THE FIRST FOLIO"**

**ABSTRACT:** "Figure" is among of the most complex terms of literary art and criticism. In the phrase "figures of thought," a figure is a "turn" or "conversion," a way of letting one thing stand in place of another. The word immediately recalls the rich variety of literary and popular figures of speech, which are perhaps the *sine qua non* of what we call "literary." This paper will specifically interrogate the word "Figure" in the first line of Ben Jonson's *First Folio* prefatory epigram.

Its use suggests a textual problem given the ostensible purpose of the epigram to compliment and recommend the visual image. “Figure” is thus the first word of warning alerting us to the possibility of Jonson’s “darker purpose” in the folio preliminaries. I will also consider two related structural figures visible in the prefatory poems of the *Folio* -- Ring Structure (Douglas 2007) and the Sacred Center (Fowler 1975). Exploring these and other “figures of thought” in the folio, I will attempt to summarize the state of “Post-Stratfordian” knowledge about the Folio preliminaries.

Douglas, Mary. *Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition*. New Haven, Ct: Yale University Press (2007).

Fowler, Alastair. *Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry*. Cambridge: at The University Press (1970).

**ROGER STRITMATTER** is a professor of Humanities at Coppin State University and the editor of *Brief Chronicles* from 2009 to 2016. He was a founder of the modern Shakespeare Fellowship. Educated at Evergreen State College (B.A. 1981) and the New School for Social Research (M.A., 1988). In 2001 he was awarded a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Massachusetts Amherst on the basis of a study of 1,043 marked passages found in Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible, which is now owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library. He has edited numerous books on the authorship question.

## **OTHER SPEAKERS: (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**



**BEN AUGUST, SOF TRUSTEE**

Ben is the creative mind behind the SOF’s new “Blue Boar Tavern” video series. Based in Houston and Napa and an active member of the SOF’s Board of Trustees, Ben is also the proud owner of Edward de Vere’s personal copy of a 1565 volume by Herodotus on the Greek and Persian wars. Part owner of a wine estate in Napa, he bottles his limited edition wines under the label “Earl 17.”



**JULIE SANDYS BIANCHI, SOF TRUSTEE**

Julie has a Master’s Degree in Drama from San Francisco State University and has worked in a variety of theater settings in California, Colorado, Missouri and Virginia, both on the stage as an actress and behind the scenes as a designer, stage manager and theater educator. She has given presentations at SOF Annual Conferences in 2014 (Madison, Wisconsin) on the use of genealogy in solving Elizabethan ancestral mysteries and in 2016 (Boston) on card-playing imagery in the

First Folio. Now residing in Nashville, Tennessee, Julie is a member of the SOF Board of Trustees. She chairs the Video Contest Committee and took the lead in launching the SOF Podcast “Don’t Quill the Messenger.”



### **JOHN HAMILL, FORMER PRESIDENT**

John Hamill retired in 2010 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco, where he worked as Coordinator of U.S.-Mexico Border Issues and Manager for Military Base Cleanups in California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, and other U.S. Pacific Islands. A native of Puerto Rico, John earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of Puerto Rico and his master’s degree *summa cum laude*, in historical geography, at California State University. John is an independent scholar who has written frequently for *The Oxfordian* and the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*. One of his most notable articles is “Shakespeare’s Sexuality and How It Affects the Authorship Issue” (2005).

John served as President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society before its 2013 merger with the Shakespeare Fellowship to form the present unified SOF. He was instrumental, along with the late Tom Regnier and others, in bringing about that merger. John became a member of the SOF Board of Trustees and the first President of the unified SOF in 2013. From 2018 to 2021, John again served on the Board as President. He continues as the long-time chair of the SOF’s Research Grants Committee.



### **BOB MEYERS, SOF TRUSTEE AND PRESIDENT**

Bob Meyers served for 21 years at the National Press Foundation, including 19 years as president and chief operating officer. He also worked as a reporter at the *Washington Post*, including on its Pulitzer Prize-winning Watergate investigation, and as an editor at the *San Diego Union*. Bob also served as director of the Harvard Journalism Fellowship for Advanced Studies in Public Health. He has been a freelance writer for *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*, among other publications. He is the author of two books, one of which won the American Medical Writers Association Award for Excellence in Biomedical Writing.

Bob has edited the popular “How I Became an Oxfordian” essay series on the SOF website since 2015 and moderated the Looney SOF Centennial Symposium at the National Press Club. He was elected as the third President of the unified SOF at the organization’s Annual Meeting in 2021. He previously served on the Editorial Board of *The Oxfordian*. His interviews with news-making Oxfordians regularly appears on the SOF website.





### **DON RUBIN, SOF TRUSTEE AND VICE-PRESIDENT**

Conference Chair for both this symposium and the upcoming live SOF conference scheduled for Sept. 22-25, 2022 in Ashland, Oregon. Don is Vice-President of SOF and President of the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition (DoubtAboutWill.org). He is Professor Emeritus of Theatre Studies at Toronto's York University where he chaired the Department and later directed its M.A. and Ph.D. programs. In the years before his retirement, he also taught popular senior-level courses on the Authorship Question. He served as series editor of the six-volume *World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre* (Routledge) and edited the standard volume *Canadian Theatre History: Selected Readings*. When not doing SOF and SAC work, he is Managing Editor as well as Book Review Editor of the webjournal *Critical Stages* (critical-stages.org) published by the Paris-based International Association of Theatre Critics.

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO MEMBERS OF THE SOF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE (BONNER CUTTING, RICHARD JOYRICH, ALEX MCNEIL, TOM WOOSNAM AND EX-OFFICIO MEMBER BOB MEYERS); TO OUR WEBMASTER AND CONFERENCE ZOOM-MASTER JENNIFER NEWTON; TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES; AND TO ALL OUR PRESENTERS.**

**A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL WHO REGISTERED FOR THIS SOF SPRING SYMPOSIUM ZOOM EVENT AND WHO ARE JOINING US FOR IT.**

**TO DONATE: [SHAKESPEAREOXFORDFELLOWSHIP.ORG](http://SHAKESPEAREOXFORDFELLOWSHIP.ORG)**

*COVER: Edward de Vere at 25    PHOTO: Don Rubin  
From Paula Slater's Wellbeck portrait bust commissioned by Ben August*