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Coming to you from the city of the weir,



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exploring topics from the esoteric and unexplored to dimensions unknown, shining a light of truth on the darkest corners of Our reality. Welcome to the curious realm.



00:41

Well, hello everybody. Welcome to curious realms. Official coverage at the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference here in Denver, Colorado, after great pleasure being won by Don Rubin, he is one of the SOF a board and also a former theater teacher. Don This is a fascinating topic. I'm a theater geek myself. That's how I got into my career as an AV Technician. Was through tech theater. And how did you come to the point as let's just start with teaching. How did you come to a point of teaching theater to begin with?



01:17

Well, I was, I started my career as an actor. I went to the famed High School of Performing Arts in New York City. Oh, wow, fame and the TV series and film and all that. I didn't dance on cars, but I learned my acting techniques there, and then I found when I was very young, when I was still teenager, that I enjoyed writing about theater as much as I enjoyed doing theater, and I found that writing about the theater had the possibility to get you paid more than the theater. And so I wound up getting my graduate degrees. I wound up as a theater critic in New Haven, Connecticut, for the New Haven register in and around the Yale Drama School, I mean, a whole lot of things like that. And then I did my one of my graduate theses on the regional theaters, new movement all over the United States and Canada, looking at theater beyond New York, that kind of thing. And I was traveling to the regional theaters, and I met somebody by the name of Nathan Cohen, who was a critic for the Toronto Star, and that was Ernest Hemingway's paper. That's how I knew the Toronto Star. And there was so much new activity going on in Toronto that he invited me to come to Toronto as second critic. And as I was moving into Toronto, York University, a major university there, was starting a theater department. They

wanted somebody to teach theater criticism. They wanted the best theater critic they could find, so they went to my friend, Nathan Cohen, and Cohen said, Oh, I'm not an academic, but have this young guy who has his graduate degrees, and why don't you talk to him? And if you honor him, I'll come in and do some lectures. So I started teaching theater and theater criticism and theater history. And I thought this was going to be a five year gig, but I found I really enjoyed it. I was able to keep up my writing publications, things like that. So that's how I wound up as a teacher, as a university professor, and I retired three or four years ago after teaching an authorship course for the last four years at York University. Wow.

 03:44

And you know, you brought up in there theater history that was, that was class specifically at the university that I went to. And let's start getting into this controversy, especially when it comes to theater history. How did you come to the Shakespearean controversy and the authorship controversy to begin with? Don, well, I'll

 04:07

tell you, when I found out about it, I was a little bit pissed off. Sure

 04:11

why most theater people I know are

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I had studied theater at the undergraduate and graduate level. I had been an actor. I worked at the Shakespeare Institute in Connecticut. I was somebody who had seen everything at the Stratford Connecticut Shakespeare, the American Shakespeare festival there. My field was theater. I then was teaching. I was teaching Shakespeare, among other things, nobody ever mentioned the authorship question to me in all those years. I'm 200 years old now,

 04:52

it was in 2010

 04:56

I guess that for the first time about. About the authorship question. My wife bought me for Christmas a copy of Margo Anderson's book, Shakespeare by another name. And I loved biographies. I read this book and I was stunned. I said, there's a question about who Shakespeare was, why did nobody in all these years ever mention it to me? Why was I teaching that it was this guy from Stratford named Shakespeare who had no education. Why did nobody say that to me? Well, and



05:33

you know, let's, let's start there, because that is one of the first things that I bring up to anybody whenever they because, like I told you before, I'm I come from a theater background. My wife is a theater major. All of my friends in college were theater majors. Typically, whenever I post an episode with cat Kathleen, children, like when I just posted with Earl, whenever I post about this topic, it normally elicits at least one very angry email or text from a friend that's like, Hey, man, are you serious? Like, how can you even say this about Willie shake? And it's like, well, you know, I don't know of too many common people, like sons of cabbage farmers that were able to read and write in the 1600s let's just start there. Yeah.



06:19

Well, if you look at the evidence, the evidence is very clear that whoever Shakespeare was, excuse me, whoever Shakespeare was, he was an educated person. Yes, he had to have read hundreds of books in many languages, many books that were never translated. There are hundreds of references to the law, kind of in jokes that only lawyers would make. There are references to falconry. Many references to falconry by somebody who ran falcons, who dealt with falcons. Falcons were very expensive, and to train them was very expensive. This was, again, an upper class kind of activity. Many mentions of war and soldiering and one of the most puzzling things, he wrote 37 plays, at least almost 13 of them said in Italy. Now we know you could not travel without having your name approved and being given a passport of some sort. So we know that this man from Shadrach never left England. We know that if you want to be in in the Renaissance, you want to talk about Italy, it's cool, it's the place to be. It's whatever say. You write a play said in Italy, you show people eating pizza or paso, or whatever you want to do. You take some of the obvious things. You do one play, you do too, but 13 plays set in Verona, set all over Italy with very clear and obvious references. This man knew Italy, yeah, so if he never left England and knew Italy that well, how did this happen? Well,



08:16

and not just that, but also the fact of knowing how, for instance, knowing how the doses of Venice work and how that whole hierarchy operates, you would have had to have been somebody of at least some kind of noble passage or understanding, to understand how, even, even The kings of



08:40

Italy, Italy or wherever. I mean, also, there's huge connections to France. Loves Labor's lost a set in France, set in the court in France. How did this commoner at a time when, if you had the wrong name and the wrong background, you couldn't move how could this commoner? No, the French courts, the Italian courts, the English courts. Almost all the plays are set in the courts. This would be impossible for a commoner, so you start there, and then you add in something really dumb. The man's name wasn't Shakespeare. The Stratford man, his name was Shaq spur. There's no medial E in the family name. All the records are shaxper. The signatures, the

six really shaky signatures that exist, and they were probably all done by a clerk, because they're all verbal shag spur with a G or shaxper with an X, or Shakespeare with a K, but there was never a medial E to make it shake. It was in the late 19th century, early 20th century, when the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in England, which owns properties which allegedly were connected to Shakespeare, which is not. True. They said, well, for purposes, to make sure we solve this problem, let's call the man from Stratford Shakespeare. So Shakespeare was born in Stratford, but no, Shakespeare was a name on written plays. Yeah, Shakespeare was a name on legal documents. Shakespeare was the family name. No one in that family called themselves Shakespeare, Shakespeare. Shakespeare. Shakespeare versus Shakespeare. And if you look at it and you're looking for a pen name, because you're an aristocrat, you're not supposed to have your name out there among the hoi polloi. You have a pen name and you hyphenate it and a shaking spear. What a wonderful pen name for a writer,



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which was actually his jousting name as well. Edward de vere's jousting name was the



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shakes Yeah, shaker, and he was referred to as the spear shaker. And on more than half the plays and all the references, it's hyphenated. And during that period, you had Mar prelate and Coney catcher and all of these hyphenated names, which were clear, people were nervous about having their real name out there. This was, this this was a period of tremendous censorship. We think of, we like to think of Queen Elizabeth, you know, very open in this and that. Now think of the court of Kim Jong Un Yeah, you know, if you cross your eyes wrong or look at him wrong, you're going to have your hand chopped off, your head chopped off. That was that period that is a very, hugely



11:38

historically point to bring up Don is the idea that any person, much less a much less a commoner, could be able to poke fun at the Royal Court, be able to poke fun at the doges of Italy, the crowns of Scotland, anything like that, without facing repercussion



12:00

absolutely so you so you put the work into a pseudonym. You make sure your name is not there. People knew who it was, but you had the deniability, credible deniability here. Well, no, no, no, that's somebody else. It's not me. So to save yourself, to protect yourself, you used pen names. It was the golden age of pseudonyms, and also it had to do with your aristocratic status. Books were not considered proper at that time. You could pass manuscript around to your friends of poetry, of something, but you didn't deal with the hoi polloi. You are now trying to sell books that was really tasteless.



12:47

And let's explore that for a second, because it's not like they had Amazon Kindle printing or something like that, even the means by which to have something printed most of the time. And correct me if I'm wrong here somebody who taught theater history, but the the manuscripts that we have are assembled. It's not like everybody got, like, an entire script, like we do now. Oh yeah, because it was so expensive, it was like, okay, so you're, you're this character in part three. Here's your five pages. Yes,

 13:18

two things here. Um, number one, if you went to buy a book, it was rarely covered. You just bought the loose pages. They were put together, and then you put your own cover, you had it. Or you took five books, ran them together, and then had them bound. Okay, so books were pages because paper was very expensive. Books were relatively expensive. Now, if you were in the theater and you had a play like Hamlet, which would run five hours, if you had did the full script, nobody does a full script, but you have all these characters. You couldn't give 30 characters or 20 characters a 200 page play. It was just too expensive. So what they did, they created what they called, historically, sides and the sides. And when I was a young actor, I worked from side, still, you would get, let's say 10 pages, or 15 pages, it would say you, and you would have your lines, and then it would say next to it, Q. You wouldn't even know who was saying it. It would say q. And you wouldn't get the whole cue. You would get go to sleep. So you didn't know what they were saying before, but you knew your last three words would go to sleep. So when you heard go to sleep, that was your cue. And then you would say your next line. And then if there was distance between the next lines, there would be some dots, and then they do you, and you, yeah, because it's much faster to memorize, easier to memorize, but also cheaper. That's a public absolutely actors right into the 1950s were working from sides, and if you're working in some. Stock. Even today, many times you don't get a script, you still get side that's right,

 15:05

that's right. And a lot of people don't understand that. And when you're talking about specifically the assembly of the First Folio, which is what most theater majors immediately go to. Well, the folio, most of most of this handwriting in the folio doesn't match. We barely have complete scripts of most of the original works. Most of them are assembled from bits and pieces, absolutely

 15:30

right. And you know, I would just make one other point here. It was expensive for a family to have paper, it was expensive for a family to have pens. It was expensive for a family to have books. In the case of the man from Stratford, the family was illiterate going back all the generations, and he never had his own daughter educated. She couldn't write. She signed with an X. His wife signed with an X. So they were functionally illiterate as well. And the children after that, most of them were illiterate. So what you have in the Stratford man's family is illiterate. Generation, illiterate. Next Generation, illiterate. Next Generation, the greatest writer in the history of the universe, and then illiterate. There's something a little weird about that. There's



16:21

something very out of place. How did, how does it get to the point of the curriculum being given to a professor, and this still being the case, even, even with everything that we know now, even with forensic archeology, even with the forensic uses that we're talking about in here, talking about art that was done at the time, things like that, all these period pieces, all these forensic parts that point how? How does it get to the point of ending up in a literary book The teachers have, well, that it's still this or that there's no controversy to begin with.



17:02

How do we pretend that this doesn't exist, that there's no official question? I mean, I guess that's really what you're asking. Because the Shakespeare industry has long been controlled by people who've made a living off Shakespeare, they write biographies. And there's hundreds of biographies out there, and we have like, 28 facts, and they all point to a businessman from Stratford who never left Italy. So what we get, because people want to write a biography, who is this man? We want to know about him. So a scholar sits down and makes up a biography. Mark Twain once said, writing a biography of Shakespeare is like taking 12 bones and creating a 200 foot dinosaur. So you take the 12 bones, one of the most interesting biographies by a Harvard professor. It starts out, let us imagine. And so instead of giving us real information about Shakespeare, we say, Well, during this time, this is what people studied in school. So Shakespeare, not Shakespeare, but Shakespeare must have studied this during this time. This is how people traveled. So he must have traveled, because there are so many law references, he must have learned the law and the plays. We know that this businessman from Stratford, born in 1564, died in 1616. Had some connection to a theater company in London. At some point, no one questions that, yeah, but what they do is they then say, well, we have 37 plays, two gigantic poems like Venus and Adonis, 154 sonnets. We have to jam them into this guy's life. Ek chambers in the 1920s and 1930s tried to put a chronology to the Shakespeare plays. He was a respected academic, and he said, however, I'm trying to date these plays within the life of the Stratford man. So probably he's not going to start writing before he's 20 or 25 or something. So if he's born in 1615, 64 then it's going to be 1589, before we have his first writings, and he dies in 1616, so there can't be anything after 16, but that's not based on anything. We have no dates of when these plays were written. We know when they were first performed, for the most part, but we don't know when they were written. You write a play today, it may take you five years, 10 years, to get it put on. The same thing there somebody kept writing and rewriting and rewriting. Hamlet probably took him 10 years. And there was an early version, maybe done at the courts for Elizabeth. Then there was a rewritten version. Then there was a version in 1599, It, and then another playwright comes along after 1604 and says, I'm going to add this and I'm going to do that. Actors are always adding things in when is a play written?



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We don't know. And that happens even now, like you're hard pressed to go see Jekyll and Hyde and see the same performance next year. They remove songs and change songs. These things change or move around in theater all



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the time. As I said about Hamlet, it's five hours. If you play the whole play, you actually so what you see is a hamlet. And we're seeing as this organization here, as a group, we're seeing a hamlet here in Denver. It's three and a half hours, three hours and 20 minutes. Very interesting. What is this director throwing out? What are they not including? What are they including? And that's going to tell you about their interpretation of Hamlet.



20:48

And that brings up a very poignant point. Is the fact that the average person who does not understand theater history and doesn't understand the fact that Hamlet performed book to book, cover to cover is five and a half hours. They only know the hamlet that they've seen. And



21:08

let me also just say one other thing about Hamlet. It's probably the most autobiographical play that the author ever wrote. I believe the author is the 17th Earl of Oxford, Edward de Vere Hamlet. Is it about? Is about an aristocrat. Edward de Vere was an aristocrat, the oldest aristocrat in terms of earldoms and things most aristocrats in this period were the second Earl, the fourth Earl, the third Earl, he's the 17th Earl of Oxford. That family goes back to 1066. Goes back to William the Conqueror. That's the family. So it's about an aristocrat display. It's about an aristocrat who marries, who is alleged to be in love with the daughter of the Queen's Secretary of State, Polonius. Polonius says, Oh, he loves my daughter. That's that's what's going on here. Edward de Vere, married Elizabeth, married Elizabeth's Secretaries of State, Secretary of State's daughter. So there's the same kind of thing he did not like his father in law. Had all sorts of problems with his father in law, presented as Polonius, very, very autobiographical display in many, many areas, Edward de vere's father was mysteriously died when De Vere was 12, supposedly somebody poisoned him. Okay, in Hamlet, Hamlet's father comes back from the dead and said, I was poisoned. Continue here, if you're brought up to be a prince, as in Hamlet and your father dies, who's supposed to be the next king? It's supposed to be me. He comes back from studying philosophy at the University of Wittenberg, and his uncle is now the king and his mother is now married to the uncle. This is all very curious. What is Hamlet's problem? Hamlet lost his kingdom. That's a problem. And Edward de Vere also lost his kingdom. He was one of Queen Elizabeth's favorites. He supposedly, if you want to take even more controversy here, he supposedly had a child with her. Oh, if they had a child, what would that child be when she dies the next king of England, talk about the Earl of South Hampton.



23:56

I mean, it just. And you know when you're talking about especially royal family, that, once again, goes back to the time of first crusades, things like that. You know, 10 hundreds, yes, even the idea of these things being commissioned as political propaganda to prop up the crown, to basically show what they are, versus that versus the other kingdoms versus Scotland versus the others. The



24:23

only thing I want to leave your audience with is this. No one knows for sure who wrote the plays of Shakespeare. They know that the man from Stratford didn't. And the more you look into this question, the more curious, and that's why we're into this curious realm as we study this. There's a wonderful book. I urge people to read it if you're all curious about this. It's by Elizabeth Winkler, um. And it's, it's a book that came out last year, well worth reading, Simon and Schuster, Elizabeth Winkler, look for the book, and I think people will just be stunned when they find out what's really going on in this question. That's



25:20

right, it really does taking it takes taking an old topic and looking at it with a new lens and an open mind. Because, as I normally say at the beginning of the show, whenever I talk about this, if I was a DA after my research, and it doesn't take shovel fulls. It takes, like a light troweling over the dirt to scrape off the fact that, like, wow, this is all circumstantial evidence. Like, I would not take the case, yeah, if I was a DA like, No way. It's



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a fascinating question. I'm glad you hear it our conference. Absolutely you're asking these questions. You got lots of good people to keep asking.



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Let everybody know where they can go to get involved, where they can go to sign the doubting petition, if they are a doubter themselves, where they can go to find out more information about the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship. All



26:09

of these things are on websites Shakespeare Oxford fellowship.org, there is a wonderful document online called the declaration of reasonable doubt, and it's simply called doubt about will.org Go online read that declaration. It says we're puzzled why the evidence is all pointing away from the man from Stratford. And if you think that we make sense when we say it's pointing away from this person, please sign our document. We have over 5000 signatories worldwide. Keanu Reeves, yeah, absolutely. Major people, major academics, people from all over the world. A lot of lawyers who believe in evidence. A lot of scientists who believe in evidence, and a lot of theater people, you know, who the most difficult people to convince are English teachers? Yep, English professors, yes, because they've been brought up on this and they're going to have to relearn a whole lot



27:18

of indoctrination. Yeah. And like. it's one of those. It's not like we are changing a lot of physics.

It's not like you will lose a PhD, or your books will be on printed, you know, it's still a hypothesis, you know? And that's the idea, is to look at this as a hypothesis. Don't thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate thank you so much for having us out.

 27:39

We're delighted to be in your curious realm, because we're in our curious realm. Fantastic.

 27:44

Well, you are online checking out everything from the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship. Make sure to stop on by curious realm. Curiousrealm.com is where you can like, follow, subscribe. That is where you can find all the episodes. That's where you can follow the links and join the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship yourself and become an Oxfordian like me. Stay tuned through these quick breaks. We will be right back with our continuing coverage of the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference right here in Denver, Colorado, right after this you

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the key to good science is good research. At the heart of good research is a good data set with the field observation and encounter log from curious research, you can easily keep track of your investigative information all in one place, making it easier to review cases and readily see comparisons and contrasts between them, whether out in the woods, squatting in a back room, gathering EVPs or using high tech gear to track UFO, UAP activity, this easy to carry pocket sized scientific data log is the perfect companion for any field researcher. You can find your copy of the curious research field observation and encounter log@amazon.com or visit the official curious realm store at [curious realm.com](http://curiousrealm.com) forward slash store to reserve your copy for yourself, your family or a mind that you want to open that website again is [curious realm.com](http://curiousrealm.com), forward, slash, store. You

 29:45

Well, hello everybody, and welcome back to the curious Rome's continuing coverage of the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference here in Denver, Colorado, we have the pleasure of being joined by researcher Roger Strickmatter. Welcome to the show.

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Thank you, Chris. You.

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Were you just giving the presentation a little while? Let's get into that presentation a little



30:03

bit. Okay. Well, I have for a few years now, been the editor of a series of books that the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship has been publishing on various aspects of the authorship question. We did two of what I hope will be a five volume series on Edward de beer's poetry, one of the standard arguments that you will hear frequently from Shakespeare professors is, well, first of all, they say there's no authorship question. And if you persist a little further, they say, well, it couldn't have been the Earl of Oxford. And their two favorite reasons are, they say that he died before some of the plays were written, and they say that he was an awful poet. He was a prolific, innovative, creative poet, especially in the 1570s we regard those poems as essentially the juvenalia of Shakespeare. Traditional Shakespeare scholars don't really have any juvenalia. They start off with rape of Lucretia and Venus and Donna's published in the early 1590s which are long, complex, extremely well crafted literary documents that cannot possibly be the work of a novice poet. They're a work of a poet who has already put in any number of years on his craft. So the first books are about de vere's poetry, and then we've done several others. Did a book on Shakespeare and the law. And this is relevant because Shakespeare, Shakespeare's knowledge of the law is is very large. He uses numerous technical legal terms in ways that some of the best legal minds in Anglo American history will tell us are routinely highly accurate, except when he is perhaps varying the legal concept. Because, after all, he's writing a drama, he's not writing a legal tract. So it has seemed to many people for a long time that whoever wrote the plays had a very solid grounding in law, which you don't get in Elizabethan England without first graduating from college and then going to the ends of court. So the question of Shakespeare's legal knowledge has always been inevitably wrapped up in the question of who actually wrote these plays, and whether the traditional account that we're given is correct or not, because the man that we're told wrote these plays not only did not go to college, but had no association with the ends of court or sort of the legal community in Elizabethan, London. Sure. We also recently have done a book on the Shakespeare First Folio. The first folio is the collected works of Shakespeare published in 1623, this is a posthumous publication, regardless of who you think the author was, and about half of the plays and it had never been published before. Yeah,



33:02

yeah.



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And, you know, let's revisit that first book real quick, because one of the, one of the things that is very interesting is that concept of an early poet. I wrote poetry myself for years and years, and yes, there is a progression that happens to you as an artist, whether you're a musician, whether it's stagecraft, you know, and it's fascinating, because I definitely had my my very good friend Billy. We would quite literally sit just like this, drinking coffee. He would be writing poetry. I'd be writing poetry. I don't think I ever Robert or Roger got rid of a page of poetry? Ever? No matter the scrap, whatever it's it's somewhere in a folder, my buddy would write things and just tear them up and, like, burn them, throw them away. I don't know how he did it,

but as a creator, I don't understand that, but I understand the idea of somebody evolving over time as a writer, somebody's skill and craft evolving over time as a writer. So let's explore the idea of, do we have any other early works of who we know as Shakespeare? Well,

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that's a great question. It turns out that the second best playwright in Elizabethan England was anonymous. There's a whole series of play Quartos which have some connection, an unclear connection, to Shakespeare that appear anonymously. Some of those actually are, were collected and accepted as being by Shakespeare in the folio many years later. And then there's a whole nother group that sort of hover in the Purgatory of not having an author. Many of us believe that those plays are so I told you that Edward de Vere is lyric poetry corresponds. Response to his Shakespeare's juvenalia In the world of poetry. I think these anonymous plays are function in the same way with respect to the development of his dramatic skill and his dramatic techniques the and this is related to the point I mentioned that people say, well, Edward de Vere, whose dates were 1550, to 1604, that He died before some of the plays were written. But the truth of the matter is, there is no chronology of the writing of the Shakespeare plays that is really independent of an assumption or premise about the life of the author. And the most honest Shakespeare scholars who studied the chronology will admit this. They say this, they admit it. So what we have is we have a situation where there is very imperfect and incomplete data about all these plays, and the assumption is frequently made that they must have been written a year or maybe at most, two years before their earliest mention in the historical record. This is manifestly not true for any number of plays. What is also true very clearly, is that at least some of these plays, we have definitive evidence for long delayed publication. Why would that be? Well, the interesting thing is that when you look at the plays by genre, the genre that is has the most examples of plays that were delayed. I'll use them as you like. It as an example As You Like It is registered in 16 103, years before the death of Queen Elizabeth, four years before the death of Edward de Vere. And it's in the registration, it says, when he hath got sufficient authority for it, which is essentially the register, a registration that is saying, Okay, you paid your sixpence. You own the play. But the registration itself is not going to allow you to publish, because somebody of greater authority has to sign off on this. So, as you like, it, registered 1600 apparently performed in 1603 that's the earliest performance date we have for it. That is contested, but I believe that that is real. I think that's a true data point, but it's not published until 1623,

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so fascinating. So

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indeed I would, I would say, I would, with respect, would, would it bounce your question back to those who would defend the traditional view. First of all, you know, they have said repeatedly, Oh, hahaha, it's so silly this. Oxfordians say that these plays were kept in a trunk for 20 years. They were kept in a trunk for 20 years at least. And a number of them, yeah, obviously and unambiguously, were kept in somebody's trunk somewhere for many years. I would say that the reason the comedies have a particular problem with being published, is just simple

ensorship, we all know that comedy, we say, what do we say about comedy? You had to be there. Yeah. That means that comedy, in its origin, however much it may escape that and aspire to universality, is about specific people and circumstances and time. It's details, it's details, and also it's details about real people who are being made fun of. Now, the being made fun of may be gentle or it may be harsh, yes, and in Shakespeare, I believe it is both, depending upon where you look. But oxfordians, in my experience, are much better. That is, people who believe that Edward De Vere wrote The plays are much better than our Orthodox brethren at identifying what some of those comic problems are sure and they relate to people who we know that Edward de Vere, the real author of the plays, had personal beefs with so it's not surprising to see him taking out those beefs by writing comedies. And so these people are alive. Their relatives are alive. And so some of those plays really could not be published until well, I'll give you my favorite example on 12th Night. Sir Andrew aguchi is a pretty clear parody of Sir Philip Sidney. Now, Sir Philip Sidney is a national hero in Elizabethan England. There is nobody who is more worshiped by the Protestant community in England than Sir Philip Sidney. And he's an intellectual, and he wrote a book in defense of poetry, and wrote his own poetry. He's a very interesting man, but everyone knows who studies the period that he and or. Of Oxford had serious beefs up. It began when they were young, because Sir Philip Sidney was engaged to be married to Anne Cecil. And then when William Cecil, her father found out that maybe he could marry him to Edward de Vere, that was called off, and she married Edward de Vere, that was kind of maybe the beginning of what had been a friendship turning into kind of a personal rivalry. So this is a is a bitter mockery, yeah, of a famous man loved by so many. The follow is published in 1623, what's interesting is that Philip Sidney's Sister Mary Sidney lived until 1621, oh, and it's her two sons, William and Philip, Herbert, Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, who are the two noble patrons of the Shakespeare First Folio. One of them, the younger brother Montgomery, was married to Edward de vere's daughter, Susan, the other one, the elder brother William, was, at one time, engaged to marry another of Edward de vere's daughters. So as long time researcher Ruth Lloyd Miller has said the First Folio was a family affair, and like any family, it was a family with conflicted interests, Mary Sidney would not have approved of the publication of plays that mocked her famous brother well,



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and you know, specifically, especially the callback to comedy like you were saying, the funniest jokes are inside jokes. The funniest jokes are ones that you were in on or that you know the situation, right? So, yeah, when you're talking about these things being, sometimes possibly commissioned, as you know, political prop up for the crown, yes, things like that, you would have had to have been in the know. You couldn't have been an outsider and written that joke.



41:58

Yes, and the traditional myth that we're told by the Shakespeare scholars is all these plays were written for the public stage, nonsense. Yes, some of them were written for the public stage, especially, I think they ended up they all ended up there sooner or later. But again, we could make a distinguished by genre is that the comedies tended to be written for more of a select audience, yeah, and only over time did they kind of escape that. Yeah, but there's, there's lots of evidence for this kind of conflict. Another really good example is trolis and Cressida. Trolls and Cressida is one of the strangest plays in the Shakespeare canon, because, well, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who wrote uh, essays on all, or almost all, the Shakespeare

plays, says he ran away from Charles and Cressida because all the characters in it seem to have gone to a medieval University. It's a deeply erudite, intellectual retelling of this ancient story of the fall of Troy and the relationship between Charles and Cressida. That's another play is registered in 1603 when he hath got sufficient authority for it. Now it finally does appear six years later in a Quarto version. That the quarto is a small book with just one play in it, but, but it's wild because there are two. There's only one quarto in 1609 but it exists in two different versions. Bibliographers call these two states. And the first state was interrupted and the first pages of it, the title page was torn out, a new title page was put in it with an introduction and all of these, all this stuff. I don't want to get too far into the week, that's okay. It's okay. But, but the We the point is, the point is that there was real problems with this play for the kind of reasons that we've been talking about. I

 43:56

mean, the thing is, what the audience needs to understand is translations did not exist at that point, mostly for not like you could go to the public library and pull out right a copy of the fall of Troy and read it, you would have had to have read that in the original Greek, in the original Latin, and the original whatever language it was, which once Again, bears the fact of an educated person wrote this, somebody who was able to read the original text and translate it into a modern time, correct, into a modern situation, correct. And

 44:31

that has been obscured for centuries, really, because of the statement that Ben Johnson as a younger colleague of Shakespeare's and in the in the First Folio, Johnson has a long, 80 line encomium, poem of praise to Shakespeare. It contains the line, and though thou had small Latin and less Greek for names to praise you, I would not seek and then he goes on to name a bunch of classical dramatists. And this has been many. Misunderstood to mean that Ben Johnson is saying that Shakespeare has small Latin and less Greek. It's actually the opposite of that. If you've studied even a little bit of either one of those languages, you may encounter something called a contrary to fact, hypothetical statement, which is what this is. He's saying, even if you had small Latin and less Greek, but you don't. You actually have a lot, yeah, I would still praise you by comparison, right? Those ancient Greek and Latin dramatists? Yes, yeah.

 45:30

It's a shorthand for if this then correct. You know that that brings up a fascinating point. I myself and about Oxfordian. I'm a I'm a big believer in Edward de Vere, but there are so many. I mean, I, good God, I watch it. Curse of Oak Island. That's one of the hypotheses of Oak Island is that the missing Shakespeare scripts are in the bottom of, I don't know why. Anything Shakespeare manuscripts in the bottom of Oak Island, right? Um, but it goes it goes to Francis Bacon, it goes to Marlowe. Where do all of these come from? Where do, where do all of these possible authorship hypotheses source from? Okay,

 46:12

then again very good question. I would say that the the wide diversity of people have been

then again, very good question. I would say that the the wide diversity of people have been proposed, and it's actually as many as, like, over 70. Oh yeah, possible candidates. I think this indicates the depth of public discontent with the traditional account, which is wholly justified, in my opinion. And however, in my reading of the intellectual history of the dispute really the starting in 1920 when John tomassoni first proposed that Edward de Vere of Oxford was the real author, I believe that that theory has ever since then, been by far and away more persuasive than the other theories. But you know, lots of people actually knew about the reality a that there was an authorship question, and many people knew that it was Edward de Vere, but you were not to speak about it in public. It was just not done, and you didn't write about it openly. If you knew about it, you wrote about it covertly, using, you know, many, they had many very sophisticated techniques for sort of speaking in tongues about subjects that you were not supposed to, be sure, openly, and

 47:27

you know, especially the way that like you were talking about, or like we spoke about earlier, the idea that he ended up going with somebody else's fiance, the fact that he that his family goes back to the 10 hundreds. You're talking about a lot of intermarriage within royal families, things like that. So the idea of his family going back so far, him possibly marrying into the royal family, you could possibly see how for a while, you might want to obscure that fact of authorship, you know, to make sure that three, four generations down the line, somebody's Castle doesn't get taken because somebody finds out like, oh, you wrote that thing about my uncle. Your uncle wrote that about my uncle. You your parcel is gone. No more vassals for you,

 48:21

exactly so. And, you know, I think there are people, you know, view this very anachronistically. We're like, Well, why wouldn't Shakespeare want to take credit for what he wrote? I mean, and yet what we don't realize is a couple layers we already talked about, about the politically explosive character, potentially the dramas, and I believe that's a significant part of it. But there's also something called the stigma of print, which is essentially the idea that aristocrats were not supposed to soil their hands with doing work for money, and that included writing plays or acting. It did not include, by the way, being the patron of a dramatic troupe. And in fact, the way that the Elizabethan state, and also the Jacobean state after it operated, was that you could not be an actor unless you wore the livery of a nobleman. And that was the way the state could enforce policy against actors who might well. Hamlet has a thing where he says, Don't, don't to the comic actors. Don't say anything that's not written down for you. That's what that's about. Don't go beyond or para. You're going to get in trouble. And the way the trouble is going to happen is going to come down through the noble page,

 49:44

yeah, through the chain of command, right? In that kind of way, right, right. So

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there are multiple reasons why the author of these plays actually capitulated. Is the word I

would use to him be basically being a. Faced



50:00

be faceless, yeah? And even the idea of he himself was patroned by the Crown, the fact that Edward de Vere got what would a quick equivalent to now like a million dollar a year endowment from the ground, correct? And yes, he was a patron. It was great to be a patron of the arts, but you couldn't, you couldn't be the one writing the plays. What do you just? What are you doing?



50:23

And you know, I agree when I speak about orthodox Shakespeare scholars, I'm critical of many of their assumptions, but I've learned a tremendous amount from them. They're completely correct when they say that whoever wrote these plays was an actor. Oh, absolutely. And that's a whole nother layer of scandal is that's in some ways even worse, is that this is a we're talking about a noble playwright who, in my opinion, I cannot imagine, I don't we don't have definitive proof of this. I cannot imagine that he did not enjoy dressing up in women's clothes. Why would I say that? Because this is a playwright who's a male playwright, I believe, but one whose understanding of female psychology is extraordinary.



51:08

It's fantastic. It's incredible. He has to



51:11

understand deeply in touch with his own feminine aside. And this is terrific. Would have been terrifically scandalous. Yeah, we're talking about an England that is divided by religion, and there is a strong anti theatrical sentiment coming from both sides, both from the Puritan side and from the Catholic side as well the town council in London, the alderman whenever they had a pretext, like if there was plague in London, but, but it wasn't really, I mean, there was a public health rationale when there was plague to shut down the theater. But it's beyond that. It's like they wanted an excuse to shut the theater down. And when you read the documents of control of the theater, what you see over and over again is that the alderman will shut down the theater and then Queen Elizabeth will say, well, they have to practice because they're going to perform before me next week, so maybe you should open up the public stage. That dynamic goes back and forth. Yeah, she was a powerful supporter of the theater in general, maybe not in certain particular cases, but as a general principle. And as you mentioned, one of the really interesting things about Edward de vere's biography is that starting in June of 1586 sorry, 1586 in June of 1586 which was the year in which the Elizabethan state reorganized its censorship laws, and this was one part of that reorganization the Queen authorized under a Privy Seal warrant, which is means that this is essentially an intelligence service level do basis, yeah, which literally says that the grantee, neither the grantee, nor any of his heirs, shall ever be required to account for the expenditure of these monies. She began to give him 1000 pounds a year. At the same time the state's expense through the office of revels declines by

approximately the same amount of money. Wow, so it's very clear that what she was doing was essentially contracting out to Edward de Vere the responsibility for basically funding the greater part of the Elizabethan theater, yeah, at least

 53:42

the private creation of things that, once again, may have eventually ended up in the public domain, though they were for the court originally for their entertainment, like, once again, absolutely, an inside joke. Let's perform this thing for the audience that it was written for, yes, and then it ended up going to the Public Theater.

 54:00

I would say what you just described matches the comedies perfectly. But I would say that there's another aspect to it, which is that the history plays were intended for the Public Theater. Why? Well, 1586 is an interesting moment in time, because that's only two years before Spain launches the Armada against England, and they knew this was going to happen, they needed to stir the patriotism of the English public, and a number of these plays, especially, think a play like Henry the Fifth, for example, is probably the most obvious example that yeah, that speech is the ultimate Yeah, The rousing of a sense of national consciousness and defense of the English way of life. So I think it was both the subsidy supported both comedies on a more private level and some of these other plays that were expressions. They were not. This is a hard thing to say, so they were. They were probably. Began to expressions of the Elizabethan states, intention, but never reductively so, because we're talking about a creative genius who was a disrupter, and so he actually makes jokes about this in the plays in comedy of errors. There's this the two dromios. One of them says, I buy 1000 pound a year. I buy a rope. Well, the word buys a little bit of, you know, that doesn't sound like he's being given 1000 pounds, but when you see that there's a rope attached to the 1000 pounds, that's what it is. Yeah, he's joking about the 1000 pounds he's got, talking about it as a rope began and in holding him back, holding him back. Yeah, and the sonnets is the line is Public means, which public manners breeds? The sonnet writer is complaining about public means, which public manners breeds. Now that is a line that our Orthodox colleagues have no clue what it can possibly mean, but to us, it is a direct poetic reference to the 1000 pound annuity, wow. And the fact which public manners breeds. That's the rope basically. Yeah,

 56:13

yeah, yeah. And, you know, once again, the idea of keeping this secret for generations so that inheritances wouldn't be taken, properties wouldn't be taken, things like that. Why continue it? Why continue it now? Roger,

 56:31

well, of course, that's a very good question. And I think now I think it's still a political issue. I think the character of the politics has been transformed over time. You have had since 1767, when the Stratford, Stratford Jubilee was held by David Garrick in Stratford upon Avon, you

have had the development of multi 100 million dollar a year tourist industry with huge real estate holdings in and around Stratford and the need to keep the tourists coming in. And then on top of that, you have, what, maybe around 3000 Shakespeare professors in the world and and although their livelihood is not really threatened by our heresy at all. I don't even think that Stratford upon Avon is threatened by our heresy, although that is dependent on their response to the challenge, right? I don't think it need to affect any of that, but people think that it does. And you know, I sympathize. I know that if you're trained for years, you go to graduate school and you're told that this is not a topic that responsible scholars talk about, then you will avoid it. And unfortunately, the result is a huge information gap. That's right, I believe in my lifetime, I've been involved in this for about 30 years, and the volume of new evidence that has been produced is absolutely staggering. It is. It's staggering. And yet our Orthodox colleagues, for the most part, know virtually nothing about

 58:11

it well, and I think a lot of that is because, you know, while they look at very traditional research, reading techniques, breaking it down within the culture of the time somewhat, which is odd to me, because there are things like, really a common person in the 1600s could just write like that. I don't think so that, not the way it was at all. But

 58:35

well, especially when you look at the content of the works, yeah, the most common noun in in the whole Shakespeare canon is the word Lord, yeah? And that's not the Lord in the religious sense. It's the Lord in a social sense, yeah. And the vast sense, yeah, there's, there's no question that these plays reflect a worldview that is distinctly aristocratic, yeah. And that being the case, if you really believe that upwardly mobile, highly successful, petty bourgeois, he's not a peasant. Sometimes people you know, like, no, that's not right. He was a very successful man financially, but he may have gone to the Stratford grammar school, but even that cannot be proved. He didn't go to college, he didn't go to the ends of court, he didn't travel, and he certainly was Oh. John Thomas Lowney said it best, and Shakespeare identified as Edward de Vere in 1920 he said anybody who follows Shakespeare's advice about money will soon be in bankruptcy proceeding because Shakespeare's beliefs about money are not really unrealistic that you require, especially if you're trying to save money to get ahead in the business world, his attitude about money is. Very much. Did no bless a bleach, you know, to

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give it away, gotta spend money, to make money well,

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and yeah, and you should. And he believed he was, he was, anachronistically, a believer in in charity, in good works, and again, that that fingerprint matches De Vere in very precise ways. There are multiple accounts of his excessive generosity, and I shouldn't say excessive, but the reason I say that is because it's also clear that he was not a good money manager, and he was

born an incredibly wealthy man. He lost money his whole life. That's not what he was interested in. He wanted to fund the arts and be an artist and to support other people in making art. And so he frequently ran into financial problems and literally spent most of his life selling off his inherited properties in order to keep himself afloat financially. Now the one thing I should add to that that's important to realize is this is a man who when he was 12 years old, his father died, and therefore he became what's called a ward to the court, which means that his vast estates were managed by government bureaucrats, and he was 12 years old. He did not escape from the financial obligations that he incurred through his wardship until he was probably around 30 years old. And so imagine this, if you're if you're managing this young no money's 12 or 13 years old, and you're getting a percentage of everything that he spends. You are not going to raise him to to be spend Thrift, you know, or to be economical. You're gonna, you're gonna encourage him to spend money. So that's the kind of financial training he had at his teen in his teens, when he was being told that he had so much it would never run out. Haha, well, and



1:02:00

you know, that's, that's an interesting point to bring up the idea of him being brought up by somebody other than his family, because he was brought up by his uncle, correct?



1:02:10

Well, not quite, although his uncle, Arthur Golding, was his Latin tutor, that's the connection. And also a publisher. Well, he was also the main manager of of the De Beer estates. When, when? So it is really complex relationships. But his the household that he lived in was run by William Cecil, otherwise known as Lord Burley. Now, William Cecil is a very remarkable man. He became the most powerful man in Elizabeth's government. His enemies called him King Cecil. That's how powerful he was. And he obtained that power by as a young lawyer at about, I think he was about 30 in 1548, Queen Elizabeth. Princess Elizabeth, was not yet queen. She was involved in a sexual scandal because her Protector, who was married, she was living in his household, and he the evidence shows that he was doing everything he could to jump her bones, because that, you know, that would put him in a politically advantageous situation. It appears that she became pregnant, and she was not seen for a number of months. And when she returned to court, it was William Cecil who put on the show that brought her back. And the first thing she did two years later, no would have been five years later, 1553, when she came to the throne, she said, Send me William Cecil. And he became her principal secretary. He became the Lord treasurer of the realm, and he became the en loco parentis authority raising the young Earl of Oxford after his father died in 1562 Wow. So it was in his household that the young Edward de Vere would have received an education. He had the best tutors available in England, Arthur Golding in Latin. Noel. Can't remember Noel's first name right now, but Noel in Anglo, Saxon Noel owned the Beowulf manuscript. Oh, wow. And we have a fascinating letter from him with I think it's in 1563 when De Vere was 13 years old, he writes to Burley and says, I can see that my work for the Earl of Oxford will no longer be required. Now, one might interpret that in many ways. I've heard somebody say, Well, you know, he wanted to get rid of the kid because he was such a badass, but more likely it was that he had already mastered Anglo Saxon at the age of 13. All the evidence suggests that he was a genius in languages, and he brought multilingual awareness. You mentioned, you know, being able to read Greek and Latin. He read Italian. In he wrote French by the time he was 12 years old. I believe if he knew Anglo Saxon,

he could have done German pretty easily as well, and so he was really steeped in the same kind of cultural preparation that lies behind the plays. Yeah, and Cecil. He and He and William Cecil had a very complicated relationship. They were both geniuses, but of opposite spectrum. You know, Cecil was a genius at statecraft and the founder of the modern secret service through his friend Francis Walsingham, very practical. It's sometimes said, Well, he didn't approve of the theater. That's not really true. He only he did approve of theater, but it had to be in the interests of the political stability of realm, that's right. If it didn't have that didactic purpose, he didn't approve of it. And of course, Devere was, didn't care about that. That was, I mean, I won't say he didn't care about it. I think he remained certainly loyal to Queen Elizabeth, but he had other larger considerations than that. Yeah, he, I mean, look, he knew he was, he was hell on wheels. He knew that. He knew that he was a world historical genius. He wasn't dumb. He could figure that out. And if you read the sonnets, I would really encourage your listeners to read the sonnets, and especially pay attention to the sequence between sonnet 71 and sonnet 76 because he really tells you the whole story in those sonnets. He tells you the writer says that his name has been taken from him, and he says that he tells his readers, don't rehearse my name when you read this. Don't say my name, because the wise world, as he puts it, the wise world will look into your moan and mock me. Mock you with me after I am gone. I can't, for the life of me, see what traditional shakespeareans can make of that, which may explain why those are not sonnets that they regularly expose their students to. They Yeah, so I compare thee to a summer's day. That's Sure, sure,



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but yeah, I mean, if, if you didn't understand the the story of his connection of divers connection, and the fact that De Vere may be the author, then it would be utterly nebulous. Correct being spoken about Correct,



1:07:32

correct, and, and, and one can go beyond that. Even as an ox 40 and his his motto was *vero ni hovarius*, which means nothing truer than the truth there are if you, if you again, read the sonnets and within that group that I described, I'm sorry I can't do them from heart. I'm not that's okay, memorizing things, but, but great. He, he, he, he rings multiple changes on that Devere family motto in those sonnets, he's alluding to it in the language that he uses. You know, I said that he capitulated. He did capitulate. Here's an interesting example of why he capitulated. So I was able to study Edward de vere's Geneva Bible, which is at the Folger Shakespeare Library today. It was purchased by Henry Clay Folger in 1925 one of the big lies in the modern Shakespeare industry is that Henry Clay Folger, although they admit he was at one time, interested in the authorship question, and he collected Baconian books and stuff on the bacon as the author and they say, well, he gave that up. He was no longer interested in it. But the truth is, he continued his interest, but he shifted his focus to Edward de Vere in the mid to late 20s, and I think he died in around 1928 so just a few years after he purchased this Bible. So it turns out that there are over 1000 underlying marked and annotated passages in Edward de Vere Geneva Bible. It is bound with his coat of arms. There is no disputing that originally was his. That is what Henry Clay Folger bought it as as Edward de Vere Geneva Bible. And one of the annotation patterns in it is in Matthew 61 through four, which essentially says, this is Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees. And he says, When you give your alms and you do your works, do not blow your trumpet in the marketplace. So this was a religious precedent. It was used actually

by William Tyndale. When William Tyndale translated the Bible into English for the first time, he did not put his name on the translation. Yeah, and this was contrary to the statutes of Henry the Eighth, which said that any translation. To have the translator's name. Why? Because translations, historically are notorious for not just being translations.

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They can be adaptations. A prime example would be Beowulf, not a direct translation, but more than likely changed by the translator to be slightly more Christian in tone. Well indeed.

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So when, and very often, if you study this, you'll find that translators have their own political perspective, and a great way to express your political perspective and get away with it is to translate something, because then you got plausible deniability. And so Tyndale was eventually about six or eight years after he had published this. He was hunted for a long time, and eventually he published a book where he admitted that it was his translation, and he said that the reason why he didn't put his name on it was because of Matthew 61 through four, he was following the admonition of Jesus to not blow his trumpet in the marketplace. Now, of course, that's a half truth, right? The other half of the truth is that his life could have been forfeit if total name on it, and eventually his life was forfeit. He was eventually burned at the stake by Henry the Eighth, only like what, two or three years before Henry the Eighth became Protestant, because he saw in Bolin, right? Yeah, crazy world. Crazy world. We I mean, our world is crazy, but in very other ways. You

 1:11:26

couldn't make up the play about it quite

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and that's just it. The idea that these plays, especially the comedies, things like that, were reflections of the society around him, reflections of, quite literally, the world that he was steeped in. Yeah, it's just fascinating, fascinating, once you really start giving it that forensic treatment like you have, which once again, when you're looking through a textbook, when you're when you're going over a generalized curriculum that's been the same curriculum almost for a decade, with maybe a new edition of a book along the way, or something like that, or a new annotation to a new edition. It can be hard to look at things in that kind of forensic way, even when we were talking about talking with Don earlier, he taught theater history, you know, and the idea that, like, wow, I taught theater history, and it these things. Never even like the history of the time and the theater history, not being able to shake hands, never even registered right. Never even registered

 1:12:31

right because, because the truth is, I believe that you're trained as a Shakespeare scholar, or

right because, because the truth is, I believe that you're trained as a Shakespeare scholar, or really as dealing with any part that could touch on Shakespeare's you are, you were steered completely away from that, yeah, and I saw that in my graduate experience. I was fortunate. I was in a Comparative Literature Department, and I did the work I was just describing to you about, which is phenomenal. Yeah, wow. And it, but it produced, my pursuit of this question produced a crisis within the university, because not everybody, but there were some people in the English department are like, Why are you letting your cop lit students study Shakespeare? That's our turf, not to mention the fact that he's telling you a lot of nonsense, because he doesn't accept, you know, our paradigm and our assumptions. So, so it did and and for I was very fortunate, because I had a number of professors, really, most of the department in comp lit, who really supported me and saw the issue as one that required a more open minded perspective.



1:13:39

Absolutely, absolutely. It's one of those, you know, Roger, the fact is, history is truly so much a working hypothesis, because it's a, it's written by the victors until you find the losers manuscript. You know, you rarely get the other side of the story. Yeah, and that's a, that's a prime point to bring up and to wrap this up with, is the idea of you have to be both a student of history and a student of the literature.



1:14:09

Absolutely. And you can go even beyond that. You know, one of the ways this has taken me is an interest in handwriting. Because, you know, I had this Edward beers and even Bible and, of course, you know, one of the first things I did was to try to be sure that the handwriting in it was actually his. It was his Bible. But that is at least a hypothetically legitimate question. So I just start learning about, you know, what do forensic handwriting experts do? How do they do that? And that turns out to be relevant. You know, the Stratford man six signatures is the sum total of his handwritten work. Yeah, he survived. And even those may not all be by the same person, that's right. So they have this horrible dearth of relevant evidence. We, on the other hand. Have an overwhelming and expanding, you know, galaxy of evidence. Yeah. So we need people that are interested in all of these things and are willing to think in an interdisciplinary way and bring whatever tools are necessary to the table to try to get a better understanding of what really did happen in the past? Absolutely,



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because, like we say on the show regularly, I don't care if you're talking physics, I don't care if you're talking paranormal, like we do regularly on the show, or even if you're talking this or history or lost history. Research does not happen in a vacuum. It cannot just happen by one person. You've got to be able to share data. You've got to be able to have even a disagreeing conversation of in an open mind. And you've got to be willing to kill your darlings, even if you're the one that posed the hypothesis. You've got to be the one willing to put the shell in it, to shoot it down, you know. And thank you so much for the conversation. This has been fantastic. Let everybody know where they can go to keep up with your work, where they can go to buy books, where they can go to find more about this Shakespeare Oxford fellowship.



1:16:07

Okay, well, the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship has a wonderful website. There is our sister organization in England, the De Vere society, that is pursuing the same objectives. They have many very famous sir Derek Jacobi is one of their patrons. Yeah, I mean, a lot of really famous Shakespeare actors are into this. And so when people say to me, well, all the experts say you're wrong. I'm like, you're saying that Derek Jacobi. Derek Jacobi is gotta be in the top stratosphere of Shakespeare experts. He's acted in almost all the plays, maybe all of them, some, many, many times. And when you have to act those plays, you have to know them anyway. So the De Vere society has, they have these impressive patrons and and my own website is called shake, hyphen, spears, hyphen, bible.com, and that includes materials on my the De Vere Geneva Bible research and a lot of the stuff I've been doing since then. Well, I



1:17:11

would love to have you back on again and again again to talk about this continuing research, because it's something as a theater kid, it is near and dear to my heart. The theater is why I do what I do for a living. Yes, and this has just like reignited my love for Shakespeare



1:17:30

as it should be. This is the sad part about the opposition to us is that many of us are people who reconnected with Shakespeare Absolutely because we thought, Oh, Wow, isn't this an interesting story? I wonder if it's true, and I wonder if you explore it as a hypothesis, can it teach you more about the works? And the answer, in my experience, is, yeah,



1:17:52

whenever I have this topic on my show, the turn of phrase I use is, it doesn't take a shovel, it only takes a trowel. It's just a scraping across the surface of evidence that will lead you down the rabbit hole, because it's there's not a lot there. There's no original complete manuscript. Every manuscript in the folio is assembled from parts, most of them incomplete. Like you said, we have all of six signatures, none of which actually match. So, yeah, yeah, fascinating. Thank you so much again for your time. I greatly appreciate it. It's been a great conversation. Okay, while you are online, checking out all of the great work of Dr or Roger stripmeier. Strip matter, make sure to stop them by curious realm. Curious realm.com. Is where you can like, follow, subscribe. That is where you can find all of our episodes from this and other live events. Stay tuned through this quick break. We will be right back with our continuing coverage of the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference right here in Denver right after this. You



1:19:05

the key to good science is good research. At the heart of good research is a good data set with the field observation and encounter log from curious research, you can easily keep track of your investigative information all in one place, making it easier to review cases and readily see

comparisons and contrasts between them, whether out in the woods, squatting in a back room, gathering EVPs or using high tech gear to track UFO, UAP activity, this easy to carry, pocket sized scientific data log is the perfect companion for any field researcher, you can find your copy of the curious research field observation and encounter log@amazon.com or visit the official curious realm store at curious.realm.com forward slash store to reserve your copy for yourself, your family or a mind that. You want to open that website again is curious.realm.com, forward, slash, store. You



1:20:24

Well, hello everybody, and welcome back to the curious film's continuing coverage of the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference here in Denver, Colorado, we have the great pleasure of being joined by Cheryl Egan Donovan. She is from controversy films and the creator of nothing truer than truth on Amazon. Welcome to the show.



1:20:44

Thanks so much.



1:20:45

How did you first come to light with the Shakespeare authorship controversy? Cheryl, well,



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I was a British literature major in high school, and then I did independent study on Shakespeare and androgyny when I was an undergrad in college. And then I took a course, a history course at Harvard University, with a professor named Don Ostrowski, who still teaches there. And his whole approach to history was about evidence, primary, tertiary, secondary, evidence, and how do we know what we know? And so he asked us to write an essay, and he said one of the topics he might want to write about in that context is who wrote Shakespeare. And here I had been studying this for many years, and had never heard any kind of you know, controversy. So he recommended John Thomas Loney's book, Shakespeare identified. I read that. Then I read Joseph Brand's book, alias Shakespeare. And I said, Wow, this guy is so interesting. I was convinced, particularly with the analysis of the poetry that Loni did. Because I had written poetry as an undergrad, it was clear to me that this was the developing voice of the poet who would become Shakespeare. So I went from there. I did a little research. I said, this guy is fascinating. I would love to make a film about him. I had just finished my first film, which was about music. It's called all kinds of girls. It was about a punk rock band from Boston, and I found out that Margo Anderson and Roger Stripmatt were working on a biography of Edward de Vere. Roger was still doing his PhD at UMass at the time, and then they ended up splitting up. And Margot finished the book Shakespeare identified, and Roger went on to do his PhD analysis of the Geneva Bible that's at the Folger library. Yeah. So I went to the book release party and introduced myself to Margot Anderson and said, I'd like to option the book. And then I

went to the Shakespeare Oxford fellowship conference in Ashland, Oregon, and had lunch with Margot, and we made a deal. So from there, yeah, I got the rights to the book, and yeah. And from there, I started filming, and it was a long process, but it really, I really enjoyed it. I loved it.



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And at any point during that process, at what point did you come to the point Have you come to a point of doubt about Shakespeare yourself through the process of making this film? Well,



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as I said, when I was introduced to Edward De Beer, I was convinced that he was the author, so I started from that premise, but I wanted in my film to allow people to kind of get there on their own. So what I did was, you know, show the parallels between the plays and his life, just as Margot Anderson had done. So I really used that book as a template, and I just focused on two chapters, really, that focused on the time that he went to Italy. So showing, you know, using film clips, which, again, was an expensive way to show, you know, the connections. But I felt that that was something that young people could relate to, like many of them are familiar, you know, with Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet, and also Zeffirelli's Romeo and Juliet. So we used the film clips to tell the story of the parallels between De Beer's life and the plays. And then we went to we did a Kickstarter campaign. We went to Venice and Northern Italy and filmed for seven days. And that was really great. So that became the story arc. He leaves London and goes to Italy, and, you know, discovers commedia dell'arte, meets Titian, sees the plays in Siena of Piccolomini, you know, and he comes back with all these ideas about music and theater. And when the film ends with him returning to London, and then the first two plays that were produced right after he got back, comedy history of eras, which we believe is an early comedy of eras. And then Titus and Justus, which is an early version of Two Gentlemen of Verona. So that's where I left off with the first film, fantastic.



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And you know, that is one of the topics that we talk about regularly on the show. Is the fact that whether it's Edward de Vere, whether it's anybody else, it's the fact that the author would have had to have traveled. He could not have been somebody of just regular, common upbringing, common ilk. You would have had to have been somebody of means to have been able to have that worldly kind of travel. Because the locations in Romeo and Juliet, the locations in, you know, Merchant of Venice, things like, they are actual locations. Exactly.



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Yes, that was what was so fun. I was able to interview Richard Rowe before he passed, who wrote the book Shakespeare in Italy, you know, who had gone to all of these locations and photographed them and wrote a beautiful book about that. But, you know, other wealthy, as you said, aristocrats, did travel to Italy. And so, for example, there was a book that came out a few years ago about Thomas North. He traveled in Italy. Someone talked at the conference today about Philip, Philip Sydney, having gone to Venice. You know, so other people did go to

Venice, but the things that De Beer puts into the plays as Shakespeare are so specific. They're they're during the time period that he was there. And it's certainly not the kind of information that someone would get at the merchant at the mermaid tavern. And it's also people sometimes, sometimes say, well, he learned all this from John Florio, but it's much more detailed than that.

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Yeah, yeah. And even the, even the ideas of Romeo and Juliet, where they met, things like that, the way that the families operated, you would have had to have had an intimate knowledge of such things, right?

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And, I mean, the great thing about Shakespeare is that he uses so many different sources and his own life experience. So as a writer, you know, that's what I find fascinating, the way that he can take these archetypal characters and these great classic works. Because Romeo and Juliet, for example, is based on a on a myth of, you know, a real pair of lovers in 13th century. I guess it would be Verona that, yeah, that, you know, tragically, had this same thing happen to them. And then, of course, this early poem of Arthur Brooke Romeo and Julia. But he also puts in his own experience, and that's what makes it so rich, because, for example, his men were fighting in the street with Ann Babasaur's family, her brother and her people. So it seems so closely related to, again, things that happened in his own life, not just other sources.

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What were some of the other things that you came across that I guess, kind of changed the way that changed the lens through which you view Shakespeare as as you created this film.

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Well, I think one of the things that really interested me was what lonely just identified as his conflicted attitude toward women, and which sobering writes about, extensively about the sonnets, you know, and the fact that it appears that the author was bisexual. And many, many Stratfordians have said that, and I found that that was a really important part of, you know, the way he creates his characters, the strong women that he gives us, the, as I said, the Androgyny that I was interested in when I was in college writing about that. But I did find a lot of resistance to that theory. And so that was surprising. So one of the things that opened my eyes was that, you know, that experience of getting some pushback on that well, and,

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you know, it's fascinating. I can, I can see where you might get some pushback on that from people. But when, when you start looking at older societies, when you start looking specifically in royal courts, things like that, that was, that was a it was not an uncommon thing for a man to

have a young lover. Things like, I'm not saying it's okay by any means, believe me. Audience,



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I can hear my audience,



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perfectly acceptable, exactly,



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and that's just it. It isn't until our modern time really closer to the Victorian area era things like that. I mean, even that was one of the things that John Adams got on Benjamin Franklin about was like, my god, you're torrid when you're over there in France. And Benjamin Franklin was like, I don't think you understand how French politics works. If I'm not betting these women and in doing these things, we aren't going to get anywhere, because that's how French society works. Well,



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that's a great analogy to when Xavier went to Venice. So when he went to Venice, I did some research about what was going on there, and it was really kind of the last frontier. It was anything goes kind of place. It still is a little bit. And so, you know, not only the dressing up for Carnival, which allowed you to mix with the different classes, because in disguise, but people actually played the roles. And, you know, the female prostitutes dressed as men, because that way they could get the male clients who were looking for someone. So it's really fascinating when you look into the time period that he was there, you know, he. Did. He was known to a famous cortisan, Virginia, padawanna. And so when you find out you know about his experience when he was there, it's really fascinating. And I think it would have been something he was interested in, and he certainly informed his work.