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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant



“We are such stuff/ as dreams are made on, and  
our little life/ Is rounded with a sleep.”

Will ran  
Shakespeare

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Plays

#### Tragedies

|                               | Year (approximate) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Titus Andronicus</i>       | 1593-1594          |
| <i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i>     | 1595-1596          |
| <i>Julius Caesar</i>          | 1599               |
| <i>Hamlet</i>                 | 1600-1601          |
| <i>Othello</i>                | 1604               |
| <i>King Lear</i>              | 1605               |
| <i>Macbeth</i>                | 1606               |
| <i>Antony &amp; Cleopatra</i> | 1606-1607          |
| <i>Coriolanus</i>             | 1607-1608          |
| <i>Timon of Athens</i>        | 1607-1608          |



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Plays

#### Comedies

|  | Year (approximate) |
|--|--------------------|
| <i>The Comedy of Errors</i>                  | 1592-1594          |
| <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>               | 1593-1594          |
| <i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>           | 1594               |
| <i>Love's Labor's Lost</i>                   | 1594-1595          |
| <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>             | 1595-1596          |
| <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>                | 1596-1597          |
| <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>            | 1597               |
| <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>                | 1598-1599          |
| <i>As You Like It</i>                        | 1599               |
| <i>Twelfth Night</i>                         | 1601-1602          |
| <i>The History of Troilus &amp; Cressida</i> | 1601-1602          |
| <i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>             | 1602-1603          |
| <i>Measure for Measure</i>                   | 1604               |



A Midsummer Night's Dream

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Plays

### Histories

### Year (approximate)

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Henry VI, Part I</i>       | 1589-1590 |
| <i>Henry VI, Part II</i>      | 1590-1591 |
| <i>Henry VI, Part III</i>     | 1590-1591 |
| <i>Richard III</i>            | 1592-1593 |
| <i>King John</i>              | 1594-1596 |
| <i>Richard II</i>             | 1595      |
| <i>Henry IV, Part I</i>       | 1596-1597 |
| <i>Henry IV, Part II</i>      | 1598      |
| <i>Henry V</i>                | 1599      |
| <i>The Life of Henry VIII</i> | 1612-1613 |



Laurence Olivier as Richard III

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Plays

#### Romances

*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*  
*Cymbeline*  
*The Winter's Tale*  
*The Tempest*  
*The Two Noble Kinsman*

#### Year (approximate)

1607-1608  
1609-1610  
1610-1611  
1611  
1613



William Hutt as Prospero



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Poems

#### Description

“Venus and Adonis”

“The Rape of Lucrece”

Sonnets

“The Phoenix and the Turtle”

#### Year (approximate)

1592-1593

1593-1594

1593-1599

1601



Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton

## The Early Years

- Shakespeare's birthday is traditionally observed on April 23, 1564
- He was born in Stratford-Upon-Avon, In Warwickshire, England
- He was baptized on April 26, 1564 at Holy Trinity Church
- His parents were John and Mary (Arden) Shakespeare; John was burgess (mayor) of the borough at the time of William's birth
- Mary Arden was part of Arden family that was prominent in Warwickshire, although she was of a relatively obscure branch of the family. The Arden Forest (named in a number of Shakespeare's plays) was a part of the family's extensive holdings
- John was a glove-maker by trade, and it is likely that William spent time working with his father in his early years



## The Early Years

- It is likely that Shakespeare's family were Roman Catholics, at least until such time as Catholicism was banned by the state in 1571
- It is unknown whether the family remained closet Catholics after Catholicism was banned
- Sometime in the mid to late 1570's the fortunes of John Shakespeare declined, and he sold and mortgaged some of the property he'd bought in the areas near Stratford-Upon-Avon
- John Shakespeare's financial difficulties may have been caused by:
  - ✓ His closet Catholicism
  - ✓ Trading in wool along with his occupation of glove-maker; tradesmen were not allowed to engage in two separate activities, so he may have been fined for engaging in black-market wool trading
  - ✓ A summons to appear before the Queen's Court for failure to keep the peace, resulting in significant fines; it is not clear what the charges were against John Shakespeare related to the summons



## The Early Years

- William probably attended the local grammar school, the King's New School, where Latin grammar was taught, using Ovid, Virgil, Caesar and Cicero as models of Latin grammar and construction
- Education was based on rote memorization, and was accompanied by frequent beatings to encourage the students' memory
- Classes began at 7:00 AM in the winter and 6:00 AM in the summer and lasted until 5:00 PM with a 2 hour break for lunch. There were 2 half-days off during the week, and school was held throughout the year

Shakespeare's birthplace



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Early Years

- There is no record of William ever attending University; he learned “Little Latin, and less Greek,” during his years of study at the King’s New School, leading to speculation that he lacked the education necessary to write the plays



School room at the King's New School



Copy of text which was similar  
To the one Shakespeare would  
Have used

## The Early Years

- The first plays observed by William were likely to have been morality and/or mystery plays, performed by troupes that traveled the countryside
- John Shakespeare, as burgess of Stratford-Upon-Avon, would have reviewed the players' recommendations, as well as their sponsorship by a peer, and would have recommended them to perform in the town
- The first performance was often called the Mayor's performance, and was free to all town members who wished to attend
- The players, of course, hoped that not everyone would attend on opening day, and that there would be return appearances by townsfolk
- The plays were sponsored by the various trade guilds





## The Early Years

### Mystery Plays

- The plays were based on events from the Bible, and were also known as cycles
- There are four recognized sets of cycles:
  - ✓ The York Cycle, composed of 48 plays or pageants
  - ✓ The Towneley plays, of 28 pageants
  - ✓ The Chester Cycle of 24 pageants
  - ✓ The Ludus Coventriae composed of 3 older plays that were rewritten
- The themes covered in the plays consisted of the following:
  - ✓ The fall of Lucifer
  - ✓ Creation and fall of man
  - ✓ Abraham and Isaac
  - ✓ The Nativity
  - ✓ The Passion and Resurrection



## The Early Years

### Morality Plays

- These plays were generally allegorical in nature and represented themes such as good versus evil
- The actors personify certain virtues and vices, as well as famous personages
  - ✓ Good
  - ✓ Evil
  - ✓ Death
  - ✓ Knowledge
  - ✓ Beauty
  - ✓ Good Deeds
  - ✓ Angels
  - ✓ God





## The Early Years

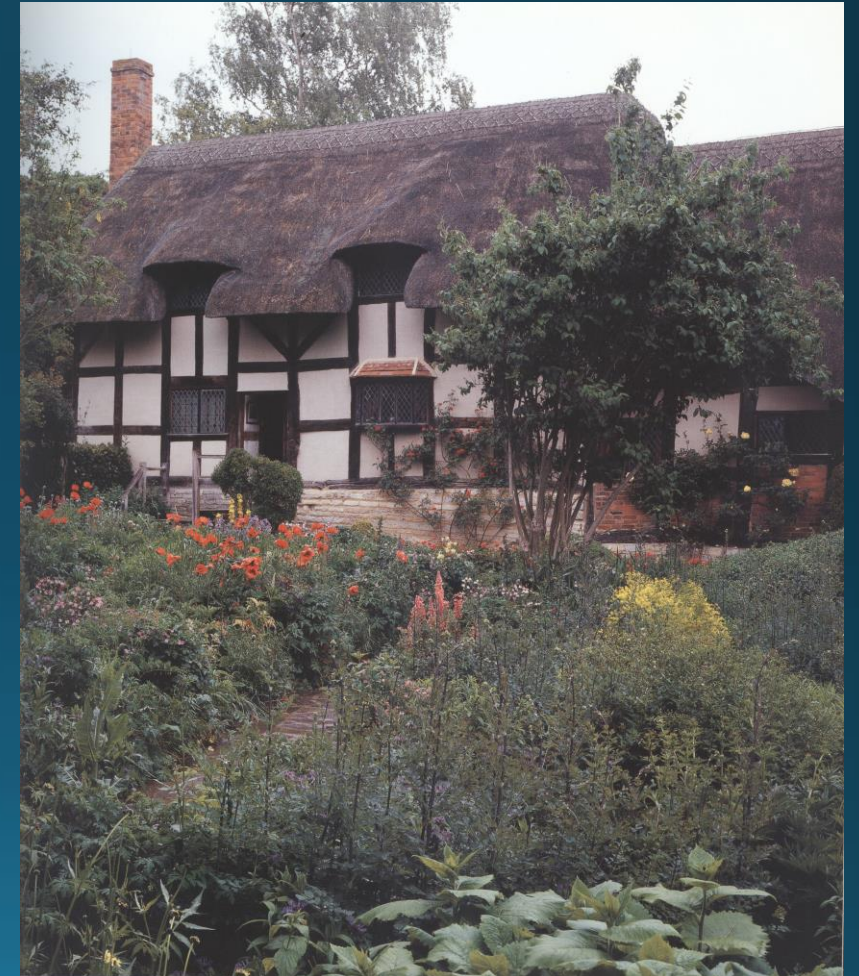
- What did William do after grammar school, at the age of 14 – 16? No records exist, but several theories have been developed:
  - ✓ He worked with his father as a glover
  - ✓ He worked with lawyers in some clerical capacity
  - ✓ He spent time at a monastery
  - ✓ He was a soldier
  - ✓ He was involved in some kind of medical practice
  - ✓ He worked aboard a ship
- Yet, none of these account for his career as an actor and playwright
- William may have been a schoolmaster or tutor in or around Stratford, or even as far north as Lancashire
- At the time, some families in Lancashire were practicing Roman Catholics, and this has led to the theory that John Shakespeare was a closet Catholic and sent William to teach there
- There is also some speculation that Shakespeare taught in Hampshire, in the south of England; this speculation is fueled by the fact that Shakespeare's first patron, the Earl of Southampton, Henry Wriothesley, lived nearby

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Early Years

- At the age of 18, (1582) he married Anne Hathaway, a local woman from Shottery, who was 26 at the time of the marriage; their first daughter, Susanna, was born 6 months after the wedding
- Friends of Anne's father had to put up a surety of £40 for the marriage, in part, because formal banns were not posted, and in part, to ensure that the marriage would proceed
- Just prior to his marriage to Anne Hathaway, Will was engaged to be married to another young lady, named Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton. There has been some speculation that the two Annes were indeed one and the same person, but this is unlikely.
- Anne Hathaway's father died in 1581, and she lived at the time with her brother and step-mother in her father's house



Picture of the Hathaway family cottage in Stratford

## The Early Years

- Some three years after his marriage to Anne, Shakespeare was in London, having rented an apartment near Henley Street; Anne remained in Stratford with their three children, Susanna, Hamnet and Judith (the twins were born the year before Shakespeare's departure)
- London, at the time of Shakespeare was overcrowded with a population of 200,000 people, unsanitary, and prone to outbreaks of disease
- He may have fled to London as a result of being accused of poaching deer at Sir Thomas Lucy's park at Charlecote
- He may also have fled as a result of being suspected of Catholicism by Sir Thomas Lucy who hunted down known Catholics in Warwickshire



London during Shakespeare's time



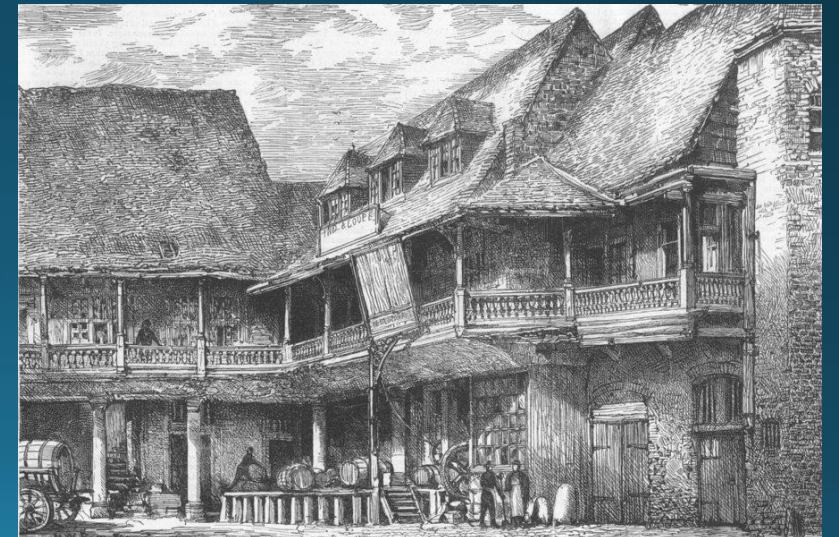
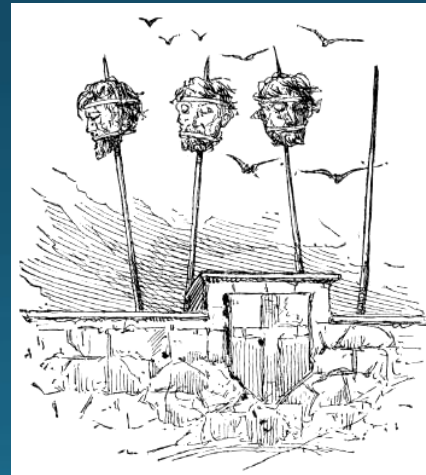
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The Middle Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### Scenes in Shakespeare's London

- Theaters
- Bull and bear-baiting
- Criminal punishment
- Archery and pistol ranges
- Taverns and inns
- Stews (brothels)
- Fighting and riots





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The Middle Years

Scenes in Shakespeare's London

**"I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too!"**

Queen's speech at Tilbury when the English fleet advanced  
Against the Spanish Armada



Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant





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The Middle Years

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

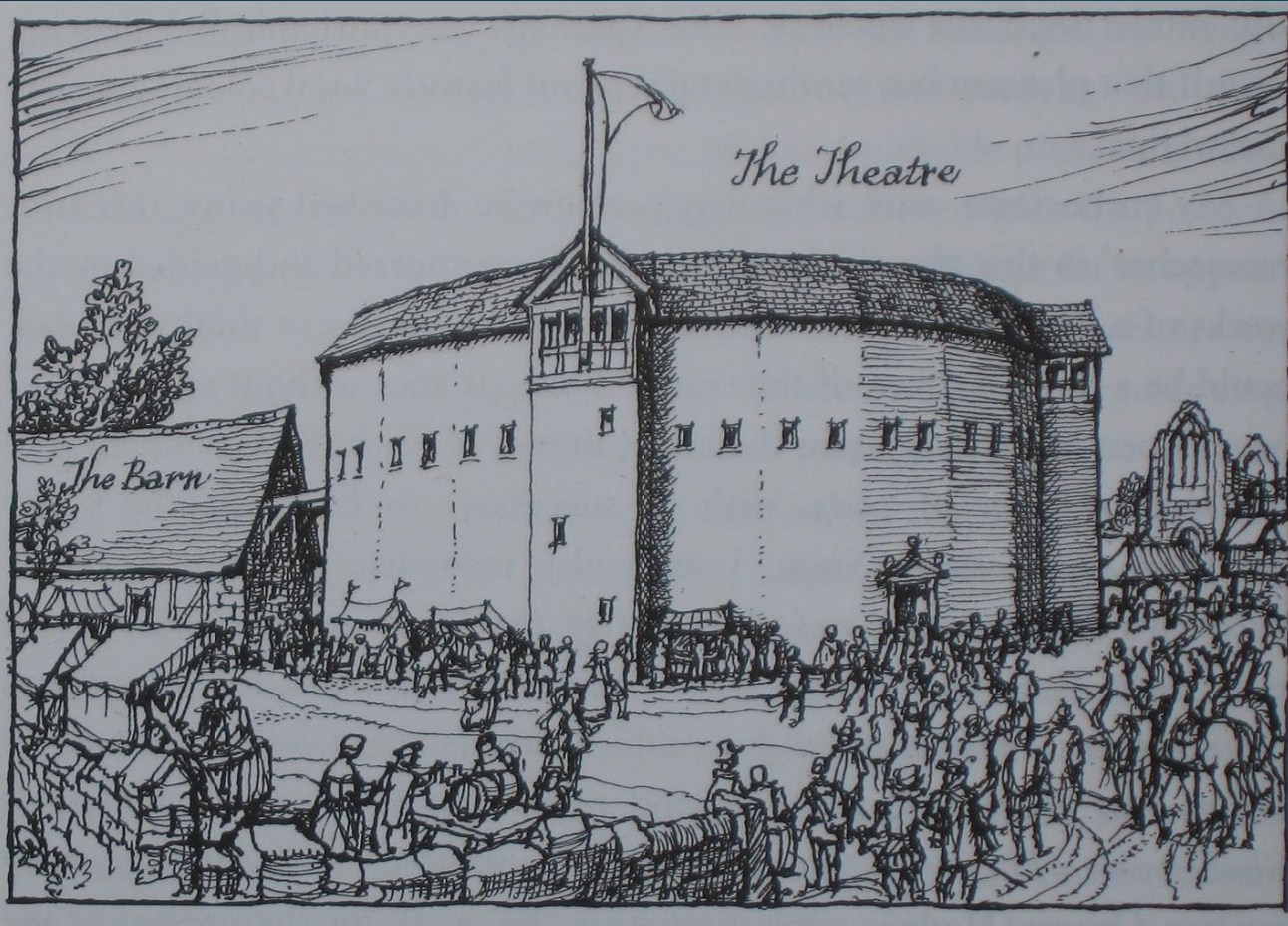
## The Theatre in London

- The first dedicated theatre in London was the Red Lion, built by John Brayne around 1567
- The “Theatre” was built by James Burbage and John Brayne in 1576; the theater was composed of the following elements, and all subsequent theatres copied these features:
  - ✓ An elevated platform for the actors
  - ✓ A painted canopy known as the “heavens” which protected the actors from the elements
  - ✓ A trapdoor on the stage known as “hell”
  - ✓ An entrance and exit on either side of the stage
  - ✓ A box-office used when the change was made for customers to pay to see the play
  - ✓ The open area surrounding the stage where the groundlings viewed the play
  - ✓ A series of seats in a covered gallery which ringed the playhouse
  - ✓ A cushioned seat on the lower level of the galleries

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The Middle Years

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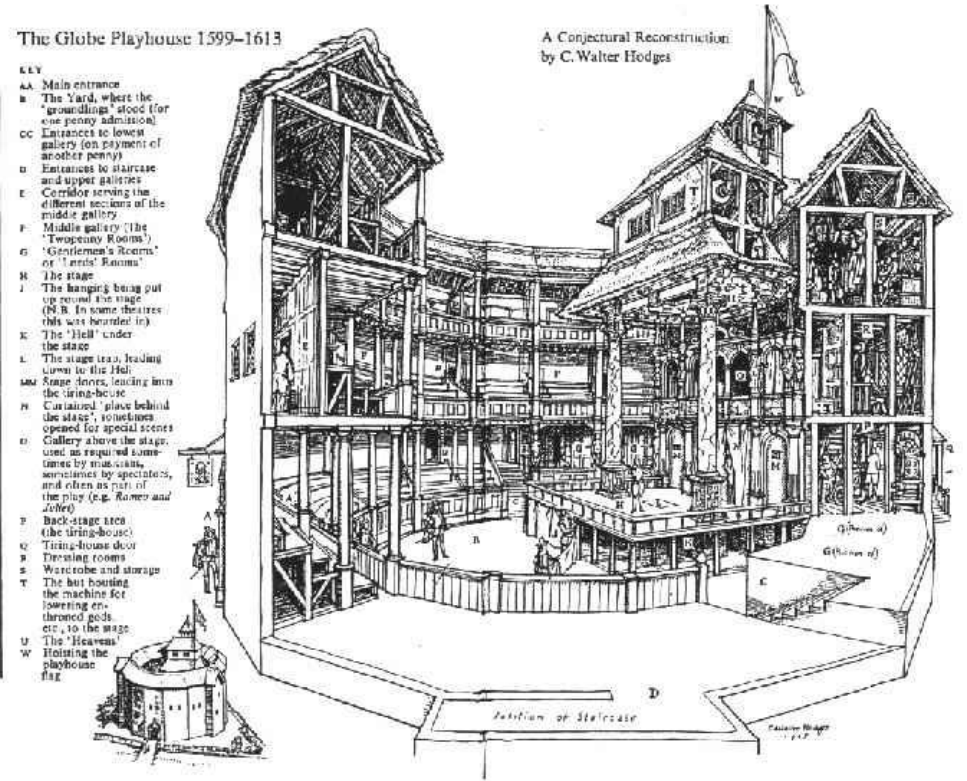


The "Theatre" in London



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The Globe Theatre

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Groundlings

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## The Middle Years

### The Theatre in London

- The first theatres held approximately 2,000 paying customers
- In order to get customers to return (and pay), the theatres performed 5 or 6 different plays a week
- The demand for plays was therefore quite high, and the companies used old Roman plays, modified plays written by earlier playwrights, and cobbled together bits and pieces from other plays which they “borrowed” from other companies
- In this need for new material, Shakespeare found an opportunity to not only act, but to write plays, as well

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Middle Years

#### The Theatre in London

- The parts of the characters were played by men; the female parts were played by men or boys
- Actors were considered “low” men, and were looked upon as being inferior to the playwrights



Richard Burbage, son of James Burbage



Edward Alleyn



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Middle Years

- Shakespeare became a member of an acting troupe sometime in the late 1580's; most likely the Queen's Men as part of the traveling group of players
- He likely was an actor playing small parts as part of the Queen's Men; writing came later
- The playwrights at this time were composed of a series of University educated men who provided plays adapted from earlier sources or the classics and included:
  - ✓ Christopher Marlowe
  - ✓ Thomas Watson
  - ✓ Thomas Lodge
  - ✓ George Peele
  - ✓ Thomas Nashe
  - ✓ Robert Greene
- Shakespeare, not University educated, was considered an upstart and was referred to as "Shake Scene"
- His first successful plays were the *Henry VI* series, and they caused the University playwrights to become concerned about the upstart player



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The Middle Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- By 1595, most of these University playwrights had died, leaving Shake Scene as the remaining playwright in England of any stature
- Robert Greene, prior to his death, wrote a scathing diatribe against actors who considered themselves playwrights: “Yes trust them not; for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tiger’s heart wrapped in a player’s hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shakescene in a country.”
- Greene is alluding to Shakespeare, who started out as an actor, became a playwright while continuing to act, wrote the lines “O tiger’s heart wrapped in a woman’s hide” in the play *Henry VI*, was a *Johannes Factotum* (Jack of all trades), and a Shake Scene
- Shakes Scene thrived; Robert Greene is best known for his invective against Shakespeare

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- Greene was educated at both Cambridge and Oxford, and obtained a double Master's Degree
- He abandoned his wife, Doll, and his young child and ran off to London to write poetry and plays. He later took up with a mistress named Em Ball
- He was a braggart, drunk, thief, fighter, whoremonger, cardsharp, corpulent and bully
- He died alone, having been abandoned by his London associates, after overindulging in pickled herring and Rhenish wine
- His funeral expenses were paid for by a shoemaker and his wife



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- He was transformed by Shakespeare into one of his finest comic creations
- “No, good my lord, banish Petro, banish Bardolph,/ banish Poins, but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind/ Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff,/ and therefore more valiant, being as he is old Jack/ Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry’s company, banish/ not him thy Harry’s company—banish plump Jack,/ and banish all the world” (I Henry 2.4.474-480).
- It is no coincidence that Greene’s wife was named Doll, just as Falstaff’s mistress is named Doll Tearsheet, and that he frequented a tavern run by Mistress Quickly. Greene, like Falstaff, had a mistress



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Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

## What were Shakespeare's Sources?

- Shakespeare probably obtained books from his friend from Stratford, Richard Field, who was a printer in London
- Field printed a number of famous books and likely possessed many others
- Shakespeare's primary sources were:
  - ✓ *Plutarch's Lives*
  - ✓ *The Holinshed Chronicles*
  - ✓ *A Mirror for Magistrates*
  - ✓ *Ovid's Metamorphoses*
  - ✓ *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York*
  - ✓ *Historia regum Britanniae*
  - ✓ *Montaigne's Essays*
  - ✓ *Tamburlaine* by Christopher Marlowe



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

What were Shakespeare's Sources?

- *Plutarch's Lives* influenced the following plays:
  - ✓ *Julius Caesar*
  - ✓ *Coriolanus*
  - ✓ *Troilus and Cressida* (as did Chaucer's poem)
  - ✓ *Antony and Cleopatra*



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

What were Shakespeare's Sources?

- *The Holinshed Chronicles* influenced the following plays:
  - ✓ *Henry VI*
  - ✓ *Richard II*
  - ✓ *Richard III*
  - ✓ *Henry IV*
  - ✓ *King John*
  - ✓ *Henry V*
  - ✓ *Macbeth*



Patrick Stuart as John of Gaunt in *Richard II*

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### What were Shakespeare's Sources?

- Ovid influenced the following plays and poems:
  - ✓ *Titus Andronicus*
  - ✓ *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
  - ✓ *A Winter's Tale*
  - ✓ "Venus and Adonis"
  - ✓ "The Rape of Lucrece"
  - ✓ The Sonnets



Dame Judith Dench as Titania with Bottom

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- By the early 1590's, Shakespeare was successfully acting, writing plays and managing the money for the Queen's Men
- The sonnets were begun around this time (there are 154 sonnets). One of the themes of the sonnets was that of the young man whom the poet urges to become married and reproduce his striking features in a child
- The young man is thought to have been Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton
- The sonnets suggest a romantic interest between the Earl and Shakespeare
- The famous sonnet XVIII may have been written to the Earl, not a woman: "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"





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The Middle Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- Another theme of the sonnets is that of the “Dark Lady,” who is Shakespeare’s mistress
- Not all of the poems written to the dark lady are complimentary, as sonnet 130 attests:  
“My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;/ Coral is far more red than her lips’ red:/ If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;/ If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.”



- It is believed that Mary Fitton, who was maid of honour to the Queen, was Shakespeare’s “Dark Lady”
- Shakespeare accuses his mistress of being unfaithful to him, possibly with the Earl of Southampton

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The Middle Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- As Shakespeare became more successful, he revived a request for a coat of arms to be granted to the family, a request his father first made in 1575-6
- The granting of a coat of arms was seen as a step towards respectability, a sign of being a gentleman
- On October 20, 1596, William Shakespeare was granted permission to display his coat of arms
- The upstart crow, Shake Scene, was now a gentleman
- The motto on the coat of arms reads “Not without Right,” which may have been a way of trying to compensate for his country upbringing



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The Middle Years

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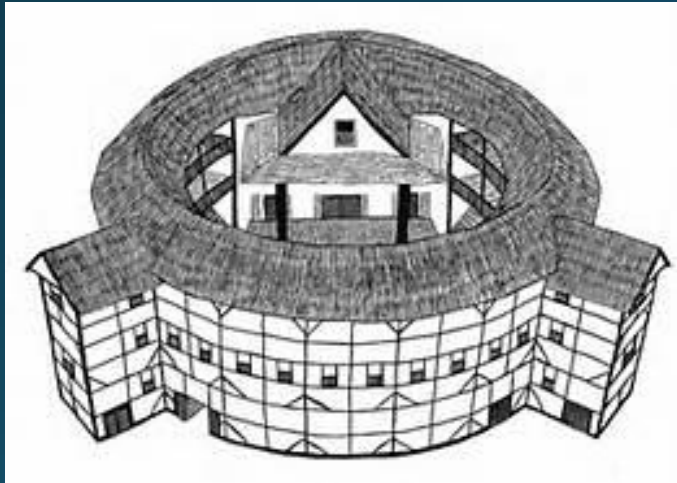
- In 1594, the plague again struck London (it did so with regularity) and the theatres closed
- Lord Chamberlain's Men survived, while many other companies ceased to perform
- Shakespeare was made a shareholder of the company, along with John Heminges, Augustine Philips, George Bryan, Thomas Pope and Richard Burbage
- In 1598, the lease for the Theatre, held by Giles Allen, expired. Attempts to renegotiate the lease were unsuccessful
- On December 28, 1598, the actors and shareholders of the Theatre, under cover of darkness, disassembled the Theatre and ported the building materials across the Thames, and constructed a new theatre
- The Globe Theatre, with its motto "The whole world plays the actor" opened in June, 1599. The first play performed at the Globe was *Julius Caesar*

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- William Shakespeare became a part owner of the Globe (one-tenth share), in addition to being a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Later Years

- William Shakespeare wrote what many consider to be his best plays in the period from 1599 – 1613
- His period of greatest creativity began with the writing of *Hamlet*
- At the time of the composition of *Hamlet*, several notable events occurred:
  - ✓ His son, Hamnet, died in 1596
  - ✓ His father, John, died in 1601
  - ✓ The Earl of Essex instituted an unsuccessful campaign to put down an uprising in Ireland, and returned to England; he later led a revolt against the Queen and was publicly executed in 1601
  - ✓ Shakespeare's patron, young man of the sonnets, and possible lover, the Earl of Southampton, was involved with Essex in the Irish campaign and may have been implicated in the plot against the Queen; he was later pardoned but did not regain royal favor

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex



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The Later Years

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- Each of these events are thought to have played a part in the writing of the play, *Hamlet*
- The play, of course, is marked by the death of a father and the reaction of the son to that death
- Stephen Greenblatt speculates that not only did the death of Hamnet and John Shakespeare play a role in the composition of the play, but that John Shakespeare's recusancy also played a part in the emotional complexity of the play
- Greenblatt speculates that John Shakespeare wrote a "spiritual testament" which reaffirmed his Roman Catholic origins and asked his son to pray for his deliverance from Purgatory
- At the time of John Shakespeare's death, the notion of Purgatory had been removed from Protestant religious belief, as had the notion of mourning for the souls of the departed
- Shakespeare would have been conflicted by his father's request, and that sense of conflict is evident in the play

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## The Later Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- Elizabeth I died in 1603, and James I became the King of Scotland and England
- The Lord Chamberlain's Men became the King's Men and performed in court 19 times in 1603 – 4
- Flush with success from the plays and profits from the theatre and the playing company, Shakespeare bought New Place in Stratford in 1597 and made improvements to the house and grounds in 1602 and 1605
- He continued to buy properties in and around Stratford during this period, and the resulting property transactions are some of the only documented records we have of Shakespeare's life (baptismal records and will are the exceptions)
- In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare has Banquo allude to the fact that his descendant (James I) will inherit the throne



King James I

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### The Later Years

- Shakespeare retired from the stage in 1610 and moved back to Stratford
- At the time of his retirement, he was a successful actor (his last role was the ghost in *Hamlet*), playwright, theatre owner, and landed gentleman in Stratford
- Many believe that *The Tempest* was a send-off, a final act to his theatrical career
- “But this rough magic/I here abjure, and, when I have required/Some heavenly music, which even now I do,/ To work mine end upon their senses that/ This airy charm is for, I’ll break my staff,/ Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,/ And deeper than did ever plummet sound/ I’ll drown my book.”



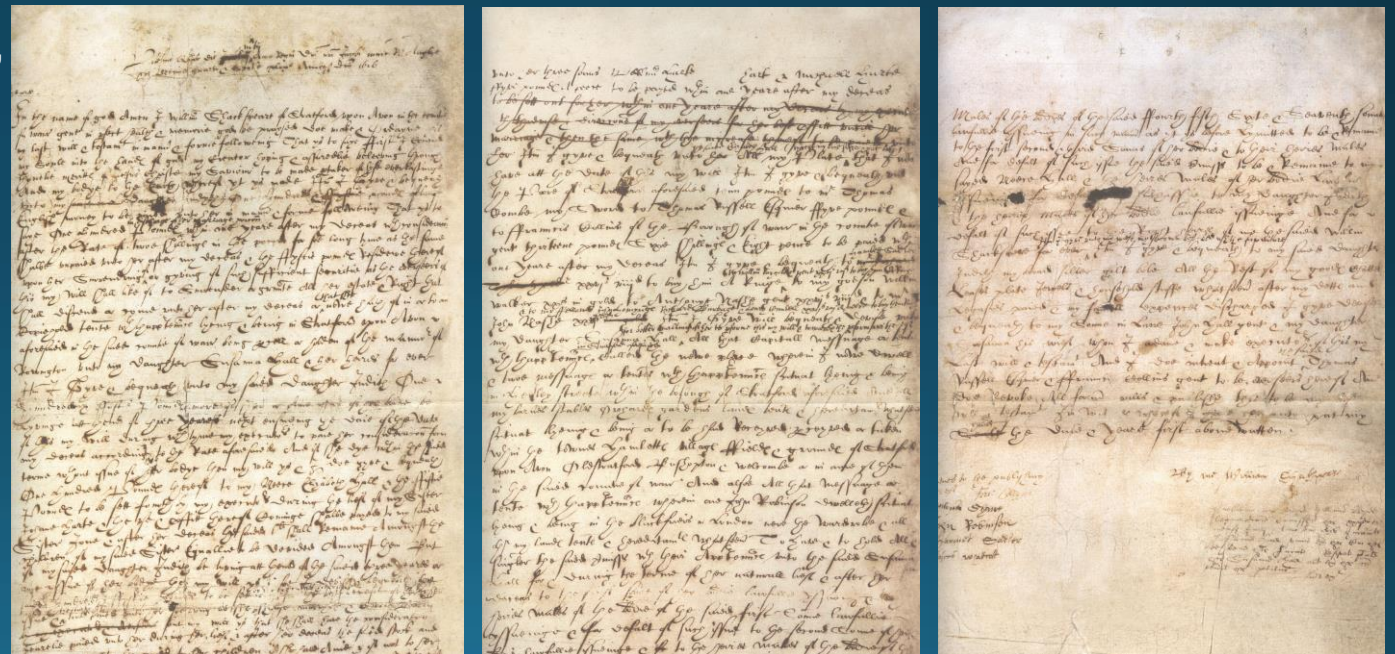


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## The Later Years

- Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 at the age of 52; his dates of birth and death are the same
- His last will left virtually his entire estate to his daughter Susanna and her husband, Doctor John Hall
- He left his wife his “second best bed”



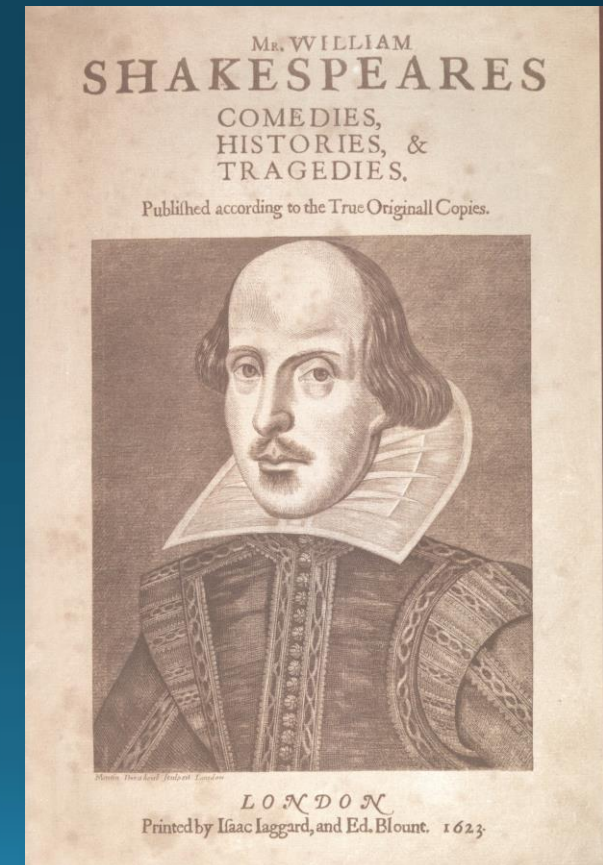
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The Later Years

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- In 1623, two of his colleagues, John Heminges and Henry Condell published a collection of his plays, known as The First Folio, dedicated to William Herbert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Pembroke and Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery
- In all, thirty-six of the plays are contained in the First Folio
- The Lake County Discovery Museum is hosting one of the remaining copies of the First Folio from 2/3/16 through 2/28/16; the edition is a loan from the Folger Shakespeare Library
- Details of the exhibit can be viewed at:  
<http://www.lcfpd.org/museum/first-folio/>



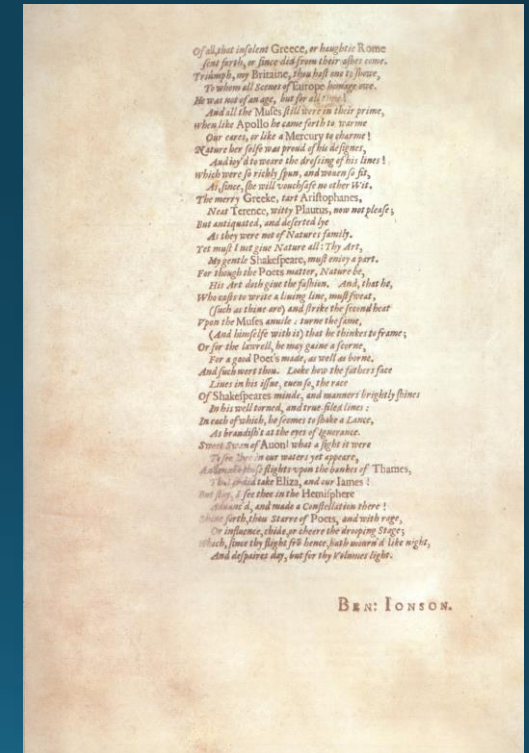
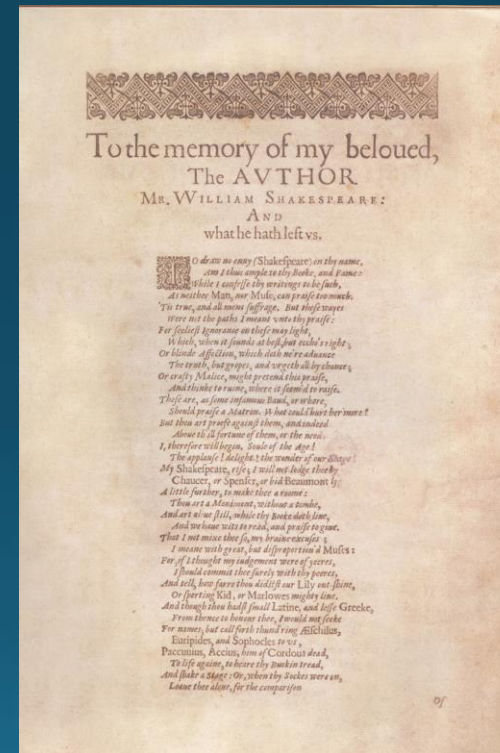
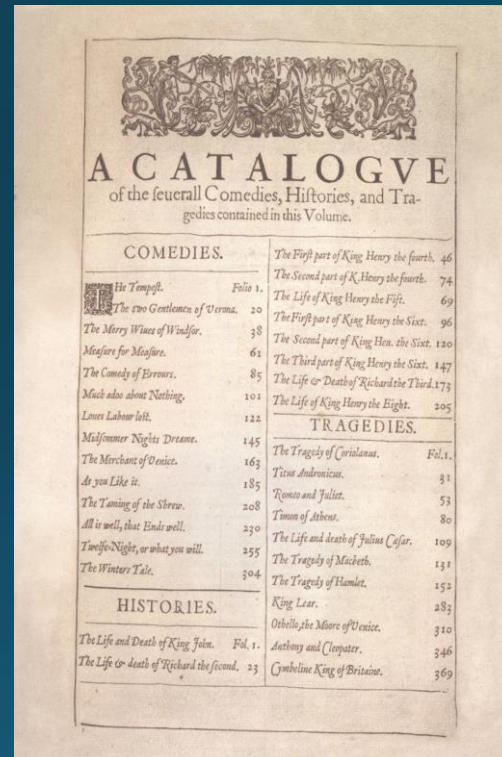
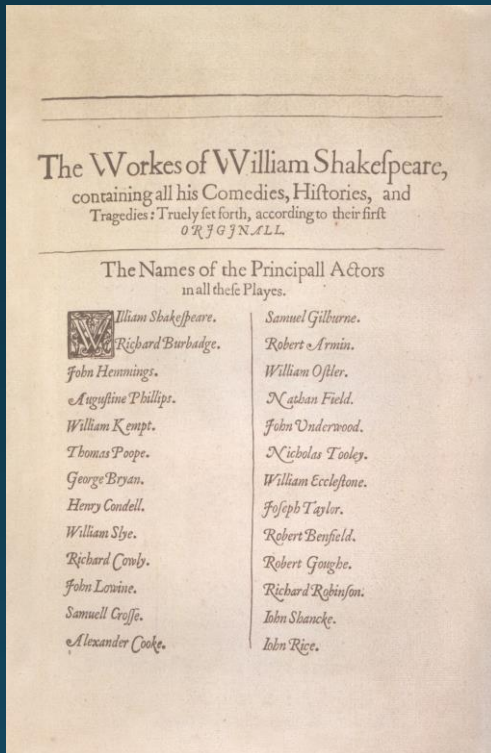


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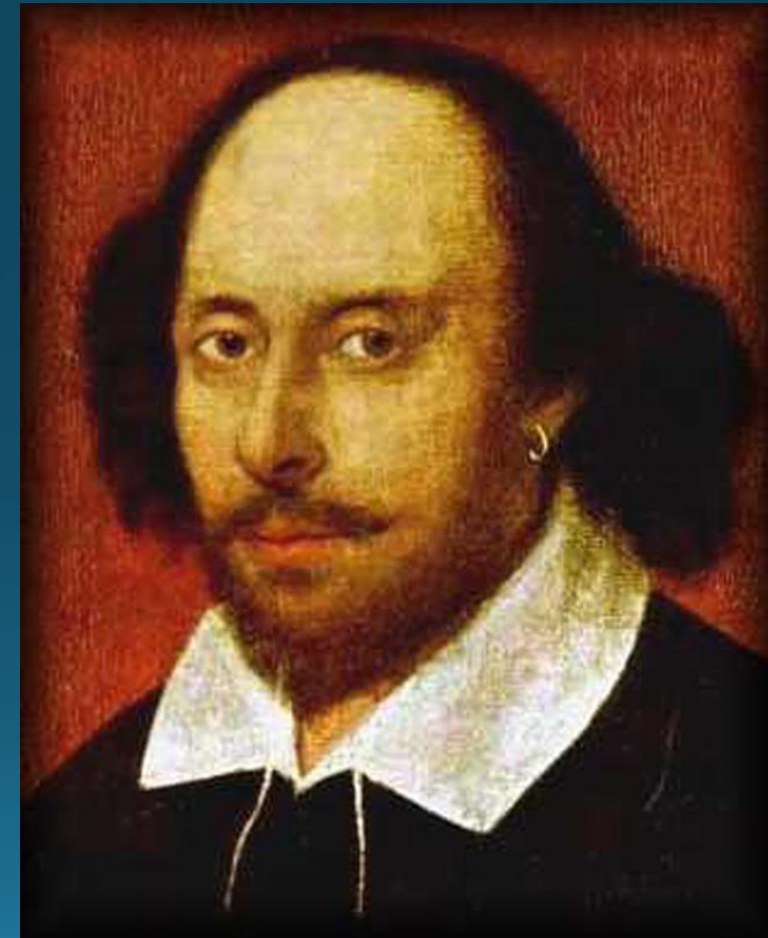
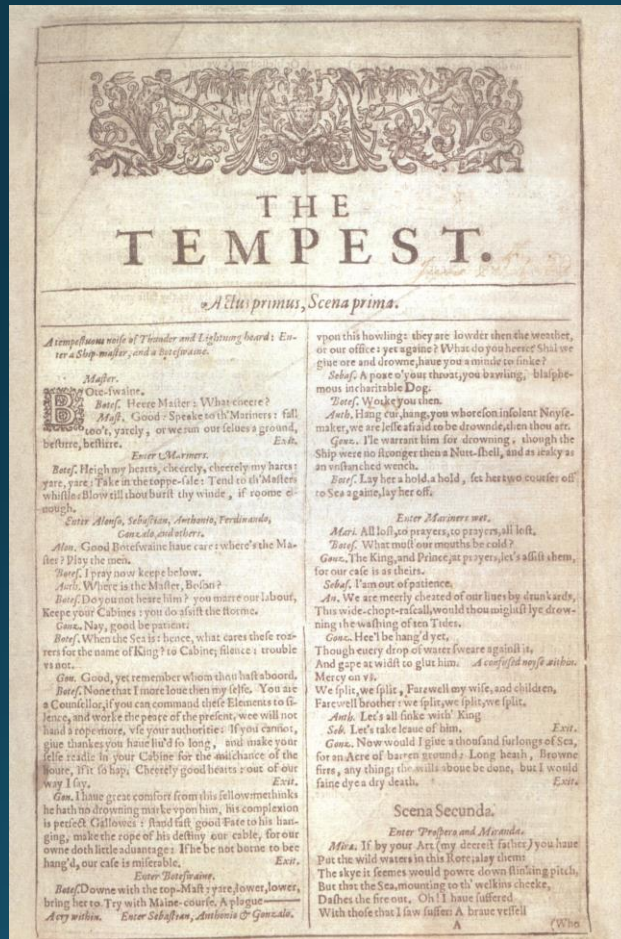
### The Later Years

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Disputed Authorship

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There are a number of theories which claim that Shakespeare did not write the plays. Among those listed as possible authors are three worth mentioning:

- Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford
- Francis Bacon
- Cristopher Marlowe

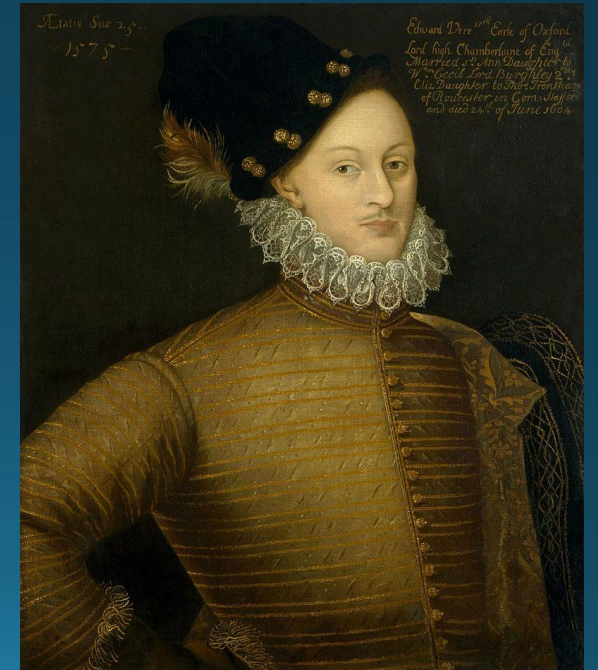
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## Disputed Authorship

Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford

- De Vere was bright, ambitious, well-traveled, and a favourite of the Queen until he impregnated one of her maids of honour
- He died in 1604, and a number of the plays (13) were written after his death
- Believers in de Vere's authorship hold that the plays were written before he died and released after his death
- They cannot account for the numerous topical references to events that occurred after 1604, and that are mentioned in the plays

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant



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Disputed Authorship

Christopher Marlowe

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

- Marlowe was a spy for the Queen and was killed in a tavern brawl in 1593
- Until recently, it was not known that his killers were also spies; Marlowe may have been assassinated for his unorthodox political, religious, and sexual views
- The majority of Shakespeare's plays were written after his death
- Believers in Marlowe's authorship maintain that he was not killed and that his death was faked



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Disputed Authorship

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

### Francis Bacon

- Francis Bacon was a philosopher, politician, jurist and scientist
- He was a brilliant man, but was unprincipled
- He was a member of Elizabeth's court as well as that of James I
- Those who believe in Bacon's authorship claim that Shakespeare was not sufficiently bright to write the plays, nor did he have experience in the life of the court to write the History plays and Tragedies.
- Bacon, while brilliant, does not seem to possess the creativity needed to write poetry and plays





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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

Quiz – What do the following words or phrases mean?

- Get thee to a nunnery?  
Whorehouse
- Accost?  
Belch
- Bauble?  
Penis
- Beard, bottom grass?  
Female pudenda
- Cliff?  
Female breast
- Can you not conceive?  
Have sexual relations
- Focative case?  
Intercourse
- Juggle?  
Have intercourse
- Infinite malady?  
Venereal disease

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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

Quiz – What do the following words or phrases mean?

- Beast with two backs?  
**Intercourse**
- Jakes?  
**Bathroom**
- Mutton?  
**Prostitute**
- The Netherlands?  
**Female pudenda**
- Pox?  
**Venereal disease**
- Hobby Horse?  
**Mistress**
- Punk?  
**Prostitute**
- Sword, Staff, Thistle, Tail, Thorn?  
**Penis**

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Legacy

## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

Shakespeare is the greatest author in the English Language

He has been translated into many different languages, including Klingon



David Warner as Chancellor Gorkon in  
*The Undiscovered Country*



Christopher Plummer as General Chang  
"Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war"  
In *The Undiscovered Country*

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Legacy

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

## Top Ten Reasons for Not Liking Shakespeare

10. Who cares about a guy who died 400 years ago?
9. He doesn't tweet or use Facebook
8. I like his fishing reels better
7. He didn't even write the damn plays!
6. He hasn't been on Letterman, Conan or Jimmy Fallon (Maybe Jay Leno would like him)



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Legacy

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

## Top Ten Reasons for Not Liking Shakespeare

5. Who cares about a bunch of dead British Kings anyway?
4. Hamlet. I said omelet!
3. Queen Elizabeth, “Like a Virgin” was just a song, not a way of life
2. To pee or not to pee is a better question when you’ve had too many beers
1. It’s not even in English!

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Legacy

Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

Shakespeare is the greatest author in the English Language

As Ben Jonson wrote in “**To the Memory of My Beloved, the Author, Mr. William *Shakespeare***” (1618):

“Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show  
To whom all Scenes of Europe homage owe.

**He was not of an age, but for all time!**

And all the muses still were in their prime,  
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm  
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!”



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## Why Shakespeare is Still Relevant

Fremont Public Library – Great Books Reading Group <http://www.fremontgreatbooks.org/>

| Month     | Meeting  | Title                             | Author                |
|-----------|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| January   | 1/30/16  | <i>The Call of the Wild</i>       | Jack London           |
| February  | 2/27/16  | <i>A Room with a View</i>         | E.M. Forster          |
| March     | 3/26/16  | <i>Julius Caesar</i>              | Plutarch, Shakespeare |
| April     | 4/30/16  | <i>Leaves of Grass</i>            | Walt Whitman          |
| May       | 5/28/16  | <i>As I Lay Dying</i>             | William Faulkner      |
| June      | 6/25/16  | <i>The Accidental Tourist</i>     | Anne Tyler            |
| July      | 7/30/16  | <i>The Misanthrope</i>            | Moliere               |
| August    | 8/27/16  | <i>I, Robot</i>                   | Isaac Asimov          |
| September | 9/24/16  | <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i>  | Margery Kempe         |
| October   | 10/22/16 | <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> | Oscar Wilde           |
| November  | 11/19/16 | <i>Goodbye to All That</i>        | Robert Graves         |
| December  | 12/17/16 | <i>Little Women</i>               | Louisa May Alcott     |