Demonstrates that William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon really did write the plays and poems attributed to him via a literary forensics case that puts all other authorship theories to rest.

Can Shakespeare help us with the question of how to live? Re-Humanising Shakespeare argues that although Shakespeare himself contributed to the uncertainties of modern living, his work can still serve as a source of existential wisdom and guidance. The book examines through a wide range of Shakespeare’s plays the conditions under which human beings flourish or perish. Love, ethics, emotion, vulnerability and humility are amongst the topics discussed as part of the book’s argument that Shakespeare is continually at pains to reclaim the human from its complete liquefaction. Given the range and originality of its approach, Re-Humanising Shakespeare will make provocative reading for all those interested in Shakespeare, ethics and questions of literary value.

Now in its third edition, Four Essays on the Shakespeare Authorship Question is an introduction to the authorship issue. The first essay examines the evidence for why William Shakspere, the man from Stratford, cannot have been William Shakespeare, the author of the Works. The second essay offers 48 arguments for why Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, was Shakespeare. The third essay explores the secret identity of Edward de Vere and explains why the timeless works of the aristocratic courtier, poet and playwright were attributed to the journeyman actor and businessman from Stratford, not just during de Vere’s life, but for three centuries after his death. These essays draw upon the research and insights of many authors who have been investigating the authorship question since 1859, including Charles Wisner Barrell, Charlton and Dorothy Ogburn, Hank Whittemore, Mark Twain, John Thomas Looney, Charlton Ogburn, Jr., Elisabeth Sears, Paul Streitz, John Hamill and others. Four Essays on the Shakespeare Authorship Question is both a primer on the authorship question and a sophisticated treatise on the Prince Tudor theory. In teasing out the evidence for de Vere’s true relationship to Queen Elizabeth, A’Dair offers a new theory on his parentage. In postulating a romantic love relationship between de Vere
and his son, Henry Wriothesley, the Third Earl of Southampton, A’Dair may have illuminated the most shocking truth of all about the greatest poet in the English language.

Virtuoso presentation of available evidence of the Bard’s life. "Written with wit and panache, this erudite tome dismantles the arguments claiming that someone other than Shakespeare wrote his plays." — Publishers Weekly.

The Rational Shakespeare: Peter Ramus, Edward de Vere, and the Question of Authorship examines William Shakespeare’s rationality from a Ramist perspective, linking that examination to the leading intellectuals of late humanism, and extending those links to the life of Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. The application to Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets of a game-theoretic hermeneutic, an interpretive approach that Ramism suggests but ultimately evades, strengthens these connections in further supporting the Oxfordian answer to the question of Shakespearean authorship.

The last two decades have witnessed a profound change in the way we receive the literary texts of early modern England. One could call this a move from ‘text’ to ‘culture’. Put briefly, earlier critics tended to focus on literary texts, strictly conceived: plays, poems, prose fictions, essays. Since the mid-1980s, however, it has been just as likely for critics to speak of the ‘culture’ of early modern England, even when they do so in conjunction with analysis of literary texts. This ‘cultural turn’ has clearly enriched the way in which we read the texts of early modern England, but the interdisciplinary practices involved have frequently led critics to make claims about materials and about the ‘culture’ these materials appear to embody that exceed those materials’ representativeness. Shakespeare and the Question of Culture addresses the central issue of ‘culture’ in early modern studies through both literary history and disciplinary critique. Douglas Bruster argues that the ‘culture’ literary critiques investigate through the works of Shakespeare and other writers is largely a literary culture, and he examines what this necessary limitation of the scope of ‘cultural studies’ means for the discipline of early modern studies.

It is long overdue that someone took a closer look at the brilliant Mary Sidney. I have a suspicion that Mary Sidney’s life, and especially her dedication to the English language after her brother’s death, may throw important light on the mysterious authorship of the Shakespeare plays and poems. —Mark Rylance Actor; Artistic Director of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, 1996–2006; Chairman of the Shakespearean Authorship Trust For more than two hundred years, a growing number of researchers have questioned whether the man named William Shakespeare actually wrote the works attributed to him. There is no paper trail for William Shakespeare—no record that he was ever paid for writing, nothing in his handwriting but a few signatures on legal documents, no evidence of his presence in the royal court except as an actor in his later years, no confirmation of his involvement in the literary circles of the time. With so little information about this man—and even less evidence connecting him to the plays and sonnets—what can and what can’t we assume about the author of the greatest works of the English language? For the first time, Robin P. Williams presents an in-depth inquiry into the possibility that Mary Sidney Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke, wrote the works attributed to the man named William Shakespeare. As well educated as Queen Elizabeth I, this woman was at the forefront of the literary movement in England, yet not allowed to write for the public stage. But that’s just the beginning . . . The first question I am asked by curious freshmen in my Shakespeare course is always, “Who wrote these plays anyway?” Now, because of Robin Williams’ rigorous scholarship and artful sleuthing, Mary Sidney Herbert will forever have to be mentioned as a possible author of the Shakespeare canon. Sweet Swan of Avon doesn’t pretend to put the matter to rest, but simply shows how completely reasonable the authorship controversy is, and how the idea of a female playwright surprisingly answers more Shakespearean conundrums than it creates —Cynthia Lee Katona Professor of Shakespeare and Women’s Studies, Ohlone College; Author of Book Savvy
This book brings together a selection of essays on the reception and dissemination of Shakespeare's plays in England and beyond from the 17th century to the present. Written from the perspective of a nation or cluster of nations in which Shakespeare has been used either to reflect, legitimize or challenge different versions of authoritarian rule, each of the chapters offers a picture of Shakespeare as an unwitting commentator on some of the most significant and unsettling political events in Europe and elsewhere. Illustrating and analyzing changing attitudes to Shakespeare and his work in various tyrannical and post-tyrannical contexts in both Western and Eastern Europe, North Africa and South America, the volume provides insights into issues like the role of censorship and self-censorship in the revision and production of Shakespearean material; institutional controls on the dissemination and publication of Shakespeare’s work; assumptions and techniques in the staging of his plays; state intervention in the elaboration of a Shakespeare “canon”; the role of Shakespeare in the construction of identity under tyranny; and the pertinence or otherwise of the subversion/containment paradigm following events such as the collapse of communism and the so-called “Arab Spring”.

Think you know Shakespeare? Think again . . . Was a real skull used in the first performance of Hamlet? Were Shakespeare’s plays Elizabethan blockbusters? How much do we really know about the playwright’s life? And what of his notorious relationship with his wife? Exploring and exploding 30 popular myths about the great playwright, this illuminating new book evaluates all the evidence to show how historical material—or its absence—can be interpreted and misinterpreted, and what this reveals about our own personal investment in the stories we tell.

First Published in 1967. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

Explores the challenges of maintaining bonds, living up to ideals, and fulfilling desire in Shakespeare’s plays. In Thinking About Shakespeare, Kay Stockholder reveals the rich inner lives of some of Shakespeare’s most enigmatic characters and the ways in which their emotions and actions shape and are shaped by the social and political world around them. In addressing all genres in the Shakespeare canon, the authors explore the possibility of people being constant to each other in many different kinds of relationships: those of lovers, kings and subjects, friends, and business partners. While some bonds are irrevocably broken, many are reaffirmed. In all cases, the authors offer insight into what drives Shakespeare’s characters to do what they do, what draws them together or pulls them apart, and the extent to which bonds can ever be eternal. Ultimately, the most durable bond may be between the playwright and the audience, whereby the playwright pleases and the audience approves. The book takes an in-depth look at a dozen of The Bard’s best-loved works, including A Midsummer Night’s Dream; Romeo and Juliet; The Merchant of Venice; Richard II; Henry IV, Part I; Hamlet; Troilus and Cressida; Othello; Macbeth; King Lear; Antony and Cleopatra; and The Tempest. It also provides an epilogue titled: Prospero and Shakespeare. Written in a style accessible for all levels Discusses 12 plays, making it a comprehensive study of Shakespeare’s work Covers every genre of The Bard’s work, giving readers a full sense of Shakespeare’s art/thought over the course of his oeuvre Provides a solid overall sense of each play and the major characters/plot lines in them Providing new and sometimes unconventional and provocative ways to think about characters that have had a long critical heritage. Thinking About Shakespeare is an enlightening read that is perfect for scholars, and ideal for any level of student studying one of history’s greatest storytellers.

The theoretical ferment which has affected literary studies over the last decade has called into question traditional ways of thinking about, classifying and interpreting texts. Shakespeare has been not just the focus of a variety of divergent critical movements within recent years, but also increasingly the locus of emerging debates within, and with, theory itself. This collection of essays, written by distinguished and powerful critics in the fields of literary theory and Shakespeare studies, is intended both for those interested in Shakespeare and for those interested more generally in the emerging debates within contemporary criticism and theory.
Macbeth is universally recognized as Shakespeare's great drama of the absolute and fatal frustration brought on by the pangs of conscience. In a book of striking originality and uncommon insight, Ned Lukacher explores a previously undiscovered story—the role of Shakespeare himself in the history of conscience. Focusing on key moments in that history, Daemonic Figures traces the influence of Shakespeare's works on Heidegger's and Freud's interpretations of conscience.

In Revising Shakespeare Grace Ioppolo addresses the question of Shakespeare's integrity. Through analysis of variant texts spanning the history of the plays, she arrives at an interpretation of Shakespeare as author and reviser. Ioppolo stars with the physical text. As textual studies of King Lear have shown, the text of Shakespeare is not as given. The text is nearly always a revision of another text. Critics can no longer evaluate plots, structure, and themes, nor can scholars debate what constitutes (or how to establish) a copy-text that stands as the most authoritative version of a Shakespeare play, without reconsidering the implications of revision for traditional and modern interpretations.

Examines current debates about the actual authors of Shakespeare's plays, citing challenges from famous historical figures while discussing the sources of modern doubts and the author's own beliefs.

Excerpt from Is It Shakespeare?: The Great Question of Elizabethan Literature, Answered in the Light of New Revelations and Important Contemporary Evidence Hitherto Unnoticed

Who knows not how difficult it always is to get people to alter their preconceived ideas or their traditional beliefs? But whenever sufficient evidence has been discovered in support of a change of current opinion, then it is, I think, just as well that some one should collect it and present it to the public, making, at the same time, such additions from his own researches as may help to settle the question. That is my excuse for this volume. If people were afraid to offer rebutting evidence because all the leading literary authorities had declared that there was no evidence against them that was not irrational, we should make very slow progress in research.
Why do Shakespeare and the English Bible seem to have an inherent relationship with each other? How have these two monumental traditions in the history of the book functioned as mutually reinforcing sources of cultural authority? How do material books and related reading practices serve as specific sites of intersection between these two textual traditions? This collection makes a significant intervention in our understanding of Shakespeare, the Bible, and the role of textual materiality in the construction of cultural authority. Departing from conventional source study, it questions the often naturalized links between the Shakespearean and biblical corpora, examining instead the historically contingent ways these links have been forged. The volume brings together leading scholars in Shakespeare, book history, and the Bible as literature, whose essays converge on the question of Scripture as source versus Scripture as process—whether that scripture is biblical or Shakespearean—and in turn explore themes such as cultural authority, pedagogy, secularism, textual scholarship, and the materiality of texts. Covering an historical span from Shakespeare’s post-Reformation era to present-day Northern Ireland, the volume uncovers how Shakespeare and the Bible’s intertwined histories illuminate the enduring tensions between materiality and transcendence in the history of the book.

A TIMES BOOK OF THE YEAR 2019 ‘The best introduction to the plays I’ve read, perhaps the best book on Shakespeare, full stop’ Alex Preston, Observer ‘It makes you impatient to see or re-read the plays at once’ Hilary Mantel A genius and prophet whose timeless works encapsulate the human condition like no others. A writer who surpassed his contemporaries in vision, originality and literary mastery. Who wrote like an angel, putting it all so much better than anyone else. Is this Shakespeare? Well, sort of. But it doesn’t really tell us the whole truth. So much of what we say about Shakespeare is either not true, or just not relevant, deflecting us from investigating the challenges of his inconsistencies and flaws. This electrifying new book thrives on revealing, not resolving, the ambiguities of Shakespeare’s plays and their changing topicality. It introduces an intellectually, theatrically and ethically exciting writer who engages with intersectionality as much as with Ovid, with economics as much as poetry; who writes in strikingly modern ways about individual agency, privacy, politics, celebrity and sex. It takes us into a world of politicking and copy-cats, as we watch him emulating the blockbusters of Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd, the Spielberg and Tarantino of their day; flirting with and skirtming round the cut-throat issues of succession politics, religious upheaval and technological change. The Shakespeare in this book poses awkward questions rather than offering bland answers, always implicating us in working out what it might mean. This is Shakespeare. And he needs your attention.
This lively Companion examines the films adapted from, and inspired by, Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare's intertwined love polygons begin to get complicated from the start—Demetrius and Lysander both want Hermia but she only has eyes for Lysander. Bad news is, Hermia's father wants Demetrius for a son-in-law. On the outside is Helena, whose unreturned love burns hot for Demetrius. Hermia and Lysander plan to flee from the city under cover of darkness but are pursued by an enraged Demetrius (who is himself pursued by an enraptured Helena). In the forest, unbeknownst to the mortals, Oberon and Titania (King and Queen of the faeries) are having a spat over a servant boy. The plot twists up when Oberon's head mischief-maker, Puck, runs loose with a flower which causes people to fall in love with the first thing they see upon waking. Throw in a group of labourers preparing a play for the Duke's wedding (one of whom is given a donkey's head and Titania for a lover by Puck) and the complications become fantastically funny.

This handbook brings together 54 essays by scholars from all parts of the world. It offers a fresh and comprehensive understanding of Shakespeare tragedies as both works of literature and as performance texts, written by a playwright who was himself an experienced actor.

A unique look at the social and religious foundations of the tragic genre. Liebler asks whether it is possible to regard tragic heroes such as Lear and Coriolanus as 'sacrificial victims of the prevailing social order'. Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy is a unique look at the social and religious foundations of the tragic genre. Naomi Liebler asks whether it is possible to regard tragic heroes such as Coriolanus and King Lear as 'sacrificial victims of the prevailing social order'. A fascinating examination of Shakespearean tragedy, this extraordinary book will provoke excitement and controversy alike.

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