



The Truth Will Out

Unmasking the
Real Shakespeare

"remarkable,
intriguing,
and provocative ...
It may prove to
be a landmark book
of genuine world -
wide importance."

*Professor John Spiers,
University of Glamorgan*

Brenda James *with*
Professor W. D. Rubinstein

The Truth Will Out: Unmasking the Real Shakespeare

Brenda James and William Rubinstein

Media Pack

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The story of one of the most important
literary discoveries of recent times,
The Truth Will Out reveals
the identity of the secretive man who wrote
the greatest works in English literature.

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Brenda James's truly incredible discovery has, at a stroke, solved comprehensively and categorically all the mysteries and puzzles surrounding the world's greatest literary genius.

The Discovery

When scholar and researcher Brenda James cracked the secret of the strange Dedication to Shakespeare's Sonnets, she was astonished to find, hidden in the text, what appeared to be the name of the man who wrote the works of Shakespeare. A leading Elizabethan figure, he has never before been considered a Shakespeare authorial candidate.

Intrigued, but needing more evidence, she followed the trail. One remarkable discovery led to another, most based on previously unknown primary documentary evidence. Viewing all the evidence together, we can confidently state that, for more than one hundred years, academic research has been galloping full cry ... in the wrong direction.

The First Supporter

Her research almost complete and the first draft of her book written, an article in *History Today* caught Brenda's attention. It was written by Professor William Rubinstein, an influential figure in the authorship debate and an Associate of The Shakespeare Authorship Trust. In it he confirmed his position as an agnostic in the debate, unconvinced by any of the known candidates.

Brenda approached Professor Rubinstein to discuss this new candidate. He was so totally convinced that he agreed to revise and co-author the book, bringing his substantial expertise to the work.

The structure of the book

The Truth Will Out reveals the most compelling Authorship candidate to date. With a foreword by Mark Rylance, Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe and Chairman of The Shakespeare Authorship Trust, it introduces an exciting new line of investigation.

Beginning with an overview of the Authorship debate, it then reveals completely new documentary evidence, illuminating the plays and the life of the true, unexpected and secretive author.

Further new evidence is revealed at the end of the biography and some unexpected sources for the plays are revealed.

Who wrote the works of Shakespeare?

William Shakespeare is one of the most elusive and mysterious men in history. Virtually everything known about the facts of his life seems to belie the extraordinary genius of "his" plays and poems.

Hundreds of historians, researchers, and archivists have pored over thousands of Elizabethan and Jacobean documents to discover something - anything - about Shakespeare the man, and especially something - anything - about Shakespeare the writer. Despite all their efforts, about Shakespeare, the man, they have found little and, about Shakespeare the writer, nothing at all.

As a result, over the past century and a half, many intelligent and perceptive people have come to doubt that William Shakespeare could conceivably have written the plays and poems attributed to him. More recently some scholars and researchers have come to the conclusion that Shakespeare was a 'front man' or 'smoke screen' for the true author of the works.

The Reasons for Doubting Shakespeare as the Author:

- Although educated at school, he was not the profoundly learned man, able to read many languages and having knowledge of the political, diplomatic and Court environment, demonstrated in the plays.
- There is no evidence that he travelled to Europe – so how did he know all the details of European cities used as settings for some of the plays?
- His life doesn't mesh with the influences at work in the plays.
- He would not have had access to some of the documentation used for the plays, which was either restricted or unavailable in Britain at the time.
- There are no manuscripts or evidence of his writing career in any of the family documents. In fact, nothing written by him survives except 6 signatures on legal documents.
- The contemporary documents which mention Shakespeare the actor make no reference to his writing.
- Being a penniless actor for much of his early life, he would not have had the time, congenial surroundings, materials, etc. needed for writing the Plays.
- There was absolutely no connection between the surviving Shakespeare family and the production of the First Folio of the works.

A variety of other Authorship Candidates (as they are known) have been vigorously proposed*. However, the true author of the plays of William Shakespeare has completely escaped detection - until now.

* For more information on the candidates or the history of the debate, please contact Elie Ball

Evidence Supporting the New Candidate

1. The Tower Notebook

- Brenda discovered a notebook, written by the new candidate, which contains background notes to the Coronation scene in Henry VIII.
- It was written 11 years before the play was first performed.

2. Dates

- The course of his life matches up at every point, without exception, with the evolution of "Shakespeare's" works.
- There is a complete overlap between the change from comedy to tragedy within the plays, and the sudden tragically-changed circumstances in this candidate's life.

3. Education and Experience

- He was a deeply learned man. An expert linguist with immediate access to an extensive library of works in many languages; used as the sources of the plays.
- There is a complete match between the multi-faceted academic knowledge displayed in the Works and his educational background.
- He travelled for four years on the Continent, visiting the places used as settings for the plays and having access to much of the source material used in the plays - unavailable in Britain at the time.
- He was politically active.
- He was a Courtier who maintained a constant interest in Court affairs and personnel.

4. Access to restricted information

- As an Officer in the second London Virginia Company, he would have seen the "Strachey Letter", kept confidential until 1625. This letter concerns the shipwreck off Bermuda, which is central to The Tempest.
- Shakespeare would not have had access to this letter.

5. Connections

- Shakespeare's mother was a distant relative, so he was probably introduced to William Shakespeare through this connection.
- He was related by marriage to Francis Bacon.
- He was an extremely close friend of Southampton, to whom it is believed Shakespeare's Sonnets are dedicated.
- A friend of the playwrights Beaumont and Fletcher.

6. Known works

- He was almost certainly the author of annotations in a copy of Halle's Chronicles, used as a source extensively in the History plays.
- His many diplomatic and personal letters are eloquent, linguistically innovative and 'Shakespearean' in tone and vocabulary. In the eighteenth century, they were reviewed and praised by David Hume the philosopher and historian.

7. Northumberland Manuscript

- His name appears on top of the mysterious Northumberland Manuscript.

8. Circumstance

- He was jailed in the Tower for two years for his role in the Essex rebellion (1601-03). It is here that he wrote *Hamlet* and many Sonnets, the meanings of which are immensely illuminated when the writer's imprisonment is known.

9. Relationships with women (reflecting the strong roles for women in the plays)

- Unlike other candidates he enjoyed good relationships with women throughout his life.
- His wife's mother was from a family famed for containing the most educated women in England.
- His step-mother endowed a school for girls and was a strong, educated woman.

10. Contemporary recognition

- Praised at Oxford and throughout Europe during his lifetime for his genius and erudition yet, unaccountably, he left no published works to his own name.

Why the Secret Identity

There were several pressing reasons why he would have used a pseudonym:

- He shared his name with other eminent members of his family and wanted to avoid putting them in any danger through his writing.
- He was a well-known politician, ambitious for high office, and did not wish his name to be associated with the public stage.
- The History plays, about the violent overthrow of English kings, would have been viewed as seditious if his prominent court and political position were known.

However, a simple pseudonym could not provide adequate protection from the curious, and to ensure absolute anonymity he went one step further and employed William Shakespeare to stand in as the author of his works.

Shakespeare was, in many ways, the ideal 'front man'. He was a distant kinsman, which would guarantee his loyalty, he was involved in theatre life both as an actor and as a theatre proprietor, his social sphere didn't normally cross with that of the 'true author' so there would be little reason to suspect the relationship between them.

The Authors

Brenda James

Born and educated close to Stratford upon Avon, Brenda was a "subconscious Stratfordian" for many years. Nevertheless, she was intrigued by the mystery surrounding the works of Shakespeare. For the past seven years she has devoted her time to researching aspects of Shakespeare's poetry and plays.

As a teenager, she vowed to crack the secret of the strange Dedication to Shakespeare's Sonnets. When she was unexpectedly struck down by a persistent illness, the hours she was forced to spend in the dark as part of her cure, gave her the time to return to her teenage passion.

Memorising the Dedication and visualising its structure she had a Eureka moment; she realised that she had discovered the key to its hidden message. Her deciphering unexpectedly revealed the name of a man who, she was to discover, possessed every attribute necessary to qualify him as the true writer of the works hitherto appearing under Shakespeare's name.

Today, this man's name is hardly known, although it was familiar to the prominent members of society in Shakespeare's time. Brenda soon realised that having discovered this name was just the start of the most extraordinary journey that would eventually lead her to identify him as the true author of the works attributed to William Shakespeare.

During her research she has uncovered piece after piece of compelling evidence, most notably the notebook, found in a provincial Public Record Office, written by this same man, which gives detailed stage directions for Henry VIII 11 years before it was produced.

She has followed all the avenues of research relating to the true author's life, works and connections and as her typescript is about to go to press, new evidence constantly reveals itself. Who knows what else may come to light once this extraordinary book is in the public domain.

Qualifications and Career

- First Class Honours degree in Cultural Studies from Portsmouth University.
- Worked as a lecturer in English and Civilisation with the British European Centre.
- Has run specialist classes in Shakespeare studies.
- Was a part-time lecturer in English on the Portsmouth University B.Ed.course.
- An aural history researcher for Hampshire County Council.
- Lectured in English and Theatre Studies at the Karl Liebknecht Hochschule, Potsdam University, Berlin.

Professor William Rubinstein is Professor of Modern History at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Previously, and for many years, he was a professor at Deakin University in Australia. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and of the Australian Academy of the Social Sciences.

He has had a long-standing interest in the Shakespeare Authorship question and is an Associate of the Shakespearean Authorship Trust, a body set up in 1922 to provide a neutral and positive forum for interested groups and individuals to debate the true authorship of Shakespeare's plays and poems. He has been asked to be a key note speaker at next summer's authorship exhibition at The Globe.

Bill Rubinstein has published widely on many aspects of modern history including *Genocide* (Longman, 2004), *Twentieth-century Britain: A Political History* (Macmillan 2003), *Philosemitism: Admiration and Support for Jews in the English-speaking World 1840-1939* (Macmillan 1999).

