

Author Solves Shakespeare Authorship Mystery

New Book Makes the Case for Marlowe

Who wrote Shakespeare? That's a question that has been asked by scholars and Shakespeare lovers for over 200 years. The question arose because Shakespeare's biography does not fit with what he is supposed to have written. In fact, Diana Price, in her 2001 book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, examined all of the documents related to Shakespeare and came to the conclusion that he was not a writer. "These documents," wrote Price, "account for his activities as an actor, a theatre shareholder, a businessman, a moneylender, a property holder, a litigant, and a man with a family, but they do not account for his presumed life as a professional writer."

Also, there is nothing in Shakespeare's will, written just before he died in 1616, that makes mention of anything related to a writing career. About this will, Mark Twain wrote: "It named in minute detail every item of property he owned in the world—houses, lands, sword, silver-gilt bowl, and so on—all the way down to his 'second-best bed' and its furniture. It mentioned not a single book. Books were much more precious than swords and silver-gilt bowls and when a departing person owned one he gave it a high place in his will. The will mentioned not a play, not a poem, not an unfinished literary work, not a scrap of manuscript of any kind."

And so, for the last 150 years, the most crucial question has been: if William Shakespeare did not write the works attributed to him, who did?

There have been a number of contenders, including Sir Francis Bacon and Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. But the case for either man has been anything but conclusive. Bacon, a masterful essayist and philosopher, had no reason to hide his authorship, and Oxford, a literary dilettante, did not have the genius to write the plays and poems of Shakespeare. He also died before many of the plays were written.

But Samuel Blumenfeld, author of *The Marlowe-Shakespeare Connection*, believes that he has found the true author of the works attributed to William Shakespeare: Christopher Marlowe, the literary genius and professional writer, whose alleged murder in a tavern brawl in May 1593, at the age of 29, supposedly ended his career. But the startling truth is that the "murder" was a faked death to save him from possible execution by the archbishop's inquisition on charges of atheism and blasphemy.

Marlowe, a member of the Secret Service, was then given a new identity and went into exile.

"This is the most extraordinary story in all of literary history, and it has remained virtually untold for over 400 years," explains Blumenfeld. "I decided to do the historical detective work, and it took me over seven years to finally piece together the actual story. I believe that I prove beyond a reasonable doubt that it was Christopher Marlowe who wrote the plays and poems attributed to Shakespeare."

According to Blumenfeld, Marlowe peppered his plays and poems published under Shakespeare's name with all sorts of clues so that any future literary detective might uncover the truth. For example, Marlowe's father was a cobbler, and he honored his father in two plays, *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V*. But if you didn't know that Marlowe had written the plays you would have missed these fascinating clues. As for the man William Shakespeare, he was used as a front so that Marlowe's new plays could be performed without giving away the secret that he had written them.

"This book," says Blumenfeld, "should change the way we look at the plays and poems as well as the lives of the men involved in this intriguing story. As Wayne Dyer has observed, when you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change."

Blumenfeld has written many books on education and literacy and lives in Waltham, Massachusetts.

The Marlowe-Shakespeare Connection by Samuel L. Blumenfeld (ISBN 978-0-7864-3902-7) is available at McFarland Publishing Company, Jefferson, NC 28640-0611, 800-253-2187 and www.mcfarlandpub.com. Email contact: info@mcfarlandpub.com. For a review copy, contact: bucox@mcfarlandpub.com. The book can also be ordered through Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Borders, and other bookstores. For lectures, interviews, and book signings, the author can be contacted at 781-899-6468 or slblu123@verizon.net.