

**Bryan H. Wildenthal** <bryanw@gmail.com>

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**Re: Shapiro essay & "correction" to Winkler**

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**Bryan H. Wildenthal** <bryanw@gmail.com>Sun, Jun 16, 2019 at  
12:59 AM

To: Adrienne LaFrance &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Dear Ms. LaFrance,

Two brief follow-up points merit mentioning:

1. It occurs to me that there is another problem (not mentioned in my email of June 14, or accompanying memo) with the "corrective" revised text posted by The Atlantic in Winkler's May 10 essay on Bassano & the SAQ: "Assorted comments by his contemporaries have been interpreted by some as suggesting that the London actor claimed credit for writing that wasn't his."

A key additional problem with the latter statement is that there is not, in fact, any evidence whatsoever (and if you read them carefully, orthodox scholars do not claim there was), that "the London actor" (William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon) EVER, during his entire life, personally "claimed credit" for the works of Shakespeare. Nor did any family member or descendant of his. Ambiguous comments starting with the First Folio of 1623 (7 years after his death), never endorsed or echoed, so far as anyone knows, by any family member or descendant of his, are all we have.

What there is actually evidence of (which "many," not just "some," scholars, have discussed, though which Shapiro generally denies), is doubts and questions being expressed "by his contemporaries" as to whether the name "Shakespeare" was a pseudonym, or otherwise expressing doubt about who the author was (without necessarily publishing any detailed alternative theories at that time), or expressing things plainly inconsistent with any Stratfordian theory of authorship. Some contemporaries generally suggested that Shakespeare of Stratford was a plagiarist. But neither, nor any "contemporary" prior to the posthumous 1623 Folio, clearly attributed any work of

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"Shakespeare" to him (and the Folio itself was actually none too clear, and highly suspicious on this point, when considered carefully).

The Atlantic's editorial "correction" of Winkler's original text (which was perfectly accurate as it was), really makes very little sense and creates more confusion about the issue.

2. My own book dealing in great depth with "Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts," has now been published online (at Lulu.com) as of Saturday, June 15. It should be available within a few weeks on Amazon.com, but may be ordered now from Lulu (at a discount). See:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/bryan-h-wildenthal/early-shakespeare-authorship-doubts/hardcover/product-24139420.html>

As soon as I receive my own print copies (within a few days), I would also be glad to mail one gratis to The Atlantic (but only if you confirm to me that you have received my message and are seriously considering some published response in relation to this issue; if so, please advise me of your preferred office mailing address).

My book contains a wealth of citations and information that would assist any further fact-checking The Atlantic may wish to pursue.

All best regards,  
Bryan

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