



# Beyond Reasonable Doubt: New Evidence and Arguments since The Declaration of Reasonable Doubt

## Part 3: The Stratfordian response: Stanley Wells and James Shapiro

The response of Stratfordians – supporters of William of Stratford as the author – has been disappointing. The Declaration is a very moderate, reasonable document, even acknowledging that there is a *prima facie* case for Shakspere. It makes no claim to know who did write the works, nor even that Shakspere definitely did not. All it claims is that there is room for “reasonable doubt,” and other credible scenarios are possible. It says that “the identity of William Shakespeare should therefore be regarded in academia as a legitimate issue for research and publication, and an appropriate topic for instruction and discussion in classrooms.” The Stratfordian response made it clear that they wanted *no one* to be taking a fresh look at the evidence. Doing so had already been a career-ender for Shakespeare scholars, and now it was even more forbidden. So the task fell to independent scholars to make the breakthrough discoveries presented in Parts 1 and 2.

### Stanley Wells sets the tone

The first response was an [angry letter](#) from Stanley Wells, Chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, published in *The Stage* magazine. In it he says he has “never seen the slightest reason to doubt his [Shakspere’s] authorship.” He lists some contemporary references to the author “Shakespeare,” treating each as a reference to the Stratford man, ignoring the fact that none specifically identifies him, and he did not spell his name as it is on the works. He points out that the first modern doubter was Delia Bacon and gleefully informs us that she died insane, even though this had nothing to do with her authorship views. He then issues a warning to those who launched the Declaration, suggesting that they too risk dying insane.

Wells’ letter is a good illustration of what appears to be an organized Stratfordian strategy for suppressing the authorship controversy: first deny that there is any reason at all to doubt the Stratford man’s authorship, and then push the idea that doubters are all defective in some way: in our intellect, psychology or character. They suggest that we are ignorant, amateurs, incompetent, irrational, mentally defective, delusional, insane, or motivated by snobbery, unwilling to accept that a commoner like Shakspere could become a great writer. This strategy of “denying the evidence and attacking the heretics” has been remarkably successful for them. They’ve stigmatized and suppressed a perfectly legitimate issue, making it a taboo subject in our discourse. They never provide any evidence to back up their claims about authorship skeptics, but the public believes it because they are regarded as the expert authorities, and the media often report what they say uncritically.

In another example, for years the Birthplace Trust had an article by Wells on its website with this claim:

“The phenomenon of disbelief in Shakespeare's authorship is a psychological aberration of considerable interest. Endorsement of it in favour of aristocratic candidates may be ascribed to snobbery—reluctance to believe that works of genius could emanate from a man of relatively humble origin ... Other causes include ignorance; poor sense of logic; refusal, wilful or otherwise, to accept evidence; folly; the desire for publicity; and even ... certifiable madness.”

In 2010, we wrote a letter to Wells, challenging him to either back up his claims with data worthy of the high scholarly standards that he claims to represent, or remove them forthwith. It is not as if experts in the disciplines of psychiatry, psychology and sociology cannot measure such things, but Wells never bothered. Apparently his definition of “psychologically aberrant” is anyone who disagrees with *his* view of the issue. He never provided a shred of evidence to back up his claims, and the article disappeared about a year later.

Soon the [same article](#), with a different title but the same unsubstantiated claims about authorship doubters, reappeared on the website of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), also based in Stratford-upon-Avon. It remained there for four years until it was finally taken down in response to additional letters challenging its validity sent to the Prince of Wales, in his role as president of the RSC, as well as to other RSC officials. One letter focused on Wells' claim of "snobbery," i.e., that doubters are "reluctant to believe that works of genius could emanate from a man of relatively humble origin." We know of no authorship doubter who has expressed this view, and we challenged Wells and the RSC to provide an example. No one has yet done so.

These events are clear evidence that Professor Stanley Wells, Honorary President of the Birthplace Trust, promoted a false stereotype of authorship doubters over many years, when he surely knew that it was false. If he didn't know when he penned it, he surely knew after we challenged it and he was unable to back it up. These are smear tactics, pure and simple. If Wells is willing to stoop to that, why believe anything he says? Why believe him when he claims he has "never seen the slightest reason to doubt Shakspeare's authorship"? In addition to Wells' false claims about doubters, we pointed out a number of other invalid claims he made. The entire sequence of letters to Professor Wells, to the Prince of Wales and others can be read at this [link](#).

### James Shapiro's *Contested Will*

Also in 2010, the book [Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?](#), by James Shapiro, Professor of English at Columbia University, was published as the first book on the topic by a leading academic Shakespearean. He announces early on that he believes "William Shakespeare wrote the plays and poems attributed to him, a view left unshaken by the years of study I have devoted to this subject..." (8-9). His interest is not "what people think—which has been [said repeatedly] in unambiguous terms—so much as why they think it" (8). It's clear, however, that his view of "why they think it" is not about the evidence but about our psychology. It is odd that he feels he can generalize about doubter psychology, since he refuses to communicate with us.

He says he became "increasingly interested in why this subject remains virtually taboo in academic circles, and the consequences of this collective silence," i.e., that "readers curious about the subject ... learn about it through books and websites of those convinced that Shakespeare could never have written the plays" (5). He notes that "Those who would deny Shakespeare's authorship, long excluded from publishing their work in academic journals or through university presses, are taking advantage of the level playing field provided by the Web, especially such widely-consulted and democratic sites as Wikipedia" (8). He was very worried. The last thing in the world orthodox professors want is to have to confront doubters on a level playing field.

Shapiro mentions the *Declaration of Reasonable Doubt* in surprisingly complimentary terms. He describes it as "a skillfully drafted document, the collaborative effort of some of the best minds committed to casting doubt on Shakespeare's authorship. Its title is inspired, combining the uplift of a historical declaration with that long-established sense of fairness that guides juries to just verdicts: 'reasonable doubt.' (218)" What he does not do is offer a point-by-point rebuttal of the evidence presented. He says *nothing* about the specifics. It seems that he only mentioned the declaration as a warning to Stratfordians that they should be concerned. At least he got that right. (The Birthplace Trust also got it right and published *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*.)

Shapiro names Stanley Wells in the first paragraph of his acknowledgments among a handful of those who helped him most. He is more civil and less angry and abusive than Wells. He eschews "naïve comparisons" between doubters and believers in intelligent design, Holocaust denial, or those who doubt moon landings; but he says "Then there are those whose view of the world is shaped for better or worse by conspiracy (8)." So he contradicts himself here, clearly attributing the issue to the psychology of doubters, not the evidence. He is mostly objective in his treatment of Delia Bacon, acknowledging, and even admiring of her intellect. He abstains from ridicule and admits that Emerson and Hawthorne were sufficiently impressed to help her. But he quotes those who did ridicule Bacon in her time, so evidently he wants to have it both ways on this.

The change of tone is welcome; yet the emphasis on Delia Bacon is misplaced, creating the impression that she is a much more important figure to the authorship movement, even to this day, than is actually the case. Bacon is of interest mainly for historical reasons as the first person to call widespread attention to the issue.

Her book, as Shapiro notes, is unreadable, and most doubters today (including many of us) have not read it. Though insightful, Bacon wasn't the one who developed the strong evidence and arguments we have today. Any theory should be judged based on the best arguments of its strongest proponents. In focusing on Bacon and notables like Twain, Freud and Henry James, Shapiro avoids the strongest, such as George Greenwood.

At one point Shapiro notes that Helen Keller, who had been a staunch Stratfordian, had serious doubts after reading Greenwood's *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (1908). She said that his "masterly exhibition has led to the conclusion that [Shakspeare] is not to be even thought of as a possible author [of the plays] (117)." Rather than treat this "masterly exhibition," Shapiro quickly moves on to Baconian ciphers, never to return. Though more subtle about it, he conforms to the orthodox view that doubters are all defective in some way. In that sense, he follows the Stratfordian practice of arguing *ad hominem*, rather than focusing on evidence. A less subtle example is where he says that Sigmund Freud "turned against Shakespeare." This is nonsense; just because one has a different concept of who the author was does not mean one has "turned against" him. If one thinks Sam Clemens wrote the works of Mark Twain, does it mean that he has turned against Twain? Doubters love Shakespeare as much as anyone, as Shapiro surely knows. He is wrong to suggest otherwise.

Another way in which Shapiro strictly conforms to the orthodox position is in his use of the "Shakespeare" spelling throughout, silently changing all occurrences of "Shakspeare" to "Shakespeare," without informing the reader that Shakspeare himself never used that spelling. He should have said something about it up front. The most blatant example is on page 261, which shows an image of the third signature on Shakspeare's will, with the caption "'By me William Shakespeare' from Shakespeare's will." It is hard to discern the spelling, but it is clearly not "Shakespeare." It looks like "Shakspeare." Here is a second case of falsifying the record to mislead us into thinking that Shakspeare's name was really "Shakespeare." It is one thing to "modernize" spellings when it is not an issue, but quite another to falsify what's in the record when it clearly *is* an issue.

Shapiro likely used that signature because the words "By me William" are legible. The last name is less so. It appears that this is because the words "By me William" are in the hand of the clerk who drew up the will. He evidently forgot that this Shakspeare was not *totally* illiterate, and stopped and let him sign his last name. The other possibility is that the clerk realized his error and altered his handwriting in signing the last name; but in either case, "By me William," and "Shakspeare" are in different hands, as most anyone can easily see. (Actually, the word "me" is not so clear either. It could be "Mr.," also suggesting it was signed by the clerk, referring to Mr. Shakspeare in the third person – something only the clerk, not Shakspeare, would have done.)

Nowhere did Shapiro show any of Shakspeare's other five signatures. Looking at them, it is easy to see why. Evidently he cherry picked this one for the book; and, ironically, the one he chose is only half Shakspeare's!

Speaking of Shakspeare's will, Shapiro again toes the Stratfordian line in referring to a document produced by Dr. John Hall while proving his father-in-law's will in London. The document was "an inventory of the testator's household effects," which Shapiro dubiously reinterprets as "a list of Shakespeare's possessions." He claims that "Whatever valuable books, manuscripts, or letters Shakespeare owned and was bequeathing to his heirs would have been listed in this inventory rather than in the will itself." Shapiro then says:

Had the inventory ... survived—or by some miracle it ever surfaces—it would finally silence those who, misunderstanding the conventions of Elizabethan wills and inventories, continue to insist that [Shakspeare] of Stratford didn't own any books and was probably illiterate (50)."

So first Shapiro makes the name "Shakspeare," without the medial "e," *disappear* from the will, even though that is how it is spelled three times in the body of the will and in all three of Shakspeare's alleged signatures, and then he magically makes the lost inventory *appear* and says he knows that its contents support his case! And Stratfordians accuse authorship skeptics of not following normal standards. What standard allows this? John Payne Collier, the shameless forger, would have loved it. (And, by the way, both Collier and William-Henry Ireland, another notorious 19<sup>th</sup> century forger, were Stratfordians, not doubters, as Shapiro suggests.)

The idea that the inventory would have included *all* of Shakspeare's possessions is easily refuted by reading the will. It bequeaths mundane household items much less valuable than the books, manuscripts, letters and other intellectual property that one would expect to find in the author's will, but which are entirely missing. It is Shapiro who does not understand "the conventions of Elizabethan wills and inventories," not doubters. Anyone who thinks otherwise should re-read point #14 in the list of "additional reasons to doubt" in Part 1. And even if the books *were* in the inventory, what happened to them? How did they then totally disappear?

The absence of books or any intellectual property in the will is not the only reason to think he was illiterate. The only writings allegedly in his hand are six signatures on legal documents, each spelled differently, and in handwriting that shows he had difficulty signing his own name. For more on this, read point #5 in Part 1. Not one letter in Shakspeare's hand has ever been found. Shapiro tries to explain away the absence of letters written *to* Shakspeare by suggesting they may all have been bundled together and were then all lost together. That doesn't account for the absence of letters he sent to others; how did they all get bundled and then lost? Diana Price found extant letters for fifteen other writers of the period, but none for the greatest writer of all. The more Shapiro says Shakspeare collaborated with others, the harder it is to explain this absence of letters. The will just confirms all the other evidence that he was illiterate, as the inventory probably would if found.

Shapiro begins with the premise that "For more than two hundred years after William Shakespeare's death, no one doubted that he had written his plays." He takes it as given that the Stratford man was the author, so his book is about "when and why so many people began to question whether Shakespeare wrote his plays." First, calling them "his" plays implies that Shakspeare *claimed* that they were his, when in fact he never did, and neither did anyone else during his lifetime. Second, the claim that "no one doubted that he had written" them "for more than two hundred years" is false. Several people doubted the authorship during his lifetime; and, as we have already shown, Thomas Vicars implied the name was a pen name in 1628 (see Part 1, #12). Others whose writings show that they had doubts include Thomas Edwards (1595), William Covell (1595), John Marston (1598), Joseph Hall (1598), Gabriel Harvey (1598), John Weever (1599), Sir Thomas Smith (1605) and John Davies (1611). Shakespeare himself, whoever he was, implied in the *Sonnets* (1609) that his identity was not yet known (Sonnet 81), and he expressed a desire that it never be known (Sonnet 72).

Another point about Vicars' reference to "that famous poet who takes his name from 'shaking' and 'spear'" is that the way he put it implies it couldn't be written about openly. So evidently it was an important secret. There's no great mystery, then, about how knowledge of it could have been lost and had to be rediscovered. The theaters were closed for a generation during the English Civil War (1642-1660). Knowledge of secrets not relevant and not in writing would have been lost. Once inter-generational transmission was interrupted, it's hardly surprising that it took a long time to notice the gaps and contradictions in the case for Shakspeare. Shapiro never mentions the possible importance of the English Civil War in disrupting the theater tradition. Issues of historical truth depend on the evidence, not some statute of limitations on when it had to be found. Pretending otherwise is just another way of avoiding having to deal with evidence that doesn't support him.

What Shapiro is most adamant about is that the works must not be read as autobiographical. He excoriates Edmond Malone, an attorney who was the greatest Shakespeare scholar of his time, for looking for clues to the mystery of the author's life in the works. Having studied those plays that turn on jealousy, Malone said the author had "written more immediately from the heart on the subject of jealousy than on any other; and it is therefore not improbable that he felt it" (42). How dare he! Didn't he know that the image one gets of the author from studying the works is no match for Shakspeare? Sensing the danger, Shapiro sounds the alarm:

Malone helped institutionalize a methodology that would prove crucial to those who would... deny Shakespeare's authorship ... (after all ... how would anybody but a court insider know enough to encode all of this?) (39) .... [and] in doing so, Malone carelessly left open a fire door (40).

What Malone really did was to open a window and let in some light. Shapiro wants us all kept in the dark. Note that Shapiro slips up and reveals who he is worried about: "how would anybody but a court insider..." Here we have him "committing an act of candor." He tacitly admits that if one looks to the works for clues to the author's life they suggest a different author from Shakspeare. That is not allowed, so the entire line of

inquiry must be delegitimized. It threatens orthodoxy, so a fire-wall must be erected and the door kept shut. You can be sure that if the works supported Shakspeare he wouldn't be saying they are not autobiographical. The only reason he says they are not is he has the wrong man. Get the right man and it is clear that they are.

(Harvard English professor Stephen Greenblatt committed a similar "[actor of candor](#)" in an interview with the editor of *Harvard Magazine* (Sept.-Oct. 2004), admitting that in writing his biography *Will in the World* he had found it difficult to find meaningful connections between the life of the alleged author and the plays. That did not keep him from comparing the authorship question to creationism or Holocaust denial in 2005.)

Mark Twain was a problem for Shapiro because, as a famous writer himself, he could speak with authority. Twain's last book, *Is Shakespeare Dead?* (1909), ridicules Shakspeare and the Stratfordians. Shapiro writes:

What's easily overlooked, both by those who hail the book and by those dismayed that such a prominent author could write it, is what led Twain to this conclusion: a conviction that great fiction, including his own, was necessarily autobiographical. It followed that, given what was known about his life, [Shakspeare] could have no claim to the works (112).

Shapiro attempts to counter this reasonable notion by proposing that the autobiographical nature of fiction was relatively new at the time. He says "It's surprising that such a ... shift in what writers offer—and what readers look for—has attracted relatively little ... attention" (113-14). Maybe that's because the shift didn't happen. Shapiro claims it did, saying,

This newly forged, if largely unexamined consensus that fiction was ... autobiographical would affect ... how previous authors, especially Shakespeare, were read. This, as much as any factor, explains why so many—Twain included—came to question Shakespeare's authorship...." (114).

He, like most Stratfordians, is especially keen to say that *Shake-speare's Sonnets* are fictional because it is hard to make a case that Shakspeare wrote them if one concedes that they were written to be self-revelatory. The Sonnets – highly personal, private communications to close intimates – depict an older, lame aristocrat in some sort of disgrace. This is no match for Shakspeare, so Stratfordians must claim that they are fictional; but they do not treat them as fictional when they attempt to identify the fair youth, dark lady and rival poet. If they were fictional, there would be no need not to give the characters names, but none of them is named. For anyone with an ear, the poet pours out his soul in them, and the idea that they are fictional is nonsense.

Has human nature changed since then? A poem by Sir Philip Sidney, another fine Elizabethan poet, who Shakespeare surely knew, suggests not. The last line of Sidney's "[Astrophil and Stella 1: Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,](#)" implores: "'Fool,' said my Muse to me, 'look in thy heart, and write.'" It is an extraordinary claim that Shakespeare would not look into, and reveal, his own heart in his Sonnets. Sidney's description suggests that Elizabethan poets *did* write self-revelatory poems, just as they do today.

Shapiro disagrees. Returning to Twain, he says that for him, "the notion that great writing had to be drawn from life—rather than from what an author heard, read, or simply imagined—was an article of faith" (114). Shapiro is firmly in the "heard, read or imagined" camp. Sadly for him, the recent books on Shakespeare's knowledge of Italy blow that idea out of the water. *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* was published in 2011, a year after *Contested Will*, so Shapiro cannot be held accountable for being ignorant of Roe's discoveries. But in his chapter "Keeping Shakespeare out of Italy," in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?*, Alexander Waugh notes that Shapiro says "a curious Shakespeare could have learned everything he needed to know about the Italian settings of his plays from a few choice conversations" (275). "Could he?," Waugh asks, adding that:

Shakespeare made around 800 references to Italy in general; there are 400 references to Rome; 52 to Venice; 34 to Naples; 25 to Milan; 23 to Florence; 22 to Padua and 20 to Verona. Beyond these may be found incidental but precise references to Genoa, Mantua, Pisa, Ferrara, Liza Fusina, Villafranca di Verona, Messina in Sicily and many others. In light of this, Shapiro's "few choice conversations" seem grossly inadequate. If all these details were really gleaned in such a way, with

whom, we may ask, did Shakespeare have these conversations? It is in answer to this question that the academics show themselves, once again, to be thoroughly inept and corrupted.

In his chapter on “Shakespeare,” Shapiro presents evidence that he thinks makes a good case for Shakspeare. We disagree; we think he didn’t convincingly refute a single point in the *Declaration of Reasonable Doubt*. The chapter is full of errors of fact and logic that one would think an English professor would have noticed. In one particularly egregious example, Shapiro says,

Early in his career Shakespeare showed great care in seeing into print his two great narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*, ... While his name didn't appear on the title pages, ... dedicatory letters addressed to the Earl of Southampton and signed “William Shake-speare” are included in italics in the front matter of both. It’s the first time the notorious hyphen appeared in the printed version of his name, a telling sign, for skeptics, of pseudonymous publication (225).

In fact, the name is *not* hyphenated in either volume. How did Shapiro make such an obvious error, twice? The dedication to *Lucrece* is *not* in italics; the names under the dedications to Southampton are *not* signed, as he says, but printed. There is no way to match them to any signature. William Shakespeare could have been anybody. But the most interesting fact is something Shapiro passed over. He notes that the author’s name is not on the title pages. Why not? Anonymous publication was common, but why put the author’s name beneath the dedications and not on the title pages? Why suggest he was the author in one place, but not on the title page? It doesn’t prove anything, but it could mean it wasn’t the name of the author after all. These anomalies turn up over and over in the records, but Shapiro lacks the imagination to appreciate them.

In the same chapter, on page 224, Shapiro writes,

As an actor, playwright, and shareholder in the most popular playing company in the land—which performed before as many as three thousand spectators at a time... —he was also one of the most familiar faces in town and at court. If, over the course of the quarter century in which Shakespeare was acting and writing in London, people began to suspect that the man they knew as Shakespeare was an imposter and not the actor-dramatist whose plays they [saw], we would have heard about it.

What this ignores is that no record shows anyone thought Mr. Shakspeare was Shakespeare in the first place. If nobody thought that he was the author in the first place, why would it occur to anyone to say he was not? Does the fact that nobody at the time ever said Shakspeare of Stratford wasn’t a king mean that he was one? Shapiro’s statement is based on circular reasoning. First, he just *assumes* that Shakspeare was the dramatist, and so he *must* have been famous; but he has no *evidence* that Shakspeare was *either* a dramatist *or* famous. There is no basis for the claim that he was “one of the most familiar faces in town and at court;” and to the extent that he *was* widely known, no evidence shows that he was widely known as the author Shakespeare. The evidence for him as the author is so thin it even undermines the idea that he fronted for the real author. If he had, then more evidence would seem to point to him as the author, even though it would still be false.

In support of his point, Shapiro cites a marginal note by George Buc, later Master of the Revels, who asked Shakspeare about the authorship of an old, anonymous play in 1599. Shakspeare told him what he knew, and Buc made a notation in the margin of the play, ending with “*Teste* [witnessed by] W. Shakespea[re]” (224). Shapiro says that “Buc’s flesh-and-blood encounter with a man he knew as both actor and playwright (sic) suggests that once you ... put Shakespeare in his own time and place, the notion that he actively conspired to deceive everyone who knew or met him about the true authorship of the works that bore his name seems awfully far-fetched” (225). This is pure demagoguery. Nothing about the annotation “*Teste* W. Shakespea” proves that Buc knew Shakspeare as “both actor and *playwright*” (emphasis added). He was there; that is all. Shakspeare didn’t have to “conspire” to “deceive” anyone, if nobody saw him as the author in the first place. Shapiro never proves that the plays “bore” Shakspeare’s name. He avoids the issue, and then just assumes it. If this is the best Shapiro can do to make a case that his man was known as a playwright, it is truly pathetic. It isn’t even clear that Buc was referring to Shakspeare and not to someone else he knew was the real author.

Point #4 says that “we do not know any role [Shakspere] ever played in any play, and there is no record of anyone commenting on his acting.” Nobody claimed to have known the author during Shakspere’s lifetime. Point #16 has fellow shareholder Cuthbert Burbage describing “Shakspere” and “Shakspeare” in a law suit as just one of several “deserving men” and among several “men players,” not as the company’s playwright. Point #3 cites an [article](#) about ten people who clearly knew Shakspere and knew of the author Shakespeare, but never connected the two. If we found those ten, why can’t Stratfordians find one who associated them? What about all of the people Shapiro claims saw him in plays? It all comes down to one short, ambiguous annotation? If he had had better evidence, he would have used it. The fact that he did not speaks volumes.

On page 223, he says “No other poet or playwright came close to seeing seventy or so editions in print—and that is counting only what was published in [his] lifetime” No, there were forty-five editions in print during his lifetime, not “seventy or so” seventeen of which didn’t bear an author’s name. On page 227, he says “Some plays, such as *Richard the Third*... bore Shakespeare’s name from the outset.” No, the first quarto of *Richard the Third* was published anonymously. And this man is a leading Shakespeare scholar?

The errors in *Contested Will* are much too numerous to cover in detail here; and, unfortunately, most book reviews that came out at the time were written by people who had little knowledge of the authorship issue. We recommend “[Absolute Will](#),” by William S. Niederkorn, a former Arts and Education Reporter for the *New York Times*; and “[Is that True?](#),” by Warren Hope, Visiting Assistant Professor of English, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia (who notes wryly that “It is somehow refreshing to have a college professor frankly and publicly announce that he is going to research and write a book on a subject about which he has a completely closed mind.”) Niederkorn’s was a Review of the Week selection of the National Book Critics Circle. And for German speakers, the most detailed look at *Contested Will*’s flaws: the book [Will - Wunsch und Wirklichkeit: James Shapiros Contested Will](#) by Robert Detobel at the [Neue Shake-speare Gesellschaft](#).

It’s sad that James Shapiro got it so wrong. As it turns out, Mark Twain was much better able to smell a rat. At least Shapiro declared his bias, but that is what he gave us: a book hopelessly biased right from the start. His first mistake was aligning himself with Stanley Wells and the Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon. He purposely closed his mind to all doubts, and that is why *we* made the breakthrough discoveries, not him.

If you have not yet read and signed the Declaration, please do so now at: [DoubtAboutWill.org/declaration](http://DoubtAboutWill.org/declaration).