

## Question 31

How has the Shakespeare authorship discussion been presented in fiction?

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Apart from scholarship, Anti-Stratfordians have also produced fiction about the authorship question. Some of these works focus on the preferred candidate—Bacon or Oxford—and suggest that the name “Shake-speare” was just his pseudonym. But sometimes Shakespeare does exist, as the real author’s front man. Then he is usually portrayed as a country bumpkin, without any talent or manners, and Stratford as the back of beyond. That Shakespeare’s father was a respectable tradesman, and Stratford’s former mayor; that the town boasted a good grammar school; those inconvenient facts are ignored. The reason is obvious: the entire anti-Stratfordian case rests on the assumption that the Man from Stratford could not possibly have had the knowledge needed to write his plays, that only an aristocrat could have done so. To make this scenario look more likely, Shakespeare is ridiculed as an ignoramus, and facts that suggest otherwise are swept underneath the carpet.