

Question 53

Degrees are awarded to those doubting Shakespeare's authorship at Brunel and Concordia universities. What is the intellectual justification for this?

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Concordia University's Shakespeare authorship research centre regards traditional Shakespeare scholarship as 'an industry in denial' and invites enthusiastic amateurs to, Horatio-like, assist in the process of 'reporting the cause aright'. For \$125 a year anyone with an undergraduate degree can become an associate research scholar. \$10,000 buys the title Life Scholar.

Brunel's Master's programme in Shakespeare Authorship Studies propounds the view it was the desire for a national and global icon which produced the Shakespeare industry, and argues Shakespeare was not one, but many authors. While there is certainly intellectual justification for serious enquiry into the early modern collaborative writing process, both institutions seek to disprove the research of generations of scholars, and are in danger of obfuscating long established critical approaches to the history and literary production of the period. Schoenbaum's assertion that the Looney Oxfordian theory derives in part from a medium, channelling the disembodied voice of Shakespeare in 1942, neatly demonstrates why it deserves no place in academic Shakespearean curricula.