

# Shakespeare's True Story – University Seminar Applauds 'The Monument'

PORTLAND, Ore. – August 17 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Shakespeare scholars attending a week-long Concordia University seminar concluded that the great poet-dramatist revealed the most significant chapter of his life in the Sonnets of 1609, as explained in the new 918-page edition by Hank Whittemore entitled *The Monument: 'Shake-Speares Sonnets'* by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (Meadow Geese Press, ISBN: 0966556453), published this year with further commentary at [ShakespearesMonument.com](http://ShakespearesMonument.com).

The high point of Shakespearean biography, they agreed, begins with the politically motivated staging of *Richard II* on the eve of the Essex Rebellion of February 8, 1601 and the arrest that night of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton – who was the only public dedicatee of the Shakespeare works and, later, a leader of the Essex rising against the Crown. This intense episode of Shakespeare's life continued during the long imprisonment of Southampton (the Fair Youth of the Sonnets) in the Tower of London until Elizabeth I died on March 24, 1603 and James I ordered the earl's release, after which the Queen's funeral marked the end of the long Tudor dynasty.

"Shakespeare left us his personal account of this dramatic true story in the private diary of the Sonnets," Whittemore told members of the Shakespeare Authorship Studies Seminar held on the Concordia campus. "And once we perceive the correct historical context for these heartfelt verses, there can be no more room for doubt that the real 'Shakespeare' was Edward de Vere, who sat in judgment at Southampton's trial and was forced to condemn him to death. As he recounts in the Sonnets, however, Oxford made a painful bargain with his brother-in-law Robert Cecil, the all-powerful Secretary of State, to obliterate his own identity in return for Southampton's life and freedom."

"This revelation of contemporary Elizabethan history is hastening a massive paradigm shift in regard to the authorship of Shakespeare's works," said Professor Daniel Wright of Concordia, who led the seminar. "Hank Whittemore's stunning and compelling analysis of the Sonnets in *The Monument* amounts to the long awaited 'smoking gun' to prove that only Oxford could have written the poems and plays incorrectly attributed to a man from Stratford-upon-Avon."

"We now have the three essential pieces of the puzzle posed by the Sonnets," said William Boyle, founding editor of *Shakespeare Matters*, the official newsletter of the Shakespeare Fellowship. "Traditional scholars have long known that Henry Wriothesley was the Fair Youth for whom the verses were written, while growing numbers have come to realize that Edward de Vere was the poet. Now in *The Monument* we can see that both are joined in the events of the Essex Rebellion and its aftermath, when Oxford agreed to glue the mask of 'Shakespeare' to his face for Southampton's sake. The story is personal and it's also political, revolving around the end-game power struggle to control the succession to Queen Elizabeth on the English throne."

"The winners of that struggle got to write the official history," Whittemore told the seminar participants, "but Oxford preserved true story in the monument of the Sonnets intended for readers in posterity. As he promised Southampton: 'Your monument shall be my gentle verse, which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read.' And in the end, this true account by the real 'Shakespeare' will be triumphant."

Members of the Concordia seminar unanimously concluded that, by the same token, recent biographies of Shakespeare have tried without success to "pump new life into the man from Stratford," as Dr. Wright put it, citing works that include *In Search of Shakespeare* by Michael Wood, *Shakespeare After All* by Marjorie Garber and *Will in the World* by Stephen Greenblatt. "All these fanciful, imaginative tales about Stratford Will are afflicted with little more than wildly contradictory nonsense and dreamed up by would-be biographers of a man whose character and life they seem incapable of discerning, let alone agreeing upon."

"The orthodox Shakespearean biography is in crisis," Boyle said. "Now the autobiographical account of the poet himself, as set forth plainly and clearly in *The Monument*, is forcing the old myth to implode so the real story can be seen at last."

More information: [www.ShakespearesMonument.com](http://www.ShakespearesMonument.com)

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