In March 2010, Brean Hammond’s new edition of Lewis Theobald’s *Double Falsehood* was added to the ongoing third series of the Arden Shakespeare, prompting a barrage of criticism in the academic press and the popular media. Responses to the play, which may or may not contain the “ghost” of Shakespeare and Fletcher’s *Cardenio*, have dealt with two issues: the question of whether *Double Falsehood* is or is not a forgery; and if the latter, the question of how much of it is by Shakespeare. This second question as a criterion for canonical inclusion is my starting point for this paper, as scholars and critics have struggled to define clearly the boundaries of, and qualifications for, canonicity. James Naughtie, in a BBC radio interview with Hammond to mark the edition’s launch, suggested that a new attribution would only be of interest if he had “a big hand, not just was one of the people helping to throw something together for a Friday night.” Naughtie’s comment points us toward an important, unqualified aspect of the canonical problem—how big does a contribution by Shakespeare need to be to qualify as “Shakespeare”? The act of inclusion in an edited *Complete Works* popularly enacts the “canonization” of a work, fixing an attribution in print and commodifying it within a saleable context. To a very real extent, “Shakespeare” is defined as what can be sold as Shakespearean. Yet while canonization operates at its most fundamental as a selection/exclusion binary, collaboration complicates the issue. *Timon of Athens*, for example, is now sold as a Shakespeare/Middleton collaboration in the collected works of both Shakespeare and Middleton; and, more controversially, the Oxford Middleton has also canonized *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* as collaborative plays within a second author’s canon. There is still an implicit concern for collaboration...
sully the product, whose value is derived from its fixity, its “Complete”-ness. Responding to the Arden decision, commentator Ron Rosenbaum fumed that “a respected edition of Shakespeare self-destructively tries to ‘extend the brand,’” and that *Double Falsehood*’s publication represented a “triumph of marketing over art.” In Rosenbaum’s piece, the question of authenticity is subordinate to the question of canonical integrity as informed by quality. A smaller, more prestige product is preferable to apparently boundless and unregulated extension. This has a parallel in Stanley Wells’s justification for the exclusion of *Edward III* from the first edition of the Oxford Shakespeare (1986): “From the publisher’s point of view, any edition of *The Complete Works* has to compete financially with the many other available editions of *The Complete Works*; adding yet another early history play [*Edward III*] to the several early history plays which usually go unread in existing editions will add to the bulk and cost of the edition without necessarily adding to its attractiveness.” In Wells’s justification, the marketplace tends towards homogeneity, prioritizing a single paradigm of authorship (the identification of the authorial hand) that supports the volume’s authorizing agency, William Shakespeare. The title of a *Complete Works* is another publishing requirement, and one that only developed alongside the growing widespread dissemination of Shakespeare in the nineteenth century. Completeness demands finality, closure, the imposition of absolute distinctions between “Shakespeare” and “not-Shakespeare,” canon versus the plays traditionally known as the “Shakespeare Apocrypha.”

That *Edward III* was included in the second edition of the Oxford Shakespeare in 2005, and *Double Falsehood* in the third series of the Arden in 2010, is symptomatic of a shift, however. The preference for exclusion that informed Oxford’s original decision has been overtaken by a consumer-based demand for value for money, and market attractiveness is determined by quantity of constitution. This is most evident in the decision of several editions since the Riverside Shakespeare to include Hand D’s fragment of *Thomas More*, moving towards consumption of the Author, even at the expense of rendering the play itself incomplete. As Jeffrey Masten argues: “Wanting *More* in these editions is linked to our desire for more and more Shakespeare; thus the seemingly escalating race to add to our volumes: more *Lear* in the Oxford and still more in the Norton; the “Funeral Elegy”; the arrival of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* in the updated fourth edition of Bevington’s Longman edition; *Edward III* in the second edition of the Riverside, and so on.” This practice was continued more recently by the RSC Shakespeare, which added “To the Queen” to the print edition, and scenes from *Edward III* and *Arden of Faversham* to its website, safeguarding against the possibility of omitting any of Shakespeare’s words from a *Complete Works*.
In a market that favors novelty, the neglected plays of the Apocrypha have become increasingly important in the push to enhance the market value of a Complete Works. Thomas More, Edward III, Arden of Faversham and Double Falsehood are impinging on the fixed canon and throwing into question what is considered to be, and may be sold as, “Shakespearean”—whether an individual scene he wrote, a play to which he contributed, or a play adapted from one he may have written. Arden has incorporated Thomas More as well as Double Falsehood; Edward III is available in the New Cambridge Shakespeare and will shortly be published in a new edition by Arden; and the “quarrel scene” of Arden of Faversham appears in an edited extract on the website of the RSC Shakespeare. By embracing these multiple paradigms of authorship under the aegis of Shakespeare, the integrity of the individual author as boundary for the canon is further threatened by the existence of collaborative and socially situated Shakespearean extracts that, nonetheless, are still employed in order to expand the canon of a single authorial agent. Yet the historical precedent for this use of the disputed plays points us towards the initial lack of fixity in the constitution of the canon that preceded attempts to commodify and limit Shakespeare.

Sonia Massai has recently reminded us of the importance of looking beyond the obvious and oft-rehearsed editorial history of Shakespeare in order to better appreciate the multiple agencies that have governed the construction of the established text. She notes how the Oxford editors, for example, “describe the cumulative effect of the changes introduced in the First Folio as a consistent progression towards ideological, as well as textual, uniformity.” The consolidation of canon is an important aspect of this, and attempts to justify the inclusions and exclusions of the folio in light of later authorship research have been inflected by a bias towards continuity. Yet the folio was only the most influential among a series of publishing and bibliographic moments that attempted to negotiate the constitution of “Shakespeare.” This essay will argue that Shakespeare and the Shakespeare canon have always been defined by the ongoing opposition of commercial and cultural/aesthetic interests, by returning to the period of Double Falsehood’s initial publication, during which the canon vacillated between two major forms: one containing thirty-six plays, the other forty-three. The mobility of the canon during this period demonstrates the desire for more Shakespeare during the early years of Shakespeare’s canonization, showing that movements towards canonical homogeneity have always been in conflict with reader-generated impulses towards canonical expansion and plurality. The Shakespeare that is for sale sits at the site of contested conceptions of what can and should be considered “Shakespeare.”
In 1663, Philip Chetwind published the third folio of Shakespeare's plays, the first anthology of Shakespeare in just over thirty years. This edition marked an important reclamation of Shakespeare's status in the immediate postwar period dominated by the Fletcher and Jonson canons. It filled a commercial gap in the market and reasserted the worth of Shakespeare's works, at a time when he was often derided as an "ignorant and archaic rustic." It also promoted the theater itself, reoffering the plays in a prestige folio format designed to lend credibility to the newly revived stage.

Chetwind acquired the rights to Shakespeare's plays through inheritance, marrying the widow of Robert Allot who had acquired the stake previously owned by Edward Blount. His 1663 edition closely followed the 1632 folio; but the second impression, published in the following year, marked the first attempt to alter the constitution of the canon as established by the 1623 folio. The title page of the second imprint reads as follows:


The retrospective authority granted to the 1623 folio has anachronistically diminished our sense of the impact of this edition on the burgeoning Shakespeare canon. John Jowett notes of the additions that “all were seen as having some claim to be of Shakespeare’s authorship, but in most cases the claim was weak,” a statement that projects contemporary valuations of authorial claims onto the past using the past tense. The claims of most of the additional plays are now weak, according to modern priorities of individual authorship, but in bibliographic terms, most of the additions had solid claims, better documented than those of several 1623 folio plays.

There are no records of any attempt to collect Shakespeare's works within his own lifetime in order to consolidate a canon, although critics such as Lukas Erne have attempted to argue that such a project may have begun before his death, a speculation that fulfills a critical desire but is unlikely to be proven. In the absence of an authorized canon, therefore, we must turn to the book market. Erne's groundbreaking work has forced critical reassessment of Shakespeare's popularity in print, noting that Shakespeare appeared in no fewer than forty-five editions between 1584–1616, twice as many as Heywood, the second most-printed dramatist of this period. The number of editions and the number of reprints, Erne argues, indicate
respectively the scale of investment and of sales. We must therefore not underestimate the extent of Shakespeare's material print presence on London bookshelves. A committed Shakespeare bibliophile collecting all the books attributed on title pages to the author within his lifetime could have gathered a library of quartos and octavos consisting of all of the following: *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598), *Richard II* (1598), *Richard III* (1598), *1 Henry IV* (1599), *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), *2 Henry IV* (1600), *The Merchant of Venice* (1600), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600), *Much Ado about Nothing* (1600), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), *Hamlet* (1603), *The London Prodigal* (1605), *King Lear* (1608), *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608), *Pericles* (1609), *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1609), and *Troilus and Cressida* (1609). To these seventeen books may be added *Locrine* (1595), *Thomas Lord Cromwell* (1602), *The Puritan* (1607), and *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (1611), if readers interpreted the initials “W. S.” and “W. Sh.” as Shakespeare's; and *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, which include Shakespeare's name within the books, although not on their title pages. Several other plays would not appear in print until the 1623 folio.

From the point of view of the London literary marketplace, then, the claims of several plays added to the 1664 folio were no less weak than those of their shelf-fellows, since they derived from the presses of reputable printers and shared similar strategies of title-page authentication. Physically, they belonged indisputably to "Shakespeare" insofar as "Shakespeare" functioned as their principal authorizing agent. Whether the intention behind the attributions was deliberately misleading or points to a Shakespearean involvement of a different nature is, from a commercial point of view, immaterial. It is important to recognise here the dispersal of Shakespearean literary identity across poems and plays associated with a range of patrons, companies, genres and stationers. It was the individual buyer and reader of books, rather than the printer, who determined the constitution of their own Shakespearean canon during the author's lifetime.

It was with the 1623 folio that a bookseller, in conjunction with the King's Men as the most important authorizing agent for the plays, took responsibility for shaping Shakespeare's theatrical canon into a single material entity. This involved excluding formerly "authorized" works, authorizing others hitherto anonymous and introducing previously unavailable plays. In 1619, however, Thomas Pavier had begun a similar project that, while unfulfilled, demonstrates the importance of the bibliographical attribution to Shakespeare in creating a cumulative sense of the work. Pavier's collection, usually considered unauthorized, included *The Whole Contention, Henry V, The Merry Wives of Windsor, King Lear, Pericles, A Yorkshire*
This apparent first attempt to create a collected edition of Shakespeare's plays (evidenced by the continuous signatures linking *Contention* and *Pericles*) represents an intriguing cross-section of texts, connected for the most part simply by Pavier's right to publish them. Just four years shy of the 1623 folio, then, Pavier's project is evidence of the inherent instability of the Shakespeare authorial corpus in print, despite his apparent desire to stabilize that corpus. Objective assessments of authorial contribution are secondary to practical concerns of ownership, prior attribution, and marketability: for example, *Pericles* was a top seller with three quartos already printed, Falstaff/Oldcastle was the star of the perennially popular *Henry IV* plays, and the story of the Calverley murders underpinning *A Yorkshire Tragedy* was a contemporary sensation. For Pavier, the Shakespeare attribution does not appear to have been a matter of simple forgery, as later critics assuming an inherent value in Shakespeare's name have suggested.

Rather, Shakespeare acts as a convenient marketing principle by which to set out a larger project: it provides the organizational framework to reproduce plays which are expected to sell on their own merits. Pavier's project is as much about using popular plays to create Shakespeare as it is about using Shakespeare to make plays popular.

Pavier's project was undermined by the success of the 1623 folio project. The infamous “stolne, and surreptitious copies” of Heminge and Condell's preface have been taken to refer both to the so-called “bad” quartos of previous publications and/or specifically to the Pavier quartos, half of which were substantially variant versions of folio texts. Whether intentional or not, the exclusion of several plays already attributed to Shakespeare from the 1623 folio was compounded by their association with the Pavier project and the imputations of corrupt and/or badly printed texts that the folio made, providing a foundation for the critical degradation of the Apocrypha. Not only omitted from the canon, they are associated with unsatisfactory states of textual production. As Laurie Maguire puts it, “Heminge and Condell did not give us Shakespeare; they gave us all that we call Shakespeare.”

We cannot know for certain what prompted Chetwind to readmit seven plays to the Shakespearean corpus in 1664, though we can make some inferences. G. R. Proudfoot and Eric Rasmussen have suggested that the printings of *Pericles* in 1633 and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* in 1634 were deliberately intended as supplements to the 1632 Shakespeare folio, suggesting that the canon presented by the 1623 folio was already available for challenge and extension. As I have pointed out elsewhere, a contemporary collection in the library of Charles I offers another alternative informal supplement to the 1632 folio, adding *Fair Em, Mucedorus*, and *The Merry Devil of Edmon-
ton to a grouping of other dubious plays. It is important to note that the 1623 folio preliminaries make no explicit claims for completeness: the title calls the collection “Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies,” while Heminge and Condell speak only of having “collected and published them” without specifying the parameters that define the “works” being gathered. Completeness is implied, but not marketed. The continued appearance of plays such as The Two Noble Kinsmen in close proximity to the publication of a Shakespeare folio suggests that the Shakespeare canon remained, at least in the publishing industry, unfixed. Stephen Orgel argues that the 1664 folio was the first to imply that “more Shakespeare was better Shakespeare,” beginning a move towards comprehensiveness as a marker of value.

Chetwind’s seven additions gathered together all of the extant plays explicitly attributed to Shakespeare within his own lifetime, thus excluding the posthumously published Kinsmen and The Birth of Merlin (1662). Jowett notes additionally that these two plays were both the property of stationers who had no stake in the 1664 folio, which may have practically impacted on their exclusion. The exception is the falsely dated Oldcastle, the inclusion of which suggests that Chetwind was relying solely on the physical evidence of earlier title pages rather than possessing any independent knowledge of provenance. He also excluded Troublesome Reign, most likely owing to the presence of another King John already in the folio.

Other than on the title page, the seven new additions to the 1664 folio are not explicitly differentiated from the established plays. As with several folio plays, Cymbeline ends with a “Finis” and device, then Pericles follows directly after a blank page. As such, the edition presents them without reservation as Shakespeare’s works, subject to the same frontispiece, commendatory verses and other bibliographic material. However, David Scott Kastan notices a bibliographic anomaly in the pagination of the additions: following Cymbeline, pagination begins again at 1 on the first page of Pericles and runs through to 20, then begins again at 1 for The London Prodigal and runs continuously through the six remaining plays to 100, the last page of Locrine. Kastan refuses to speculate on the reasons for this, merely commenting that “the odd physical structure of the supplement is the only sign of whatever obscure distinction its publisher, Philip Chetwind, intended.” Kastan clearly believes that there is a distinction intended, however, and his note that Pericles is the only one of the seven “plausibly thought to be [Shakespeare’s]” suggests an overly optimistic level of critical engagement on Chetwind’s part that would see him differentiate one play over the others based on the strength of its claim. The lack of any other distinguishing marks rather suggests that the pagination reflects compositorial error, or
else a simple mechanical distinction; that *Pericles* was obtained earlier than
the other six. If Chetwind was inspired by the implied supplement to the
1632 folio offered by the 1633 quarto of *Pericles*, it is possible that he initially
intended to incorporate only this play, before deciding to look for more.
However, the shift in pagination does remind us that the disputed plays are
already beginning to function as a group, a fourth category following the re-
tained division of “Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies”; the “seven Playes”
are gathered as a genre unto themselves.

The implications of the additions were far reaching as, during the sev-
enteenth and eighteenth centuries, it was the usual practice for each new
edition to be marked up from its predecessor, meaning that the new plays
would be included by default until actively removed by an editor. Thus,
the new plays remained in the fourth folio (1685), which in turn was the
base text used by Shakespeare's first modern editor, Nicholas Rowe. Rowe
further elided the distinction between the original thirty-six and the new
seven by removing the subdivisions of Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies,
meaning that all the plays follow each other continuously: his sixth volume
begins with *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Cymbeline*, after which *Pericles*
follows with no bibliographic or material distinction made until the vol-
ume closes with *Locrine*. By including frontispiece illustrations and lists
of dramatis personae for all forty-three plays, Rowe further standardized
their presentation, merely placing them at the end of the collection rather
than marking them as in any way different. Rowe's silence on this decision
is further evidence that their inclusion was passive, an acceptance of the
available canon rather than an engaged reevaluation. This passivity was fi-
nally countered by Alexander Pope in 1725. Sidney Lee dismisses this as an
insignificant period during which “six valueless pieces . . . found for a time
unimpeded admission to [the] collected works,”37 but we should not under-
estimate its importance. On purchasing a 1664 folio, the Bodleian Library
sold its copy of the 1623 version as “superfluous,” an instance indicative
of the value accorded the new arrangement.38 The forty-three-play canon
endured for sixty years, one of the longest sustained periods of canonical
stability ever achieved.39

By granting the seven additional plays the authority of the folio for-
mat, and extending to them the coverage of the commendatory verses,
dedications and frontispiece that contributed to the literary construction of
Shakespeare, Chetwind established their ongoing presence in Shakespeare's
textual afterlife. The canon now existed in two separate states, and future
compilers were required actively to choose the constitution of their edi-
tion rather than simply receiving a single authorized version.40 Gary Taylor
remarks of the additions that they “reinforced the impression that his life-
work was a mess, a collection of ‘indigested’ plays that mixed genius and
ineptitude haphazardly,” thus linking the extended canon to the relatively
haphazard Restoration treatment of Shakespeare. The apparently passive
acceptance of the additions, Taylor implies, is symptomatic of a casual at-
titude to the works during this period. Even in a growing climate of Bar-
dolatry, it would take a figure as confident and intellectually independent
as Pope to offer a challenge to the forty-three-play canon and reevaluate the
constitution of the Shakespearean corpus.

The forty-three-play canon gained considerable traction, and there is
evidence that some of the apocryphal plays enjoyed a measure of popularity
in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Pericles was one of
the first plays revived on stage when the theaters reopened after the Inter-
regnum, appearing at the Cockpit, Drury Lane, in the 1659–60 season, and
revived in the eighteenth century as Marina. The Puritan was revived in
the 1660s, and Matthew Draper’s The Spendthrift, a loose adaptation of The
London Prodigal, was first published in 1731. These later revivals occurred
not long after Tonson had reissued Pope’s edition in duodecimo, with a
ninth volume including reprints of the 1664 additions, thus reviving the
forty-three-play canon even under Pope’s aegis. Although Theobald’s 1733
dition of Shakespeare’s works followed Pope’s 1725 edition in returning to
the canon of the 1623 folio, the forty-three-play canon would emerge one
final time.

In 1734, the independent publisher Robert Walker began publishing in-
expensive individual editions of Shakespeare’s plays containing just the text.
In doing so, he challenged the monopoly of the Tonson cartel (publishers of
Rowe, Pope, and Theobald) over the works of Shakespeare. Murphy notes
that Tonson first tried to combat the publication with legal action and then
retaliated with his own cheap editions, which resulted in the marketplace
being flooded with affordable volumes of Shakespeare. During this com-
mercial battle, efforts to outstrip the other led to both Walker and Tonson
publishing the majority of the 1664 additions in new individual editions.
Jowett notes that three of these (Oldcastle, Cromwell, and Prodigal) sold
sufficiently well to warrant reprints. As Shakespeare’s plays entered mass
circulation through these inexpensive printings, so too did the apocryphal
plays, and Tonson and Walker both appear to have anticipated a readers-
ship for them. The single editions, which Edmund King points out were
“authorised” by the publishers rather than the editors, formed a major part
of the ongoing public dispute between the two publishers. Appended
“Advertisements” allowed the publishers to attack one another’s authority,
particularly over the question of King Lear. Tonson accuses Walker of stupidity in printing Tate’s Lear rather than Shakespeare’s. Walker retaliates in the Advertisement to his own Locrine, printing “A Specimen of some of Tonson’s Omissions and Blunders in the Tragedy of King Lear, which render the same useless and unintelligible.” Walker appeals to the authority of the stage, claiming that his version is printed “as it has been acted for near 50 Years last past (tho’ Tonson’s spurious Edition kills him on the stage).” His inclusion of Elizabeth Barry’s Epilogue and Tate’s dedicatory materials is cited as further evidence of authenticity. The explicit debates over authenticity conducted in the paratexts of playbooks that are themselves of doubtful authorship draws attention to the role of the publisher in determining canonical constitution, and to the fact that the “authentic” Shakespeare at this time was a multifaceted construction, a result of theatrical adaptations and publishers’ interests.

Walker consolidated his endeavor by issuing volume titles, allowing readers to bind their own seven-volume collection of his editions. Walker’s collected edition is omitted from most accounts of the publishing history of Shakespeare’s works on account of it being “pirated”: it was produced outside the linear Tonson-run monopoly and reprinted previously available texts, rather than actively editing them. However, despite its questionable merits, it was a commercial edition of Shakespeare and therefore deserves consideration: for the contemporary reader, the edition was no less authentic than the myriad popular editions that can be found on modern bookshelves; and the fact that Tonson countered with an eight-volume reprint of the canon including the disputed plays (in the eighth volume) in the same year is indicative of its perceived importance. Walker’s is the first edition that desegregates the disputed plays, mixing them in with the canonical plays, and its order is unique in Shakespeare publishing history. The effect is to place equal authority on all forty-three plays. The contents are as follows:

Vol. 1: Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Richard III, Thomas Lord Cromwell, Tempest, Merry Wives;
Vol. 2: Macbeth, Othello, 1 Henry IV, Titus, Measure for Measure, London Prodigal;
Vol. 3: Antony & Cleopatra, Pericles, Lear, 2 Henry IV, The Puritan, Two Gentlemen of Verona;
Vol. 4: Sir John Oldcastle, Locrine, Henry V, Timon of Athens, Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night’s Dream;
Vol. 5: 1, 2, and 3 Henry VI, Henry VIII, As You Like It, Merchant of Venice;
Vol. 6: King John, Troilus & Cressida, Richard II, Romeo & Juliet, Taming of the Shrew, Love’s Labour’s Lost;
This ordering is inconsistent with any modern criteria for arranging the plays, and it is fair to assume that it is dictated by practical rather than critical considerations. By chance or design, however, it presents to us a very different canon. We are used to seeing plays either in the rough generic groupings provided by the 1623 folio, or in chronological order, both of which are questionable. The random order here throws assumptions into question and causes us to consider the plays in a different way.

An imaginative reading of the plays in the order presented, assuming design in the organization, offers interesting interpretative possibilities. The juxtaposition of plays highlights themes and links that alter the reader’s perception of them. Thus, *Thomas Lord Cromwell* comes positioned in a run of plays dealing with usurpation and the fall of great men. Gardiner’s plots, hatched in his study, seem even more Machiavellian in the light of Richard III and Cassius, and set the tone for the atmosphere of political treachery in the following *The Tempest*. The consecutive placing of *Measure for Measure* and *The London Prodigal* brings out close dramatic links between the two: the city setting, the disguised authority figure (Duke/Father) secretly overseeing lapses in morality, the virtuous maid more interested in God’s love than man’s. Following *Measure for Measure*’s concern with chastity and marriage, the central scene of *The London Prodigal* becomes exceptionally shocking, as Luce’s forced marriage and subsequent honorable conduct causes the near total destruction of her life, thus further dramatizing the trials facing an honest woman.

Continuing with this reading, the hypothetical reader is uplifted by the happy chances of *Pericles* that bring reunification and peace, expecting the same as the next play, *King Lear*, draws to its close; and in this is satisfied, for Walker chooses to print Nahum Tate’s adaptation of *King Lear* with its happy ending. The connection between the two is strengthened physically through Walker’s placement of the “Specimen of Tonson’s Omissions” prior to *Pericles*. These two plays in juxtaposition present a Shakespeare concerned with family and amenable to eighteenth-century sensibilities in the reiterated reunions of fathers and daughters. In this vein, the reader then proceeds to *2 Henry IV* and finds something more approaching tragedy in the rejection of Falstaff, here separated from the history plays that provide it with context. *2 Henry IV* concludes, however, with its epilogue reminding the reader that “Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man”; and sure enough, *The First Part of Sir John Oldcastle* follows at the start of the next volume, preceding *Henry V*, as if to support the dramatist’s claim and pres-
ent the real Oldcastle with due respect. Finally, the placement of *Yorkshire Tragedy* immediately following *Cymbeline* places in parallel two instances of a husband attempting to kill a wife; disaster is happily averted in ancient Britain, but no gods descend to save the children of the more contemporary marriage.

This reading is, of course, merely one conjecture of what a reader’s experience could have been, but is designed to show the potential impact of Walker’s integration of the disputed plays into the body of the canon. This is a different canon, a different Shakespeare, with patterns of cause, effect, and resonance shaped by the inclusion and integration of the Apocrypha. Read among the authorized plays, rather than separately from them, the plays influence the reader’s perception of Shakespeare, showing the dramatist building on themes explored in other plays and responding to his own work, with each play affecting the sense of the author at work. As the cultural figure of Shakespeare was constructed, this was the danger posed by the disputed plays: they had the potential to change the way Shakespeare was read and deciphered. Once dissociated from the canon by Pope and Theobald, then, it was imperative that the Apocrypha be hidden. Walker’s treatment of the plays was the last time they were seen in print until Malone’s *Supplement* of 1780.

Alexander Pope’s edition of 1723–25 is indicative of the change in Shakespeare’s status and reputation that took place during the years since Rowe’s edition. Commercially unsuccessful but critically influential, Pope was both the instigator and the most extreme example of the Bardolatrous attitude towards Shakespeare in eighteenth-century editorial practice. His approach to the plays is governed by subjective aesthetic judgments, which lead him to make decisions that have been critically derided by subsequent generations as he makes the plays “comfortably fit for 18th century habitation.” Of these, the most significant are his regularization of meter, relegation of passages he considers less pleasing to footnotes (suggesting that they are spurious interpolations by actors), and his removal of the seven 1664 additions, thus disrupting the inherited lineage of the forty-three-play canon.

Edmund King argues that Pope’s “criterion for canonical inclusion is clearly not the *authenticity* (in the modern sense) of a work, but whether that work adds to its author’s *reputation*”; that is, that canonicity should be selective rather than objectively comprehensive. Pope’s Preface makes apology for those aspects of the plays that are judged deficient, in a bid
to create and preserve Shakespeare’s reputation. Pope thus exercises unprecedented editorial control in constructing his own Shakespeare, a Shakespeare with impeccable literary taste and a thoroughly contemporary mastery of the poetic arts. In so doing, less desirable elements are removed or diminished. Some weaker passages are justified as being Shakespeare’s concessions to “the meaner sort of people” who made up seventeenth-century audiences (though “even in these, our Author’s Wit . . . is born above his subject”). Pope’s Preface is essentially anti-theatrical: he sees a literary genius spoiled by the necessity of pandering to popular taste, and actors as complicit in the ruining of the works. Robert Weimann traces this back to the self-consciously literary attitudes of early dramatists such as Jonson: “Editors [of the eighteenth century] almost unanimously agreed on the need to guard Shakespeare’s text from the ill customs of the age and especially from those of the players.” Despite recognizing that Shakespeare was also a player, Pope expresses the wish that the author had undertaken to publish his plays himself, in order that “we might be certain which [plays] are genuine” and find “the errors lessened by some thousands.” King notes that a “belief in the inherently corrupting power of playhouse manuscript practices” licensed eighteenth-century editors to remake Shakespeare as they saw fit.

Pope sees himself as salvaging what remains of Shakespeare after lesser minds have tampered with the works, and therefore his approach is confident and absolutist. He believes that Shakespeare’s hand can be identified by “the distinguishing marks of his style, and his manner of thinking and writing,” effectively suggesting that he, Pope, has a unique insight into the workings of Shakespeare’s mind. On this basis, he declares that “those wretched plays,” the seven additions, “cannot be admitted as his.” The emotive language stigmatizes the plays in terms of their quality, but also evokes images of textual orphans, forsaken and worthless texts that are audacious in begging admittance, an association that would stick. Continuing with his merciless critique of the canon, he also conjectures that Shakespeare’s hand is only lightly present in Love’s Labour’s Lost, The Winter’s Tale, The Comedy of Errors, and Titus Andronicus.

It is the theater, and Shakespeare’s hypothesized role in it, that authorizes Pope’s intervention. He explains away the 1664 additions as anonymous contributions to Shakespeare’s company, “fitted up for the theatre while it was under his administration,” and therefore attributed to him in his role as the company’s resident dramatist. Tellingly, Pope compares this to the practice of giving “strays to the Lord of the Manor”: Shakespeare becomes part of the landed gentry, a man of wealth and power with the resources to
be charitable. Authorship, in Pope's view, is ideally an individual activity, and ideas of company ownership and collective or collaborative authorship have no place in discussing individual and personal genius. This recasts Shakespeare in a mold suited to Pope's personal approach: as Simon Jarvis notes, the implication is that “the fittest guardian of Shakespeare's text, like the ideal poet, will not be a professional of any kind, but a self-sufficient man of the world.” Pope's intent, then, is to separate Shakespeare's public and private lives, his work and his Works:

If we give into this opinion [that the plays are corrupted by players and editors], how many low and vicious parts and passages might no longer reflect upon this great Genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him? And even in those which are really his, how many faults may have been unjustly laid to his account from arbitrary additions, expunctions, transpositions of scenes and lines, confusion of characters and persons, wrong application of speeches, corruptions of innumerable passages by the ignorance, and wrong corrections of 'em again by the impertinence, of his first editors? From one or other of these considerations, I am verily persuaded, that the greatest and grossest part of what are thought his errors would vanish, and leave his character in a light very different from that disadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us.

It is Shakespeare's “character” that is at stake. Pope's stance is based on a fundamental textual pessimism and the belief that Shakespeare's “Genius” could not have been responsible for what Pope considers “errors” within the texts. Pope's particular dispute continues to be with actors; it is to the “ignorance of the Players” that he attributes the worst of the corruptions. This attitude is perhaps anachronistically informed by Pope's own time. The vogue for adaptation in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was keeping “original” Shakespeare off the stage, just as the emerging editorial tradition attempted to retrieve something closer to Shakespeare's original hand, as realized in Tonson and Walker's dispute over Lear. Pope, the poet, sets himself against the theatrical fashions of the time, preferring the unity of a single creative mind.

Commendably, in terms of editorial integrity, Pope acts on his beliefs by applying his theories of corruption to the texts as edited, hence the relegation to footnotes of “spurious” passages in the canonical plays and the removal of the seven apocryphal plays, dismissed on aesthetic grounds. However, his principles were undercut in the 1728 duodecimo reprint issued by Tonson. This edition resurrects the “wretched plays” by including them as the ninth volume of ten. Orgel theorizes that their reappearance was thanks to “Tonson's conviction that more Shakespeare would sell more copies, and in the hope that some purchasers of the Complete Shakespeare might be willing to replace it with a More Complete Shakespeare,” in the same vein as the poems, similarly treated as supplemental during this pe-
Jowett suggests that this edition was “probably issued without Pope's involvement,” though this is certainly not true of the edition as a whole: the Preface is revised, and Murphy notes that the edition incorporates many corrections occasioned by Lewis Theobald’s 1726 *Shakespear Restor’d*. Whether or not Pope had a say in the addition of the ninth volume is, from the perspective of a reader, irrelevant: the seven plays are, by their silent inclusion, presented without qualification as authentic. Despite the fact that Pope was the first editor of a Complete Works in over sixty years expressly to deny the authenticity of the plays, and despite the continued appearance of this denial in the 1728 preface, the publisher continues to authenticate them via their inclusion. For editors to debate and devalue elements of the canon is one thing, but for publishers actually to remove them from view is quite another.

Jowett argues that “over the course of half a century and more [the 1664 additions] must have become embedded in many readers’ sense of what constituted Shakespeare.” If this is the case, then the implication is that the commercial imperative overrides the critical, prompting the devaluation of the editorial front matter by the appending of a volume that contradicts the edition’s ethos. Publishers cater to the demands of a reading public that wants to see the Shakespeare with which it is familiar. This pattern is replicated throughout the history of editing Shakespeare, where published editions of complete works as often reflect popular and commercial conceptions of the canon as they do contemporary critical thought: here, as with Pope’s 1728 edition, the commercial need for “completeness” in relation to competing editions overrides the immediate editorial concern. It takes time to break down a canon presented as a unified entity.

Although textual historians identify Pope as the key agent in removing the apocryphal plays from collected editions of Shakespeare, it was in fact Lewis Theobald’s 1733 edition that enacted their lasting removal. This is particularly interesting as it contradicts Theobald’s own statement regarding them: he tantalizingly informs the reader, “I can, beyond all controversy, prove some touches in every one of them to come from his pen.” The position of the 1728 edition has been completely reversed: where Pope denied the plays’ authenticity and yet included them, Theobald supports their (at least partial) authenticity, yet excludes them. Theobald’s lack of elaboration on this matter is frustrating, as this marks a turning point in the history of the Apocrypha, the point in the editorial chain at which the plays are most influentially banished. The fact that Theobald is ostensibly a supporter of the plays’ partial authenticity implies that the reasons for their removal are motivated by other concerns. King, following Peter Seary’s assertion
that Theobald may have had no say in the extent of his edition, argues that Tonson would have dictated the constitution of Theobald’s edition. However, Tonson’s choice to publish the seven additions in 1728, and again in 1734–35, rather suggests that Tonson took every opportunity to publish the apocryphal plays. It remains likely, therefore, that Theobald was at least partially responsible for their exclusion.

The feud over Double Falsehood offers what is perhaps the most plausible explanation. In 1726, Theobald published Shakespeare Restor’d, an intelligent but often pedantic criticism of the errors in Pope’s edition of Shakespeare. The very title, positioning Theobald as Shakespeare’s savior, can be read as an attack on Pope’s scholarship, an attack that Pope took personally. The feud was intensified shortly after by the appearance of Theobald’s play Double Falsehood, first performed and published in 1728. While there is now a greater critical willingness to accept the possibility of the play preserving something of Shakespeare and Fletcher’s Cardenio, Theobald’s contemporaries were skeptical of the attribution, giving Pope the opportunity to publicly humiliate Theobald.

In the Preface to the first edition of Double Falsehood, Theobald addresses the most obvious objections to Shakespeare’s authorship and dismisses all other complaints as “far from deserving any answer.” However, he also admits that his own “partiality . . . makes me wish, that every thing which is good, or pleasing, in our tongue, had been owing to his pen.” This admission of Bardolatrous sentiment is indicative of Theobald’s preemptive eagerness to associate Shakespeare and poetic quality wherever possible. The second edition, also 1728, extends the claims. “I had once designed a Dissertation to prove this play to be of Shakespeare’s writing, from some of its remarkable peculiarities in the language, and nature of the thoughts: but as I could not be sure but that the Play might be attacked, I found it advisable, upon second consideration, to reserve that part to my defence.”

He goes on to announce that he has begun work on a new “corrected” edition of Shakespeare’s plays (again implicitly criticizing Pope’s edition). He anticipates that his edition “may furnish an occasion for speaking more at large concerning the present play.” Theobald is already taking a defensive position, protecting his intellectual property. His protestations are often suspicious: he apparently has proofs of the authenticity of Double Falsehood and of the 1664 additions, as well as no fewer than three manuscripts, yet chooses not to make any of them public despite the support these “proofs” would lend to his arguments. A reader could be forgiven for questioning whether these proofs ever indeed existed.
The exclusion of *Double Falsehood* and the 1664 additions from Theobald’s 1733 edition of the complete works is therefore a complex issue. The conflation of two decisions—whether to include the contested plays after Pope’s original decision to omit them, and whether to include a version of *Double Falsehood*—linked plays of doubtful authorship to one of contested and perhaps fraudulent provenance. Despite the editor’s defense of them, all were equally tainted in their omission. Pope’s 1728 edition gave a precedent for their inclusion that Tonson and/or Theobald decided not to use, and Tonson’s reprinting in 1734–35 demonstrates that he still maintained an active claim to them. We must conclude, then, that the decision to exclude all eight plays was taken deliberately, reverting to the earlier model of the canon based on Pope’s first edition, which itself derived authority from the 1623 folio. The thirty-six-play canon may not be “complete” according to Theobald’s beliefs, but it is undoubtedly safe and thus rescues Theobald’s reputation. Pope had, in 1729, ridiculed Theobald as “Tibbald,” the antihero of *The Dunciad*, “one who hath been concerned in the Journals, written bad Plays or Poems, and publish’d low Criticisms.” He explicitly mocked *Double Falsehood* in his footnotes. Valerie Rumbold notes that “[Theobald’s] attribution to Shakespeare prompted widespread ridicule,” and that this therefore provided solid ground for Pope’s attack. In the persona of “Scriblerus” he first mocks the shaky ground on which Theobald made his attribution (illegitimate family connections and hearsay), highlights Theobald’s own admission of his partiality for Shakespeare and then goes on to parody the style of *Shakespeare Restor’d* by mock-correcting various passages from *Double Falsehood*, using Theobald’s own language against him. In Pope’s hands, the play is remade as a site of editorial and textual folly, essentially an acknowledged and recognizable joke.

Pope’s criticism thus attacks Theobald not on the grounds of scholarship where Theobald was superior, but on poetic and artistic grounds. Theobald’s admission of “partiality” for Shakespeare, and the general association of the Bard with poetic quality, created an opportunity for Pope, who attacked the *quality* of *Double Falsehood*, and thus by implication its authenticity. In effect, Pope (the celebrated poet) accepts Theobald’s criteria but rubbishes the lawyer’s ability to judge according to those criteria. Murphy tells us that Theobald’s reputation was badly damaged by Pope’s attacks. It is not only the ongoing controversy over the authenticity of *Double Falsehood* that warranted its exclusion, but also the undermining of Theobald’s “connoisseurship,” his critical faculty. It is only logical, then, that this is reflected in Theobald’s exclusion of the rest of the disputed plays: following Pope’s rejection of them, Theobald appears to have doubted his
own ability to authenticate them. As King notes, despite Pope's initiation of a newly “interventionist” form of editing, Theobald chooses to restrict his opinions to his preface and footnotes: what King identifies as “ambivalence” I suggest might be even more strongly understood as editorial insecurity. Pope’s “victory” in this dispute thus allowed him to dictate the shape of the Shakespeare canon, and maintain the precedence of the sophisticated literary amateur over the historically oriented, newly professional critic exemplified by Theobald.

The forty-three-play canon, then, became a casualty of a burgeoning culture of Bardolatry that, in Pope's practice, treated aesthetic quality as a form of objective proof and prioritized authorial reputation over textual origins. The plays were excluded, not for being demonstrably un-Shakespearean, but for being subjectively “wretched,” and their exclusion was perpetuated in Theobald's subsequent edition owing to Theobald's lack of conviction in countering Pope's criteria. This was the most significant moment yet in the stigmatizing of the disputed plays, the point at which they were first removed from the canon for being aesthetically deficient according to a Shakespearean standard; yet this standard was determined subjectively by Pope.

Pope's specific role in removing the plays, however, was quickly forgotten. With the disappearance of the plays from collected editions of Shakespeare, the plays fell into critical neglect, and references to them became less frequent. However, volume XC of the periodical *The Adventurer* (1753) provides a sense of how quickly Pope's opinion of the plays had become standard. The periodical, whose contributors included John Hawkesworth, Samuel Johnson, and other members of the literary elite, followed the example of journals such as *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* in purporting to represent and influence contemporary tastes and manners. Volume XC, signed by “Crito,” is specifically concerned with great authors and the wish that “unworthy stains could be blotted from their works.” The writer (identified in the *ODNB* as John Duncombe) describes a dream in which all of the authors whom he considers great line up at a heavenly altar to sacrifice those aspects of their work that warrant purgation, with Aristotle and Longinus overseeing. The dream is an opportunity for the writer to describe in detail those aspects of the authors’ canons that he feels unworthy of their name, and dramatically to enact a process of selective canonization that is explicitly concerned, not with truth or textual fidelity, but with lasting fame. Shakespeare's offering is described thus, and is worth quoting in full:
Shakespeare carried to the altar a long string of puns, marked “The Taste of the Age,” a small parcel of bombast, and a pretty large bundle of incorrectness. Notwithstanding the ingenuous air with which he made this offering, some officiates at the altar accused him of concealing certain pieces, and mentioned The London Prodigal, Sir Thomas Cromwell, The Yorkshire Tragedy, &c. The poet replied, “that as those pieces were unworthy to be preserved, he should see them consumed to ashes with great pleasure; but that he was wholly innocent of their original.” The two chief priests interposed in this dispute, and dismissed the poet with many compliments; Longinus observing, that the pieces in question could not possibly be his, for that the failings of Shakespeare were like those of Homer, “whose genius, whenever it subsided, might be compared to the ebbing of the ocean, which left a mark upon its shores, to shew to what a height it was sometimes carried.” Aristotle concurred in this opinion, and added “that although Shakespeare was quite ignorant of that exact economy of the stage, which is so remarkable in the Greek writers, yet the meer strength of his genius had in many points carried him infinitely beyond them.”

Developing Pope’s concern with posthumously preserving authorial reputation through selectivity, here Shakespeare becomes the instigator of a process of self-canonization, a poet concerned above all with establishing an impeccable canon for posterity. It is significant that Shakespeare himself is evoked to refute his hand in the disputed plays. A stage tradition throughout the early eighteenth century had seen Shakespeare frequently appearing to provide prologues to performances of his works, thereby acting as an authorizing agent. This was especially important in a culture where plays were usually adapted: Shakespeare was invoked in order to legitimize the contemporary reworkings that replaced his originals. Here, Shakespeare’s presence provides the most powerful possible refutation of the authenticity of the disputed plays, drawing a line under the entire argument. The pieces are denounced as unworthy, with Longinus suggesting that even “bad” Shakespeare has an echo of his genius, while these plays are so bereft of merit that they bear no resemblance whatsoever. Aristotle, meanwhile, makes apology for Shakespeare’s “nature,” his lack of adherence to the classical unities and the ancient constructs of theater. This is countered through praise of his natural genius, producing great works despite what Aristotle terms as Shakespeare’s “ignorance.”

In some respects, this essay marks the end of the Apocrypha’s commercial profile. The Tonson cartel had not included the plays in a collected edition since that of Pope, now twenty-five years old, and the cheap 1734 individual editions were effectively disposable. Walker’s collected edition does not seem to have achieved widespread circulation, unable to compete with the Tonson machine that had already supplanted earlier editions with Warburton’s new text in 1743, and is absent from accounts of Shakespeare’s textual history. As the plays disappeared from the public eye, The Advertiser chose to mark the moment by resurrecting Shakespeare himself in order finally to disown them at a sacrificial altar.
If the formal disowning of the Apocrypha was the final step in cementing Shakespeare's reputation, we may perhaps understand why Samuel Johnson (who one might well expect to have had an opinion on the disputed plays) made no mention of them whatsoever in his 1765 edition. Instead, in his notes on *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Johnson echoes Longinus. “If [Two Gentlemen] be taken from him, to whom shall it be given? This question may be asked of all the disputed plays, except *Titus Andronicus*; and it will be found more credible, that Shakespeare might sometimes sink below his highest flights, than that any other should rise up to his lowest.” As in *The Adventurer*, Shakespeare’s unique genius is assumed to be discernible even in his weakest plays, setting him apart from his contemporaries. While Johnson acknowledges that Shakespeare might “sometimes sink,” there is still an implied base level of quality below which Shakespeare does not descend, and to which no other writers rise. Plays that do not meet this standard are, therefore, not Shakespeare's. Duncombe's “sacrifice” of the Apocrypha is made complete in Johnson’s silence on the plays: for Johnson, they no longer exist.

It is the assertion of “genius,” of direct inspiration, of Shakespeare’s person and will that decisively resolves the problem of canonical constitution. In a juridical and religiously inflected classical ceremony, Shakespeare proclaims himself “innocent” of the apocrypha; as, too, he is “ignorant” of the niceties of the eighteenth-century age that seeks to canonize him. It is the “mere strength of his genius” that prevails, that prevents the production of works that are “unworthy.” Shakespeare's self-regulation became orthodox: Edward Capell, who believed in the authenticity of the plays, and even extended authorship claims further with his edition of *Edward III*, was content to accept that Shakespeare himself chose not to include these plays in his own collected edition. The stage was set for Shakespeare's apotheosis in David Garrick's 1769 *Jubilee*, and the idea that Shakespeare was himself involved in the compilation of the First Folio has since been sustained, as in Erne. By the time Edmund Malone came to edit the plays in 1780—in the form of a *Supplement* to George Steevens's edition—the core distinction between a canon and an apocrypha had been set, although it would not be formalized until C. F. Tucker Brooke's seminal edition of *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* in 1908. All of the plays had commercial value; but the canonical would now be those that Shakespeare would have wanted to be considered his.
While a modern, historically inflected study inevitably returns to the 1623 folio to establish the basic Shakespeare canon, the purpose of rehearsing this history is to point out that the canon was settled much later, and in opposition to a popular and commercially successful model of Shakespeare that has always sought to extend the ways in which we define and read the plays. As such, the outrage expressed against Arden’s *Double Falsehood* by Rosenbaum and others can be understood as a recurrence of the conflict that oscillated between Chetwind and Pope, Walker and *The Adventurer*, which represents the collision of commercial and cultural capital, Shakespeare as popular author responsive to the demands of readers versus Shakespeare as prestigious cultural icon. It is over the plays of the apocrypha that this conflict was and continues to be most urgently fought; their inclusion alerts us to the wider commercial context of Shakespeare’s writing, both in the theater and the early book trade; while their exclusion speaks to the maintenance of the canon as single artistic oeuvre. These remain the two conflicting priorities underpinning the canon debates.

C. F. Tucker Brooke’s consolidation of the category of Apocrypha in 1908—the first volume to refer to the group by that name—was the culmination of a long line of varied and inconsistent collections of disputed plays, and acted to resolve these disputes. By creating a boundaried dumping ground for plays of dubious origin, he created a space in which the messy context of Shakespeare’s early multiplicity in printed form and collaboration could be safely discussed, while preserving the boundaries of canon. The main canon, by contrast, became a notionally fixed entity identifiable with the individual Author. By abstracting and containing the elements of doubt, Shakespeare’s canon became synonymous with Shakespeare’s corpus, an extension of his embodied presence into material book form. This was accompanied by increasing use in the twentieth-century of the title *Complete Works*, which resists flexibility; for, if new plays can be added to a complete works, then it was clearly incomplete to begin with. Yet the rationale for completeness is itself commercial, serving consumer demand for a defined and exhaustive product. Rosenbaum’s complaint may justifiably be reversed; in limiting and dissecting the artistic context of Shakespeare’s plays, it is “completeness” that represents the triumph of marketing over art.

Scholarship over the last twenty years has destabilized the dichotomy formed by Brooke between canon and apocrypha. Appreciation of the importance of early modern book culture and the theatrical repertory to the creation of Shakespeare’s authorship has insisted on the re-situation of Shakespeare’s plays within their historical context, of which the apocryphal
plays form a major part; while the acceptance of collaboration within the established canon has disrupted the corporeal, individualized idea of the corpus. Richard Proudfoot has called for the apocryphal category to be replaced with an open-ended “unattributed repertoire” of Shakespeare’s works, while John Jowett prefers a “gradualist model.”94 Neither of these, however, offers a model that can be realized commercially. While the Apocrypha has been theoretically abolished as a category, in practice it persists as the inverse of the marketable product—it is the Shakespeare that cannot be sold.

Paradoxically, then, these plays consolidated their association with Shakespeare on the basis of their perceived commercial viability and interest to Shakespeare’s earlier publishers and readers; yet it is the reawakening of interest in their relevance to Shakespeare that now undermines the principles on which Shakespeare is commercially disseminated. Shakespeare’s canon—and drama itself—resists completion, inextricably connected as it is to the collaborative milieu of early modern theater-making. The new willingness of publishers to attach apocryphal plays to Shakespeare’s name may occasion alarm, but it also allows us to reflect usefully on the eclectic and heterogeneous circulation of Shakespeare’s early printed presence. If completeness, and canonical homogeneity, restrict Shakespeare according to the anachronistically modern demand for consumption, then new attention to the apocrypha’s historical role in producing Shakespeare for the commercial market, rather than debate over their authorship, may offer the most productive means of reintegrating Shakespeare into his multiple contexts.

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NOTES


3 Hammond’s edition makes a strong and prudently qualified case for believing Theobald’s claims based on historical evidence rather than the identification of specific “Shakespearian” passages; the value, in the words of the general editors, is in the possibility of surviving textual evidence for a lost play. The counterargument, that the play is a Theobaldian forgery, is strongly upheld by Tiffany Stern, “The Forgery of Some Modern Author?: Theobald’s Shakespeare and Cardenio’s Double Falsehood,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62 (2011): 555–93.


8 As Scott McMillin, The Elizabethan Theatre and The Book of Sir Thomas More (Cornell U. Press, 1987), 158, has pointed out, the word “hand” is problematic in itself. It is taken as a synecdoche for the writer, but is actually a metonymy for writing, the process rather than the creator. Jeffrey Masten, "More or Less: Editing the Collaborative," Shakespeare Studies 29 (2001), 115, warns us against the dangers of conflating “writing habits” with “identities,” an observation which further complicates the process of boundaried can-onization.

9 Bell's eight-volume edition of 1785–86 appears to have been the first to bear the title Complete Works. The word Complete appeared with increasing frequency during the mid-late nineteenth century, before becoming standard in the twentieth century.

10 Charles Knight was the first to refer to the disputed plays as “apocryphal” in his edition of 1841. The term was most influentially formalized by C. F. Tucker Brooke in his seminal The Shakespeare Apocrypha (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), which included Arden of Faversham, Locrine, Edward III, Mucedorus, Sir John Oldcastle, Thomas Lord Cromwell, The London Prodigal, The Puritan, A Yorkshire Tragedy, The Merry Devil of Edmonton, Fair Em, The Two Noble Kinsmen, The Birth of Merlin, and Thomas More.


12 William Shakespeare: Complete Works, ed. Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2007). The edition’s original theoretical remit was to edit the First Folio according to its material constitution; but the publishers required the editors to compete at the level of a Complete Works and thus include non-folio plays and poems in the edition.


15 This history is, in effect, the “negative” history to that articulated by Andrew Murphy’s magisterial Shakespeare in Print (Cambridge U. Press, 2003). The history of the apocry-pha has been best told by John Jowett in “Shakespeare Supplemented,” The Shakespeare Apocrypha, ed., Douglas A. Brooks (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 39–73, to which I am indebted.
For the period 1659–99, *The London Stage* records 306 performances of forty-nine plays attributed to Fletcher, 228 performances of thirty-seven plays attributed to Shakespeare, and seventy-one performances of nineteen plays attributed to Jonson. Furthermore, the Shakespeare figures are heavily skewed by adaptations; including, for example, forty-four performances of Dryden and Davenant’s *The Enchanted Island.* While Shakespeare was nominally present in the repertory, the extent to which his plays were adapted is symptomatic of the period’s attitude towards him. See Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 17–61.


For the value of the “First Folio” and its role in constructing Shakespeare’s literary authorship, see Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print,* esp. 44–45.


Dates refer to the playbook’s first publication with a Shakespeare title-page attribution.


The *Oldcastle* quarto was dated 1600 despite being printed in 1619. The mistake/forgery was not discovered until the twentieth century: see Walter W. Greg, “‘On Certain False Dates in Shakespearian Quartos,’” *The Library* 9 (1908): 113–31, 381–409. It is most likely that Chetwind, too, did not realize the date was false when collecting together the 1664 additions.

27 Tara L. Lyons argues in this issue that eight of the ten plays in Pavier’s collection can be considered as part of a narrative sequence, whether historical (Henry V) or character based (Merry Wives and Oldcastle as Falstaff plays), and suggests that this became a significant aspect of the construction of Shakespeare’s print identity, most obviously realized in the organization of the histories in the 1623 folio.

28 William Shakespeare, Comedies, histories, & tragedies Published according to the true originall copies (London, 1623), A3r.

29 The Whole Contention, Merry Wives, Henry V, King Lear. Pericles is also usually considered a corrupt text. Laurie E. Maguire’s Shakespearean Suspect Texts (Cambridge U. Press, 1996) has done much to rehabilitate many of these texts, although she accepts that Merry Wives and to a lesser extent Pericles may preserve features of memorial reconstruction (285–86, 294–95).


32 The volume also included The Puritan, Thomas Lord Cromwell (the first explicit association of the W. S. initials with Shakespeare), The London Prodigal, and Love’s Labour’s Lost. See Peter Kirwan, “The First Collected ‘Shakespeare Apocrypha,’” Shakespeare Quarterly 62 (2011): 594–601. The three newly attributed plays were not subsequently included in apocryphal collections until the nineteenth century.


34 Proudfoot, Shakespeare: Text, Stage, and Canon, 87–88, points out that Nigel Bawcutt’s identification of a 1622 reference to The Childe hath founde the Father in Henry Herbert’s office-book with The Birth of Merlin suggests that the play was written several years after Shakespeare’s death.


36 David Scott Kastan, Shakespeare and the Book (Cambridge U. Press, 2001), 64.


38 Sidney Lee, Notes and Additions to the Census of Copies of the Shakespeare First Folio (London: Henry Frowde, 1906), 21. Lee notes that it was not until 1905 that the library’s original 1623 folio was recovered (131).

It could even be argued that there were three states to choose from, if one takes into consideration that the earliest issues of the 1623 folio excluded *Troilus and Cressida*. This appears to have gone unnoticed until Hinman’s pioneering work on the folio in the 1960s, however, and therefore did not feature in eighteenth-century discussion. See Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, 50 and Peter W. M. Blayney, *The First Folio of Shakespeare* (Washington, D.C.: Folger Library, 1991), 17–24.


Edmund G. C. King, “*Cardenio* and the Eighteenth-Century Shakespeare Canon,” *Quest for Cardenio*, 81–94. I am grateful to King for allowing me to see an advance copy of his paper.

J. Tonson, ed., *The tragedy of Locrine, the eldest son of King Brutus* (London, 1734), 60.

R. Walker, ed., *The tragedy of Locrine, the eldest son of King Brutus* (London, 1734), 50.


The problems of the folio’s generic groupings have been discussed in great detail. See, for example, Stephen Orgel, *The Authentic Shakespeare* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 143–58. Chronological grouping is a more common contemporary method and, in the second edition of the Oxford Shakespeare, allows for certain apocryphal plays to be integrated with the main canon. As Gordon McMullan, *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing* (Cambridge U. Press, 2007), 78–104, demonstrates, this is based on post-Enlightenment concerns with biography and tracing authorial development via the works.

Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism, 1730–1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 24, referring to Tonson’s criticism of Walker’s decision to print Tate’s adaptation, suggests that “Tonson clearly expects the discerning gentleman to want to see Tate’s version but read Shakespeare’s.” Considering the commercial failure of the anti-theatrical edition of Pope, however, it is possible that Walker’s more theatrically aware choice gave the public what it wanted. However, Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 223, observes that the prompter W. R. Chetwood “publicly rubbish’d” Walker’s claims of theatrical accuracy in an address published in Tonson’s 1734 edition. Tonson’s recruitment of a theatrical authority to critique Walker, as well as his own textual authority, ensured Walker was attacked on both fronts.

King, “*Cardenio*,” 87, provides an excellent introduction to Pope’s newly “interventionist” approach to editing.
52 Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, 67.

53 King’s reading of Pope and Swift in “Cardenio,” 82–89, provides fascinating insights into Pope’s conception of canonicity and attribution, particularly the collection’s insistence on the right of the authors to suppress and destroy their own works.


59 Pope’s poetic subjectivity was influential on disintegrative work throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While the work of the New Shakspeare Society in the late nineteenth century attempted to regularize these methodologies, the impressions of poets continued to carry weight. Kenneth Muir writes that Swinburne “has argued most persuasively against the attribution of *Edward III* to Shakespeare [although he] relied entirely on aesthetic arguments . . . Swinburne’s intimate knowledge of Elizabethan drama gives more weight to his opinion than Tennyson’s.” *Shakespeare as Collaborator* (London: Methuen, 1960), 11–12. Authority here is located not in methodology but in the mind of the poet.


66 Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, 126, links this to the elevation of theater criticism begun by Addison and Steele in the *Tatler* and *Spectator* at the start of the century, which similarly tended to treat the plays as texts to be read rather than to be seen.


Murphy, Shakespeare in Print, 69. This is in spite of Pope’s public rejection of Theobald’s volume. The problems of silent emendations based on others’ notes is endemic throughout the eighteenth-century editorial tradition, where editors regarded their emendations as an early form of intellectual property. Steevens was particularly infamous in this regard: John Collins, publisher of Capell’s commentaries, went so far as to accuse him of plagiarism (Murphy, Shakespeare in Print, 90–91).

The surviving correspondence of Pope does not reveal any thoughts regarding the addition of the ninth volume.


King, “Cardenio.”

Lewis Theobald, Double falshood; or, the distrest lovers. A play, as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. Written originally by W. Shakespeare; and now revised and adapted to the stage by Mr. Theobald, the Author of Shakespeare Restor’d (London, 1728), Preface.

Theobald, Double falshood, Preface.

See Hammond, Double Falsehood, on Theobald’s claims, esp. 122–23.


The line “None but Thy self can be thy parallel” is incorporated into The Dunciad (3.272) as a platform for Pope’s critique, and Hammond devotes an appendix to discussion of the (mis)fortunes of this line (Double Falsehood, 322–24). Pope’s parody of Theobald’s editorial style is deliberately pedantic.

Murphy, Shakespeare in Print, 74.

See King, “Cardenio.”

See also Richard Foster Jones, Lewis Theobald: His Contribution to English Scholarship with Some Unpublished Letters (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 105: “I am rather confident that he did not himself really believe Shakespeare was the author . . . a man of Theobald’s thoroughgoing scholarly nature, who insisted that all conclusions should be supported by proof and authority, would not have rested content with the feeble reasons [of the preface].”

The Adventurer has received surprisingly little critical attention, and the significance of Issue 90 as representative of eighteenth-century conceptions of the Shakespearean canon has not been previously noted.


_Dobson, Making of the National Poet_, 120, lists examples including Gildon’s 1700 _Measure for Measure_ and Granville’s 1701 _The Jew of Venice_. The Prologue to _Double Falsehood_ similarly invokes Shakespearean authority, though it ventriloquizes Shakespeare rather than bringing him onstage.

Johnson’s involvement in _The Adventurer_ may suggest a closer relationship between the essay and his edition; with the plays formally disowned in the journal, Johnson may well have considered the issue closed. Even _Pericles_ is not mentioned in Johnson’s edition.


See Dobson, _Making of the National Poet_, for detailed discussion of the movements leading up to this event.

Erne, _Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist_, 111.

