

THE NORTON

BASED ON THE OXFORD EDITION

SHAKESPEARE



STEPHEN GREENBLATT

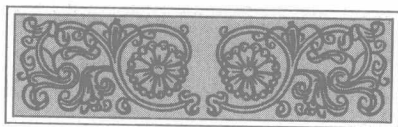
WALTER COHEN

JEAN E. HOWARD

KATHARINE EISAMAN MAUS

THE NORTON SHAKESPEARE

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Stephen Greenblatt, *General Editor*
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

With an essay on the Shakespearean stage
by Andrew Gurr



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Cover illustration: *Fool's Cap*, 1620. Douce Portfolio 142 (92). Reproduced by permission of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. The map is based on Abraham Ortelius (Flemish, 1527–1598). The Latin inscriptions on the Fool's Cap, among them “Who does not have asses' ears?” and “The number of fools is infinite,” evoke an Erasmian vision of universal folly frequently voiced by Shakespeare's comic characters. The global image serves as well to suggest the astonishing worldwide success of Shakespeare's drama.

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Preface

Since Shakespeare's principal medium, the drama, was thoroughly collaborative, it seems appropriate that this edition of his works is itself the result of a sustained collaboration. Two lists of editors' names on the title-page spread hint at the collaboration that has brought to fruition *The Norton Shakespeare*. But the title page does not tell the full history of this project. The text on which *The Norton Shakespeare* is based was published in both modern-spelling and original-spelling versions by Oxford University Press, in 1986. Under the general editorship of Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, the Oxford text was a thorough rethinking of the entire body of Shakespeare's works, the most far-reaching and innovative revision of the traditional canon in centuries. When many classroom instructors who wanted to introduce their students to the works of Shakespeare through a modern text expressed a need for the pedagogical apparatus they have come to expect in an edition oriented toward students, Norton negotiated with Oxford to assemble an editorial team of its own to prepare the necessary teaching materials around the existing Oxford text. Hence ensued a collaboration of two publishers and two editorial teams.

To what extent is this the *Norton Shakespeare* and to what extent the Oxford text? Since the Norton contributions appear here for the first time, the many pages that follow will provide the answer to the first part of the question. Introductions (both the General Introduction and those to individual plays and poems), footnotes, glosses, bibliographies, genealogies, annals, documents, and illustrations have all been the responsibility of the Norton team. We also asked Andrew Gurr of the University of Reading to contribute to this edition an essay on the London theater in Shakespeare's time, and we asked Donald W. Foster of Vassar College to introduce, edit, and gloss *A Funeral Elegy*, a poem, included here in an appendix, that raises important questions about the attribution of works to Shakespeare.

The textual notes and variants derive for the most part from the work of the Oxford team, especially as represented in *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford University Press, 1987), a remarkably comprehensive explanation of editorial decisions that is herewith strongly recommended to instructors as a valuable companion to this volume. Some of the annotations spring from the never-published commentaries of the Oxford team, who have graciously allowed the Norton editors full use of them.

The Oxford text is widely available and already well-known to scholars. A few words here may help clarify the extent of our fidelity to that text and the nature of the collaboration that has brought about this volume. The Oxford editors have profited from the massive and sustained attention accorded their edition by Shakespeare scholars across the globe, and of course they have continued to participate actively in the ongoing scholarly discussion about the nature of Shakespeare's text. In the reprintings of the Oxford volumes and in various articles over the past years, the Oxford editors have made a number of refinements of the edition they originally published. Such changes have been incorporated silently here. A small number of other changes made by the Norton team, however, were not part of the Oxford editors' design and were only accepted by them after we reached, through lengthy consultation, a mutual understanding about the nature, purpose, and intended audience of this volume. In all such changes, our main concern was for the classroom; we wished to make fully and clearly available the scholarly innovation and freshness of the Oxford text, while at the same time making certain that this was a superbly useful teaching text. It is a pleasure here to record, on behalf of the Norton team, our

gratitude for the personal and professional generosity of the Oxford editors in offering advice and entertaining arguments in our common goal of providing the best student Shakespeare for our times. The Norton changes to the Oxford text are various, but in only a few instances are they major. The following brief notes are sufficient to summarize all of these changes, which are also indicated in appropriate play introductions, footnotes, or textual notes.

1. The Oxford editors, along with other scholars, have strenuously argued—in both the Oxford text and elsewhere—that the now-familiar text of *King Lear*, so nearly omnipresent in our classrooms as to seem unquestionably authoritative but in reality dating from the work of Alexander Pope (1723) and Lewis Theobald (1733), represents a wrong-headed conflation of two distinct versions of the play: Shakespeare's original creation as printed in the 1608 Quarto and his substantial revision as printed in the First Folio (1623). The Oxford text, therefore, prints both *The History of King Lear* and *The Tragedy of King Lear*. Norton follows suit, but where Oxford presents these two texts sequentially, we print them on facing pages. While each version may be read independently, and to ensure this we have provided glosses and footnotes for each, the substantial points of difference between the two are immediately apparent and available for comparison. But even many who agree with the scholarly argument for the two texts of *Lear* nevertheless favor making available a conflated text, the text on which innumerable performances of the play have been based and on which a huge body of literary criticism has been written. With the reluctant acquiescence, therefore, of the Oxford editors, we have included a conflated *Lear*, a text that has no part in the Oxford canon and that has been edited by Barbara K. Lewalski of Harvard University rather than by Gary Taylor, the editor of the Oxford *Lears*.

The Norton Shakespeare, then, includes three separate texts of *King Lear*. The reader can compare them, understand the role of editors in constructing the texts we now call Shakespeare's, explore in considerable detail the kinds of decisions that playwrights, editors, and printers make and remake, witness first-hand the historical transformation of what might at first glance seem fixed and unchanging. *The Norton Shakespeare* offers extraordinary access to this supremely brilliant, difficult, compelling play.

2. *Hamlet* (along with several other plays, including *Richard II*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Othello*) offers similar grounds for objections to the traditional conflation, but both the economics of publishing and the realities of bookbinding—not to mention our recognition of the limited time in the typical undergraduate syllabus—preclude our offering three (or even four) *Hamlets* to match three *Lears*.

The Oxford text of *Hamlet* was based upon the Folio text, with an appended list of Additional Passages from the Second Quarto (Q2). These additional readings total more than two hundred lines, a significant number, among which are lines that have come to seem very much part of the play as widely received, even if we may doubt that they belong with all the others in any single one of Shakespeare's *Hamlets*. The Norton team, while following the Oxford text, has moved the Q2 passages from the appendix to the body of the play. But in doing so, we have not wanted once again to produce a conflated text. We have therefore indented the Q2 passages, printed them in a different typeface, and numbered them in such a way as to make clear their provenance. Those who wish to read the Folio version of *Hamlet* can thus simply skip over the indented Q2 passages, while at the same time it is possible for readers to see clearly the place that the Q2 passages occupy. We have adopted a similar strategy with several other plays: passages printed in Oxford in appendices are generally printed here in the play texts, though clearly demarcated and not conflated. In the case of *The Taming of the Shrew* and the related quarto text, *The Taming of a Shrew*, however, we have followed Oxford's procedure and left the quarto passages in an appendix, since we believe the texts reflect two distinct plays rather than a revision

of one. We have similarly reproduced Oxford's brief appendices to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Henry V*, enabling readers to consider alternative revisions of certain passages.

3. For reasons understood by every Shakespearean (and rehearsed at some length in this volume), the Oxford editors chose to restore the name "Sir John Oldcastle" to the character much better known as Falstaff in *1 Henry IV*. (They made comparable changes in the names of the characters known as Bardolph and Peto.) But for reasons understood by everyone who has presented this play to undergraduates or sampled the centuries of enthusiastic criticism, the Norton editors, with the Oxford editors' gracious agreement, have for this classroom edition opted for the familiar name "Falstaff" (and those of his boon companions), properly noting the change and its significance in the play's introduction.

4. The Oxford editors chose not to differentiate between those stage directions that appeared in the early editions up to and including the Folio and those that have been added by subsequent editors. Instead, in *A Textual Companion* they include separate lists of the original stage directions. These lists are not readily available to readers of the Norton text, whose editors opted instead to bracket all stage directions that derive from editions published after the Folio. Readers can thus easily see which stage directions derive from texts that may bear at least some relation to performances in Shakespeare's time, if not to Shakespeare's own authorship. The Norton policy is more fully explained in the General Introduction.

It has long been the dream of the publisher, W.W. Norton, to bring out a Shakespeare edition. The task proved to be a complex one, with many players. The initial efforts of the late John Benedict at Norton were followed, with the crucial encouragement of the firm's chairman, Donald S. Lamm, by the efforts of Barry Wade, who brought together with patience, tact, and goodwill the scholars who eventually carried the project to fruition. To our deep sadness and regret, Barry Wade did not live to see the completion of the work to which he devoted so much energy. He was succeeded in overseeing the project by Julia Reidhead, whose calm intelligence, common sense, and steady focus have been essential in enabling us to reach the end of the long road. We were blessed with the exceptionally thoughtful and scrupulous developmental editing of Marian Johnson and with the assistance of an extraordinary group of Norton staffers: head manuscript editor Susan Gaustad, who was assisted by copyeditor Alice Falk and project editor Kurt Wildermuth; editorial assistant Tara Parmiter, who, among many other things, coordinated the art program; production manager Diane O'Connor; in-house editor of the *Norton Shakespeare Workshop CD-ROM* Anna Karvellas; and proofreaders Carol Walker and Rich Rivellese.

The *Norton Shakespeare* editors have, in addition, had the valuable, indeed indispensable support of a host of undergraduate and graduate research assistants, colleagues, friends, and family. Even a partial listing of those to whom we owe our heartfelt thanks is very long, but we are all fortunate enough to live in congenial and supportive environments, and the edition has been part of our lives for a long time. We owe special thanks for sustained dedication and learning to our principal research assistants: Pat Cahill, Jody Greene, Nate Johnson, Jesse Liu, Joseph Nugent, Beth Quitslund, Henry Turner, and Michael Witmore. Particular thanks are due to Noah Heringman for his work on the texts assembled in the documents section and for the prefatory notes and comments on those texts; to Philip Schwyzer for preparing the genealogies and the glossary and for conceiving and preparing the Shakespearean Chronicle; and to Young Jean Lee for a variety of complex editorial tasks. In addition, we are deeply grateful to Jim, Kate, and Caleb Baker, Gen Beckman, Aimée Boutin, Dan Brayton, Laura Brown, Francesca Coppelli, Adam Feldman, Margaret Ferguson, William Flesch, Elizabeth Gardner, Ellen Greenblatt, Josh and Aaron Greenblatt, Mark Hazard, David Kastan, Dennis Kezar, Shawn Kirschner, Jeffrey Knapp, Baty Landis, Wendy Lesser, Laurie Maguire, Fred Everett Maus, Stephen

Orgel, Phyllis Rackin, James Shapiro, Debora Shuger, Melissa Wiley Stickney, Ramie Targoff, Elda Tsou, and the staff of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. All of these companions, and many more besides, have helped us find in this long collective enterprise what the Dedicatory Epistle to the First Folio promises to its readers: delight. We make the same promise to the readers of our edition and invite them to continue the great Shakespearean collaboration.

STEPHEN GREENBLATT

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General Introduction

by

STEPHEN GREENBLATT

“He was not of an age, but for all time!”

The celebration of Shakespeare’s genius, eloquently initiated by his friend and rival Ben Jonson, has over the centuries become an institutionalized rite of civility. The person who does not love Shakespeare has made, the rite implies, an incomplete adjustment not simply to a particular culture—English culture of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—but to “culture” as a whole, the dense network of constraints and entitlements, dreams and practices that links us to nature. Indeed, so absolute is Shakespeare’s achievement that he has himself come to seem like great creating nature: the common bond of humankind, the principle of hope, the symbol of the imagination’s power to transcend time-bound beliefs and assumptions, peculiar historical circumstances, and specific artistic conventions.

The near-worship Shakespeare inspires is one of the salient facts about his art. But we must at the same time acknowledge that this art is the product of peculiar historical circumstances and specific conventions, four centuries distant from our own. The acknowledgment is important because Shakespeare the working dramatist did not typically lay claim to the transcendent, visionary truths attributed to him by his most fervent admirers; his characters more modestly say, in the words of the magician Prospero, that their project was “to please” (*The Tempest*, Epilogue, line 13). The starting point, and perhaps the ending point as well, in any encounter with Shakespeare is simply to enjoy him, to savor his imaginative richness, to take pleasure in his infinite delight in language.

“If then you do not like him,” Shakespeare’s first editors wrote in 1623, “surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him.” Over the years, accommodations have been devised to make liking Shakespeare easier for everyone. When the stage sank to melodrama and light opera, Shakespeare—in suitably revised texts—was there. When the populace had a craving for hippodrama, plays performed entirely on horseback, *Hamlet* was dutifully rewritten and mounted. When audiences went mad for realism, live frogs croaked in productions of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. When the stage was stripped bare and given over to stark exhibitions of sadistic cruelty, Shakespeare was our contemporary. And when the theater itself had lost some of its cultural centrality, Shakespeare moved effortlessly to Hollywood and the sound stages of the BBC.

This virtually universal appeal is one of the most astonishing features of the Shakespeare phenomenon: plays that were performed before glittering courts thrive in junior high school auditoriums; enemies set on destroying one another laugh at the same jokes and weep at the same catastrophes; some of the richest and most complex English verse ever written migrates with spectacular success into German and Italian, Hindi, Swahili, and Japanese. Is there a single, stable, continuous object that underlies all of these migrations and metamorphoses? Certainly not. The fantastic diffusion and long life of Shakespeare’s works depends on their extraordinary malleability, their protean capacity to elude definition and escape secure possession. At the same time, they are not without identifiable shared features: across centuries and continents, family resemblances link many of the wildly diverse manifestations of plays such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Twelfth Night*. And if there is no clear limit or end point, there is a reasonably clear beginning, the

England of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the plays and poems collected in this volume made their first appearance.

An art virtually without end or limit but with an identifiable, localized, historical origin: Shakespeare's achievement defies the facile opposition between transcendent and time-bound. It is not necessary to choose between an account of Shakespeare as the scion of a particular culture and an account of him as a universal genius who created works that continually renew themselves across national and generational boundaries. On the contrary: crucial clues to understanding his art's remarkable power to soar beyond its originary time and place lie in the very soil from which that art sprang.

Shakespeare's World

Life and Death

Life expectation at birth in early modern England was exceedingly low by our standards: under thirty years old, compared with over seventy today. Infant mortality rates were extraordinarily high, and it is estimated that in the poorer parishes of London only about half the children survived to the age of fifteen, while the children of aristocrats fared only a little better. In such circumstances, some parents must have developed a certain detachment—one of Shakespeare's contemporaries writes of losing “some three or four children”—but there are many expressions of intense grief, so that we cannot assume that the frequency of death hardened people to loss or made it routine.

Still, the spectacle of death, along with that other great threshold experience, birth, must have been far more familiar to Shakespeare and his contemporaries than to ourselves. There was no equivalent in early modern England to our hospitals, and most births and deaths occurred at home. Physical means for the alleviation of pain and suffering were extremely limited—alcohol might dull the terror, but it was hardly an effective anesthetic—and medical treatment was generally both expensive and worthless, more likely to intensify suffering than to lead to a cure. This was a world without a concept of antiseptics, with little actual understanding of disease, with few effective ways of treating earaches or venereal disease, let alone the more terrible instances of what Shakespeare calls “the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to.”

The worst of these shocks was the bubonic plague, which repeatedly ravaged England, and particularly English towns, until the third quarter of the seventeenth century. The plague was terrifyingly sudden in its onset, rapid in its spread, and almost invariably lethal. Physicians were helpless in the face of the epidemic, though they prescribed amulets, preservatives, and sweet-smelling substances (on the theory that the plague was carried by

1609.

From the 24 th August	there
to the 31 st	died in London, the Liberties,
the out parishes, & the posthouse	364
whereof of the plague	177
Christened in all those places	123
parishes clear	parishes inter
	48

Bill recording plague deaths in London, 1609.