BURDEN OF PROOF: THE RHETORIC OF AUTHENTICATION IN EIGHTEENTH-, TWENTIETH-, AND TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY CRITICISM OF SHAKESPEARE

by

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(Under the Direction of CHRISTY DESMET)

ABSTRACT

Using an Aristotelian model, this thesis tracks the use of probability, evidence, and belief as types of rhetorical proof in Shakespearean criticism. Probabilistic argument, largely absent from eighteenth-century literary criticism, provides the basis for modern stylometric studies, and these studies' use of statistical and rhetorical probability demonstrate rhetorical absences in eighteenth-century criticism. Edmond Malone, eighteenth-century editor of Shakespeare, uses documentary evidence in new ways which place him in the category of "textual scholar" as defined by D.C. Greetham, and his departure from Aristotle's advice against evidence has significant effects on his critical rhetoric. Belief, both as doxa and as devotion, enlivens and directs critical rhetoric. Finally, logical, enthymematic argument, which is often missing from Shakespearean criticism, serves as a method of compromise between an unbalanced reliance on proof, and the pedantry of pure syllogistic reasoning.

INDEX WORDS: Shakespeare, Rhetoric, Edmond Malone, Aristotle, Greetham, William Henry Ireland, Forgery, Probability, Evidence, Belief, Edward III, Stylometrics, Enthymeme, Syllogism

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Eighty one years before Edmond Malone published his ten-volume edition *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, Nicholas Rowe, in 1709, published a similar six-volume collection, *The Works of William Shakespear.* Rowe included a short biography of the author before the plays. His *Some Account of the Life &c. of William Shakespear* was the first attempted biography of Shakespeare. Forty pages long, the text provides a sketchy account of Shakespeare's life which, for years, was the closest thing to a biography the academic community had. Rowe's goal was to commit the story of Shakespeare's life (scantly known story though it was) to posterity, and in this, he was successful. For nearly one hundred years, Rowe's text would be copied, amended, referenced, and plagiarized. The *Account* provides basic information about Shakespeare's life. He was born "in April 1564," his father was supposedly a wool dealer in Stratford, and Shakespeare was educated at a free-school, where he learned some Latin. Eventually he married Anne Hathaway and moved away to London (Rowe ii-v). What sets Rowe's account apart from modern biographies of Shakespeare is his inclusion of Stratford's oral history of Shakespeare.

Rowe includes tales of Shakespeare poaching deer on the land of Sir Thomas Lucy, then writing a vindictive ballad against him when Shakespeare was "prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely" (Rowe v). According to Samuel Schoenbaum, Rowe's *Account* was the first time these legends were included in a print edition of Shakespeare, and

while Rowe does admit that these are oral, not documentary details, they still appear alongside confirmed documentary accounts. Where he can, Rowe gives the source of his stories: from William D'Avenant, he hears the story of the Earl of Southampton giving Shakespeare one thousand pounds in exchange for the poem *Venus and Adonis*, but by and large, Rowe is stymied by a lack of hard evidence. He eventually turns to the plays and poems as evidence of Shakespeare the man, a technique used frequently in Shakespearean biography (perhaps most significantly in Stephen Greenblatt's imaginative *Will in the World*). Rowe concludes by summarizing and praising the plays. The biographical content of the *Account* occupies less than twenty pages, which probably feels meager to readers of modern biography.

In 1790, Edmond Malone published his ten volume collection *The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare*, and in the first volume, he includes a transcription of Rowe's *Account*. Rather than writing a new biography, Malone extensively researches and footnotes Rowe's, offering not only his own findings, but those of Pope, George Steevens, and Lewis Theobald: a veritable who's who of early Shakespearean editors. Almost every one of Rowe's claims is researched and commented on by Malone or his predecessors[1]. In the first few pages, Rowe includes a brief account of John Shakespeare. Malone consults records in Stratford and provides a complete list of entries regarding John Shakespeare's occupation: "Jan. 10, in the 6th year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, John Shakspeare passed his Chamberlain's accounts./ At the Hall holden the eleventh day of September, in the eleventh year of the reign […] 1569, were present Mr. John Shakspeare, High Bailiff" (*Plays and Poems* I. 103). The records go on for a page of tiny text. The rest of the *Account* is littered with similar notes. Malone tracks proponents of the various legends, and presents their version to the reader, even if

1 Malone kindly attributes each note to its original author.

Malone expresses doubt. His footnotes at least double, perhaps triple Rowe's original text; some pages have only one or two lines (or none at all) of Rowe's writing, and the rest of the page filled with a footnote. Legends are attributed. Errors are corrected. Details are added. Edited by Malone, Rowe's work—equal parts life-writing[2], storytelling, and literary admiration—becomes a repository of documentary evidence, a guide to the documents of Shakespeare's life, and remarkably quiet on the subject of the plays' effects on the audience.

Nicholas Rowe relies on his audience to believe in his *Account* without appendices or footnotes full of cited sources, based only on an intuitive understanding of Shakespeare, and an unscientific acceptance of oral tales and fables regarding the bard. Edmond Malone relies on authenticated documents to offer the audience his own position as expert, based on an assumed belief (or *doxa*) that documents are adequate proof in and of themselves. Both authors understand that a large degree of epistemological uncertainty is involved when studying an author so far removed in time, who left so little of his personal life behind him. In this sense, they acknowledge that probabilistic reasoning is necessary[3]. These three elements, along with the emphasis on the audience they carry, recur throughout this thesis: belief, evidence, and probability.

These two versions of the *Account* are a microcosm for the rhetorical situation this thesis is concerned with. The eighteenth century was a turning point for the scholarly treatment of Shakespeare. It saw the first editors, biographers, and textual critics of Shakespeare emerge and make their marks on the literary world. Scholars such as Edmond Malone pioneered new

2 I use the term "life-writing" as an alternative to "biography," because biography is a later, more advanced genre.
3 Malone acknowledges this uncertainty openly, and while he occasionally references probability blatantly, he more often leaves it unsaid but understood. Rowe does not mention probability as such, but acknowledges epistemological uncertainty in his dedication by saying that "I must not pretend to have restor'd this Work to the Exactness of the Author's Original Manuscripts: Those are lost, or, at least, are gone beyond any Inquiry I could make" ("Dedication" A2)

editorial practices, and men such as William Henry Ireland tested the bounds of literary authenticity. Shakespeare became a subject worthy of study in the eighteenth century; no longer a pariah because of his ignorance of the classical unities, Shakespeare could be scrutinized as a true literary genius. This study is concerned less with the results of that scholarship than the rhetorical methods it practiced. What is a rhetoric of authentication, and what were its key features in the mid- to late-1700s?

The phrase "rhetoric of authentication" does not suggest a special form of rhetoric devoted solely to scholarly authentication. Rather, the goals of authentication are different from epideictic, deliberative, or judicial rhetoric (though authentication is close to law, and is sometimes phrased as such), and should be analyzed as its own subgenre bearing similarities to the main forms of rhetoric, but not exactly corresponding to any of them. The exact classification of this rhetoric is dwarfed in importance by the means used to prove it. In the brief case study given above, I asserted the key roles of probability, evidence, and belief in the rhetoric of Rowe and Malone's life-writing, and these roles, or *pisteis*, will form the basis of this thesis.

My own doxa comes from two very different sources: Aristotle, and postmodernist bibliographer D.C. Greetham. I have deliberately chosen Aristotle as a rhetorical model because of his rhetoric's devotion to the discovery of truth. Rhetoric should be used, ideally, as a mode of discovering and communicating truth to an audience (whether that audience be a group of physically present listeners, or a more abstract group of individual readers). Nicholas Pagan, in his essay on the syllogistic reasoning of Roland Barthes, notes that Aristotelian rhetoric "emphasizes links to logic and epistemology" (1). I have chosen to study authenticative rhetoric through an Aristotelian lens for just this reason. The Shakespearean editor's goal, at least in the eighteenth century, was to discover the truth of Shakespeare's texts: which previous emendations

were accurate or beneficial, which were in line with Renaissance convention, and which were spurious? Yet this endeavor was made more difficult because of the epistemological problem: how did one know for sure? Aristotelian rhetoric endeavors to negotiate epistemological uncertainty, while still attempting to find truth (or as close to truth as one can get), just as editors of Shakespeare attempted to make the playwright's plays as accurate, beautiful, and powerful as they could[4]. I also chose to work with Aristotle because of his persistence throughout literary history. His rhetorical theories wax and wane in popularity, but Aristotle is never far from rhetoric.

Aristotelian rhetoric is not merely concerned with convincing an audience of a particular point of view; the Sophists proved that the art of convincing did not require education, or even logical argument. Rather, the audience must be considered specifically because "an ability to aim at commonly held opinions [*endoxa*] is a characteristic of one who also has a similar ability to regard […] truth," since, to Aristotle, a natural property of humans is that they can discern truth (33). All three of my investigative sites are heavily focused on the audience: probability allows an audience to discern the likelihood of a fact or event for itself; Malone's presentation of evidence allows the reader to make her own decision, with all the facts before her; a writer must consider an audience's previously held beliefs, and confirm or attempt to change those beliefs. On the other hand, D.C. Greetham in his article "Textual Forensics," writes more about the text and the bibliographer interacting with it.

"The text of *Piers Plowman* or Homer or Shakespeare or the Bible" says Greetham, "is observable only in its symptoms" (42). In other words, the text of Shakespeare, the "original" or "Ur-text," does not exist. Only the symptoms, the transmutations, the altered forms of that text

4 Different editors or publishing companies clearly have their own goals with regards to Shakespeare's plays—I am speaking here as generally as possible about Shakespeare's editors.

exist. The texts on which our editions are based are hundreds of years old and have been subjected to all manner of critical and editorial tampering. From Nahum Tate's happily-concluded *Lear* to the minute and careful critical forgeries of John Payne Collier, and even the King's or Pembroke's men's earliest performances of Shakespeare, Shakespeare's texts (among uncountable others) have been prodded, adjusted, and rewritten over the last four centuries. All that remain are the symptoms, and while it may be impossible to recreate the mythical original text, one must understand the process by which the plays are prodded and modified. Part of dealing with the absence of an authentic text is studying the ways in which the "authentic" texts we study now (those produced and reproduced in the Norton, Riverside, Arden, Pelican, etc. editions) came to be.

Critics conduct the process of authentication in dozens of ways, from Edmond Malone's deciphering of a chronology of Shakespeare's plays by contemporary references in and to the plays, to Gary Taylor's counting occurrences of word variations within a text, to stylometric analyses made using computers. But once the authentication has been done, the critic must present that information to the reader, though conducting and presenting one's research are not such clearly defined processes. If one is to understand Shakespeare, one must also understand the critical apparatus that altered and, in many cases, created Shakespeare. The history of the Shakespeare edition is long and colorful, full of mistakes and triumphs, but that history is more than publications and reactions, variorum editions, and reprintings. The editing of Shakespeare has been defined by the use of rhetoric, both successful and unsuccessful, and critical rhetoric must also be studied to understand modern Shakespeare. I am attempting to do just that, though with a necessarily limited purview. I aim to trace the uses and abuses of three different forms of

proof across the late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries to learn how these critical rhetorics attempted to convince their audiences, why, and to what ends.

To demonstrate the functions, uses, and complications of these types of proof, I have chosen three investigative sites which will showcase each proof in turn. Probability was understood by eighteenth-century critics, but they did not rely on it. To demonstrate the complexities and foibles of probabilistic reasoning (and thus, how remarkable it is that such complexities are missing from eighteenth-century criticism), I will discuss twentieth- and twenty first-century stylometric studies of Shakespeare. Stylometric scholarship is built on statistical methods, and so is obsessed with probability. Studying probability within stylometrics will offer a look at the inner workings of probabilistic rhetoric, and help to illustrate the significance of the absence of probability in most eighteenth-century critical writing. Returning to the eighteenth century, Edmond Malone's scholarship will be a key element in a discussion of the changing role of evidence in rhetoric. Maligned in the 1980s and 1990s for his supposed abuse of evidence, I will argue that Malone's use of documentary evidence was complex and sometimes flawed, but was important in pioneering modern editorial practices. Finally, I will discuss belief, which is both a fundamental background to rhetoric (as *doxa*), and a kind of devotion that animates an argument and gives the feeling of vivacity to the audience. The investigative site for this chapter will be the writings of and responses to the Believers in the Ireland forgeries, as they rely heavily on assumed beliefs and devotional belief. Finally, I will discuss the enthymeme, and its significance for negotiating the areas between epistemological uncertainty, and audience-befuddling proof.

CHAPTER 2

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: THE RHETORIC OF PROBABILITY AND SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

Postmodern critics working to authenticate (or de-authenticate) questionable plays such as *Edward III* and *King Henry VI Part One* have fused statistical analysis with traditional rhetorical forms, resulting in new mutations of traditional Aristotelian notions of probability-based argument. While "probability" once referred to simple likelihoods or strong logical possibilities, it now carries more connotative baggage. Modern emphases on scientific thinking have made probability more technical sounding, and modern criticism follows this trend, working to make mathematical and statistical statements which, the authors hope, will carry over into literary and interpretive statements. The assumption that statistical statements can easily translate into literary ones is problematic. Not all critics, of course, rely on stylometric analysis. Some, like Kenneth Muir, examine the plays based on close reading and stylistic analysis. Others, like Giorgio Melchiori, use historical evidence to place the plays in a more accurate context. Still, the potential for stylometrics to offer a new type of evidence, a new take on the idea of probability is enough to warrant an investigation.

Rhetoric, especially critical rhetoric, is a powerful tool, not only because it bears the responsibility for convincing the reader, but because it actually *creates* evidence. Greetham places evidence in the same troublesome ontological category as original texts. He asks what might serve as "scientifically acceptable knowledge" (34). If such evidence is found and

deployed against a contrary argument, it can render the contrary argument useless. The critic is responsible not only for evaluating arguments, but also for discovering evidence from among the near-infinite sources available. For instance, Malone chooses particular passages from particular odes or accounts of English poetry to support his arguments about the chronology of Shakespeare's plays, out of all the English texts available to him. This discovery, at least in the mind of the reader, is closer to the creation of evidence than to the re-presentation of preexisting evidence. Greetham notes that "the act of finding in order to create is selective and interpretive, the first stage of a hermeneutics that eventually produces meaning that seems construable directly and unambiguously from the date" (34). But evidence, for most authors, is only the first kind of proof required to make a successful argument. The evidence chosen should make a particular perspective (the hypothetical perspective) appear most likely. Stylometrics is still subject to these fundamental rules of evidence creation.

A Brief Introduction to Stylometrics

Stylometrics is an odd discipline. At its core, it applies statistical analysis to the study of literary style. The idea of counting rare words and comparing them across several plays or studying the frequency of particular spellings seems simple enough on the surface; after all, one might expect authors to use familiar words or word forms, and consistent use of keywords could be enough to suggest an author for a questionable play. A plural in the title of a symposium on Shakespearean stylometrics gives some hint of the complexity involved: *Shakespeare's Styles: Essays in Honor of Kenneth Muir.* Eliot Slater observes, correctly, that "the plural adds to our difficulties" (37). The multiplicity of Shakespeare's styles is only the beginning of the complexities involved in stylometrics. Style, even one as identifiable as Shakespeare's comic

style, is a difficult entity to define, let alone pin down (Slater 37). It certainly involves diction, sentence structure, enjambment, verse versus prose format, but other elements like content or imagery are harder to define as stylistic. Even statistics, which one would expect to be more clear-cut than a subjective concern like "style," has a murky history and serious caveats. Nonetheless, stylometrics can be a useful tool in examining a text, providing concrete numerical probabilities, in addition to enthymemes and rhetorical probabilities.

Statistical studies of Shakespeare's plays are not new to the digital age; Slater cites T. C. Mendenhall who, in 1901, "produced results from a count of 400,000 words from Shakespeare, 200,000 from Bacon and smaller samples from other writers" (40). Using these samples, he calculated the average word lengths for the various authors and used these figures to argue that Shakespeare and Bacon were different authors (40). Stylometric analysis breaks a text into a body of disassociated words, and counts them. The University of Illinois's MONK (Metadata Offer New Knowledge) stylometric analysis program works by first creating a "bag of words," which "deliberately ignores word order" ("Monk Tutorial"). Some word sequences are counted, but not as meaningful entities; the stylometric program stores them only as numeric sequences with particular designations based on lemma or word spelling, part of speech, and positions between spaces and punctuation marks. Thus, the first task of stylometrics (after entering the text in the computer program) is to dissolve the text into atoms. From this morass of words and numbers, the user can request particular counts or proportions. For example, Eliot Slater (who uses his own system, not MONK) tabulated the five hundred most commonly used words in Shakespeare, a statistical procedure, and, based on word proportions, discovered that "an overwhelming proportion of Shakespeare's text is made up by extremely common and commonplace words of high frequency" (22). While not a particularly significant or unexpected

finding, it demonstrates that meaning can be extracted from a dissolved text or collection of texts. Stylometric analysis draws meaning from the unexpected method of removing the text's surface meaning and re-approaching the text.

Different scholars use different methods of stylometric analysis. The MONK database allows users to compare word proportions as measured by the "Dunnings Log Likelihood." Without delving too deeply into the math involved, the Dunnings test is a variation of the popular chi-square test, which is used to calculate basic numerical probabilities of mathematical events. M.W.A. Smith and Eliot Slater's stylometric test uses an unmodified chi-square test (Smith 168, Slater 122). Stylometric studies hope that the mathematically derived statistical probabilities will equate easily with logical likelihood, which I will frequently call "rhetorical probability." But, as David Ritchie's 2003 article "Statistical Probability as Metaphor for Epistemological Probability" points out, the relationship between statistical likelihood and epistemological (or logical) likelihood is anything but causal.[5]

Studies in the social sciences, for instance, are quick to conflate the enumerable likelihoods (that men exposed to pornography in a laboratory setting choose answers in multiple choice tests that reflect a denigrated view of women) with non-enumerable or real-world likelihoods (that men who watch pornography in theaters or in homes are more likely to abuse or subjugate women in daily life) (Ritchie 6-7). The divide between the laboratory (or statistical) test and the real issue the test is supposed to be simulating is *not* precise, and can only indicate. With regards to stylometrics, the statistical tests that Smith, Slater, Merriam, and others perform on *Edward III*, while they might add support to one side of the authorship debate or the other,

5 I am grateful to Ritchie for suggesting the presence of two related forms of probability which represent and interact with one another. While his study is focused more on misrepresented statistical metaphors like "I support him 200%," his suggestion that one probability can be a metaphor for another is foundational to my work.

cannot prove that Shakespeare wrote the text alone or collaboratively any more than non-numerical stylistic surveys. Stylometric methods are only a different kind of proof. To examine this proof in greater detail, I will offer concrete examples from the ongoing critical debate about *Edward III*. First, it might be helpful to establish some details about the play's text.

The Text of *Edward III*

Edward III initially appeared anonymously in 1596 under the title *The Raigne of King Edvvard the third*, or "A book Intitled Edward the Third and the blacke prince their warres wth kinge John of Fraunce" in the Stationer's Register (Melchiori 3). Little appears to have been made of the play, and Melchiori suggests that it was originally written for a later-disbanded company (3). Edward Capell put it forward again in 1760 as part of a collection. He presented it as Shakespearean, despite acknowledging an almost total lack of solid evidence supporting the attribution, "so as to enable readers to confirm or reject his attribution on stylistic and other grounds" (Melchiori 10). Capell's hesitance could be eighteenth-century literary modesty, or it could be the only way to maintain the connection to Shakespeare without more evidence and analysis, or Capell could have been doing exactly what he said: calling other scholars' and readers' attentions to the play for further study. While Malone ignored Capell's call, modern critics have clearly accepted the challenge.

As a history play, *Edward III* shares much with Shakespeare's other histories. It features prominent historical characters, recognizable historical events, an extremely compacted timescale, and strong nationalistic themes. It has two prominent plots, and both define England as a nation separate from its neighbors while characterizing the king's body temporal and body politic. In the first main plot, the brave and morally upright Countess of Salisbury defends

England's northern border against the barbaric and cowardly Scottish, then defends her honor against the advances of King Edward. Smitten, Edward attempts to woo the Countess "whose beauty tyrants fear" (*Edward III* 1.2.95). She honorably resists him, and Edward expresses consternation at his body's weakness, saying that he has "dreamed of treason," because the adulterous desire of his mortal body is attempting to commit treason against his immortal political body (1.2.126). The play dabbles with its romantic plot for the better part of two acts, in which the lovestruck king pines away for his love and forces her father to advocate on Edward's behalf. The plot culminates in a scene in which Edward suggests murdering their spouses, the Countess threatens suicide, and Edward suddenly and finally swears off his unchaste desire. The plot ends as suddenly as the act, and the Countess disappears from the play.

The play moves to Edward's battles against France, and presents the battles at Crécy, Sluys, and Poitiers, the siege of Calais and the invasion of Normandy, which, historically are spread over sixteen years, as happening almost simultaneously (Melchiori 216). Here, Edward shows more resolve, even resisting the urge of send reinforcements for his son when the Black Prince is threatened in battle. The prince survives, and is strengthened by the test. By the end of the play, Edward has captured the Scottish King David, defeated the French under King John, and holds France comfortably. Note that when the Earl of Salisbury appears in the second plot, no mention of his tempting wife is made. Melchiori suggests that the two-faced presentation of the king in the play is similar to the the presentation of Hal in *King Henry IV* and *King Henry V* which present "at first the weak sides of their respective heroes [Hal and Edward], and then their reformation and triumph" (18). The medieval idea of the king's two bodies may also have a role in the dual presentation. Edward, much like Henry V, has a body temporal and body politic in conflict with each other, displaying the body temporal during the morally testing Countess of

Salisbury scenes, and the body politic when leading his nation in battle. Such a study would be interesting and might have the potential to illuminate an unexplored correlation between *Edward III* and *Henry V*, but to do so here would draw too much attention away from probabilistic rhetoric.

Shakespeare (assuming here that Shakespeare had some role in the play's authorship) consulted Holinshed as a primary source, but Holinshed did not provide the story of the Countess of Salisbury, mentioning her only in a marginal note (Melchiori 22). Instead, the medieval French chronicler Jean Paul Froissart offers an account of the incident in his chronicle history *Chronique*, which he wrote over the course of his life (1337-1405) and revised regularly (Jolliffe xv-xviii). The story is similar to *Edward III*'s Countess plot, with a few minor differences. The conflict between Edward and the Countess is much less dramatic; the Countess rebuffs Edward, blesses him, and Edward "depart[s], confused and ashamed" to go "after the Scots with his whole army" (Froissart 120). Froissart used the French chronicler La Bel as a primary source, and strangely enough, Froissart wrote *Chronique* under the patronage of Queen Philippa of England—Edward III's wife (Melchiori 22-23). Froissart may have adapted the story away from La Bel's version, in which Edward rapes the countess, or he may have included the Countess in a later revision of the *Chronique*, after Philippa died. In any case, the story was reproduced and expanded by William Painter in his collection of stories *The Palace of Pleasure*, first published in 1566. The Painter version is similar to the play's, though the play condenses significantly, characterizes the unmarried Edward as an innocent victim of love, and concludes with Edward proposing to, and being accepted by, the Countess (Painter).

Shakespeare, or whoever the plotter of *Edward III* was, presented an argument regarding Edward's character and the character of his reign, and to do so, had to find and present evidence

to the audience in the form of character speech and interactions. Since the play is not primarily an argumentative form (that is, explicitly attempting to bring the audience over to the author's side), it may be difficult to term it "rhetoric," but the history play as a genre must create an argument of some kind about its source material. Shakespeare argued for the validity of the Tudor claim on the throne by portraying Richard III as a hunched villain, just as he (or whoever) argued for a morally dubious Edward III. The author/s chose sources to use as evidence from a vast body of pre-existing evidence and interpretations which, just like Malone, Taylor, Slater, or any other critic, creates the evidence anew. Shakespeare and other early modern playwrights performed the same operations on evidence as modern scholars.

Most modern critics (Muir, Chambers, Proudfoot, Slater, Sams, Metz, Melchiori) accept that Shakespeare had at least a hand in writing *Edward III*, but the primary contention now is whether he wrote the play alone, or collaboratively (Melchiori 10-11). Those who believe the play was a collaboration typically agree with Kenneth Muir that the best[6] parts of the play are the second act, and the more stirring parts of act four. Other authors, especially M.W.A. Smith, Eliot Slater, and Eric Sams, believe that Shakespeare wrote the whole play, though perhaps in several stages of revision (Melchiori 11). The specific differences between these critics, and more importantly the ways in which they argue their cases, will be examined shortly.

In the following sections, I plan to discuss how rhetorical and statistical probabilities work when one attempts to authenticate a text of Shakespeare. In each section, I will offer case studies to illustrate the bleeding of probabilities into one another, starting with the rhetorical (or epistemlogical) probability inherent in stylometric studies, then discussing how statistical (or scientific) probability influences other stylometric authentications. First, however, some basic

6 The subjectivity of the terms "good" and "bad" are troublesome for the debate, since they are deployed frequently and without reference.

definitions will come in handy. Rhetorical probability will refer to a non-numerical sense of likelihood, brought about by the presentation of evidence. For example, the next heir to the throne would be a *more likely* culprit for the old king's murder than a minor lord with nothing to gain. There is no mathematical formulation of this likelihood, other possibilities exist, and no causal relationship is stated or implied. A statistical probability is simply one derived and represented by numbers. The implications of a statistical probability can be far broader, but the probability is simply a numerical representation of a degree of likelihood. A six-sided die has a one-in-six (.167 or 17%) chance of landing on a six. As with rhetorical probability, statistical probability (even of a very probable event, 99% or greater) is *not* an assurance, only an estimation of likelihood.

Rhetorical Probability

Aristotelian rhetoric occupies a liminal space between pure science and pure art. Each science has a particular area it is concerned with, but rhetoric can discuss all of them. But rhetoric is a creative, artistic form, dependent on the skill and talent of the speaker for its power and beauty. According to Aristotle,

> This [to see the available means of persuasion] is the function of no other art; for each of the others is instructive and persuasive about its own subject: for example, medicine about health and disease and geometry about the properties of magnitudes and arithmetic about numbers and similarly in the case of other arts and sciences. But rhetoric seems to be able to observe the persuasive about 'the given,' so to speak. That, too, is why we say it does not include technical knowledge of any particular, defined genus [of subjects]. (1.2.1)

One result of this liminality is that, while rhetoric is a dynamic form, adaptable to nearly any situation or subject, it lacks the surety that science can offer. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century developments in epistemology have led scholars to question even science's assurances of objectivity, but rhetoric is even more subject to concerns about probability than science. In the Aristotelian vein, according to George Kennedy, "both dialectic and rhetoric build their arguments on commonly held opinions (*endoxa*) and deal only with the probable (not with scientific certainty)" (26). Aristotle admits that rhetoric is frequently concerned with unsure propositions, since "[the premises] from which enthymemes are spoken are sometimes necessarily true but mostly true [only] for the most part. Moreover, enthymemes are also derived from probabilities (*eikota*) and signs (*semeia*), so it is necessary that each of these be the same as each [of the truth values mentioned]" (1.2.14). If arguments can only be argued for that which is typically or most likely true, then the rhetor must argue based on probability, or what most likely happened. Few things, especially after Descartes, look absolutely certain, and so to deal rationally with the world, one must accept the comforting half-truths of probability.

In the realm of Shakespeare studies, scholars attempt to discover authorship, but must admit, like Capell, that one cannot know positively whether Shakespeare had the primary hand in *Edward III* or not. Probability is important not only as a method for arguing the validity of one's results, but for the investigation. Yet rhetorical probability is inextricably linked with statistical probability, as Eliot Slater and M.W.A. Smith's stylometric analyses will show. Rhetorical probability provides the basic assumptions and series of expected likelihoods statistics can build systems to emulate and measure.

Slater, in *The Problem of the Raigne of King Edward III: A Statistical Approach*, studies the correlation of "unusual words" in *Edward III* with the same words, or "index words," in

Shakespeare's other plays. His hypothesis is that words with more citations in Shakespeare's non-*Edward III* plays will occur *more often* in *Edward III*: "in other words, it is the link words appearing with exceptional frequency in *Edward III* that average the greatest number of links with Shakespeare [sic] works. These words have an influence on the statistical analysis proportionate to the number of times they appear in the text" (106). Slater does find significant connections between *Edward III*, part A's index words and those in plays likely composed around the same time[7]. Part B, the more flawed remainder of the play, shows even stronger links with Shakespeare's early work. This result, among other measurements and correlations, leads Slater to "conclude […] that, as far as the rare-word vocabulary of *Edward III* goes, it is compatible with authorship by Shakespeare at an early stage in his dramatic career. Both part A and part B are regarded as his work, though probably written at different times" (135).

Slater's conclusion, though deliberately given a limited purview ("as far as the rare-word vocabulary... goes") makes the stretch from statistical probability to epistemological probability (135). What began as a series of percentages indicating lexical connections between particular texts of plays[8] has become a statement that, conditionally, argues for a historical, literary interpretation of a play. This gap can only be crossed by translating statistical probability into the language of epistemological probability, and relying on the reader to make sense of it. The numbers and limited tests alone cannot make an argument. Only Slater's rhetoric connecting the statistical evidence with his hypothesis can convince, but the enthymematic argument necessary for this kind of jump is essentially absent. Slater expects the reader to accept that statistical probability is an accurate substitute for epistemological likelihood. The two types of probability

7 Part A, consisting of act one scene two, all of act two, and act four scene four, is typically considered the most Shakespearean-feeling part of the play.

8 Slater uses the 1910 Tudor Facsimile edition of *Edward III* and Spevack's concordance of Shakespeare (105).

are correlated, but the relationship should be acknowledged as more of a metonym or metaphor than a substitute. As a persistent metaphor, then, rhetorical probability serves a greater purpose than merely connecting the statistics with the hypothesis: it provides a foundation on which to build a statistical system. To see how rife stylo-statistics is with rhetorical probability, it might be helpful to lay out the various assumptions and unspoken likelihoods at work behind Slater's text.

Studying the occurrences of rare words in Shakespeare's plays assumes a good deal of authorial consistency—in fact, the author here is taken as such a given that concerns over him are elided totally. He is an invisible word source, assumed to be semi-consistent (otherwise, it would be difficult to conduct any studies. This assumption is necessary, but an assumption nonetheless). Nevertheless, one must believe that Shakespeare likely used his vocabulary in a logically consistent way. Improbable events, like Shakespeare receiving a head injury and needing to relearn some of his vocabulary, are just that, improbable, and so unlikely to yield significant results. We assume that Shakespeare, despite having a titanic vocabulary, will use words consistently across plays, and mathematical formulas are created to measure the consistency with which unusual words occur (Slater 19). If, for instance, Shakespeare uses the word "envy" sixteen times in *Titus Andronicus*, one expects it to be *more likely* that he would use the same word more frequently in other plays written around the same time than in plays written at very different times.

The statistical measurement of probability relies on the assumption of the epistemological probability. Scholars believe that, based on the assumption of Shakespeare's word-use consistency, the same groups of unusual words will occur more often in the plays written by the same author than in plays by other authors. Based on that belief, that rhetorical probability,

stylometric critics create a statistical system for supporting the belief. In the language of textual forensics, the literary scientists propose an epistemological likelihood, and construct a statistical system to create evidence of that likelihood. In stylometrics, critics literally create evidence by constructing the mathematical formulas from which that evidence will emerge.

M.W.A. Smith begins his 1991 stylometric analysis "The Authorship of *The Raigne of King Edward the Third*" with a troubling statement, offered without significant support: "Unfortunately, however, his [Slater's] method has been demonstrated to fail when applied to questions of authorship, although it does appear to have merit for the resolution of problems of chronology" (166). The passive voice ("has been demonstrated") and lack of references or footnotes lead one to wonder who made such a demonstration, and in what capacity Slater's study is flawed. Slater, after all, never attempts to compare *Edward III* to other authors, only to Shakespeare. Still, Smith's dismissal offers a concrete example of Greetham's sense of powerful scientific evidence. If a stylometric study's evidence is stripped of its scientific validity, the study becomes worthless, at least within the confines of the newer article. Smith's study is more complex than Slater's, but is still limited. Like Slater, Smith compares word frequency between *Edward III* and other plays, but Smith holds *Edward III* up to representative plays from eight other Elizabethan playwrights writing at the same time and in the same genre as *Edward III* (including two of Shakespeare's accepted history plays, *2 Henry VI* and *Richard III*) (167-168). Like Slater, Smith uses chi-square proportion calculations, based on words found at the beginnings of speeches, and words *not* at the beginnings of speeches. Smith never gives a rationale for focusing on such an odd dichotomy (he never explains what special significance words at the beginnings of speeches have), but he does offer a proof of his system's effectiveness by applying his authorship test to *Richard II*. His system correctly suggests Shakespearean

authorship. Smith's calculations reliably associate the word correlations in *Edward III* with Shakespeare's test plays much more closely than with the other authors' test plays.

The leap from statistical to epistemological probability is even more pronounced in Smith's study than it was in Slater's (likely because Smith's work is an article, whereas Slater's was a book). After some discussion of his numerical results, Smith claims that "The results in Fig. 3 confirm that Shakespeare is the most likely of the seven remaining playwrights to have written *Edward III* in its entirety" (168). Smith's "Fig. 3" refers to the correlation of first words of speeches in *Edward III* to first words of speeches in the other playwrights' test plays, but to claim that it "confirms" that Shakespeare is the most likely author is too much of a jump, even with the disclaimer phrase "most likely." For a statistical test to be convincingly phrased as an epistemological likelihood, it must be broad, proved multiple times, and the correlation must be thoroughly explained. Otherwise, the metaphor (or metonym) is weak and lacks cohesion. Even so, rhetorical probability provides a ground for the statistical test the same way in Smith's study as it did in Slater's. The assumptions Smith makes are based on non-numerical likelihoods. At the end of the study, Smith admits that "a degree of uncertainty is inevitable in the outcome, *even if authors could be assumed to write with statistical regularity.* As in the case with other methods, there is therefore an ever-present possibility that statistical evidence can be misleading. Nevertheless. . ." (171, emphasis mine). Smith hesitates to admit his assumption, but it is the fundamental assumption of the stylometric study. While assuming authorial consistency is necessary, it is an epistemological, non-numerical likelihood which allows for the possibility of statistical analysis.

In addition to making assumptions about the author, stylometrics has a non-stylometric critical genealogy it relies on for many of its assumptions and accepted ideas. The separation of

Edward III into two parts was proposed originally by Kenneth Muir in 1960 for non-statisical stylistic reasons. Part A, consisting of act one scene two, act two, and act four scene four, Muir believes to be Shakespeare because they are well written. The other scenes he is "unwilling to ascribe to him [Shakespeare] at any period of his career—not because they are bad, but because their badness is unlike Shakespeare's" (Muir 39). Muir's division of *Edward III* into parts A and B is anything but statistical, littered with judgments like "The early part of the scene, before King Edward's entrance, is lively and amusing" (Muir 40). Even if Slater or Smith had managed to create purely statistical studies (leaving out all subjective judgments), the results would still be influenced by epistemological probability, since the work is derived from earlier, non-stylometric authors like Muir. Stylometric critics base many of their statistical procedures (like examining the play as a Part A and a Part B) on precedents derived from highly subjective evaluations like Muir's. Slater and Smith work as well as they can with such wild variables (from lexical definitions to different versions or editions of the plays), but lurking behind the statistics is the basic liminality of the stylometric study. The application of statistics to a created, fictional text can only make broad gestures and suggestions about the nature of the text, and even those are based on the imagination and trust of the reader.

Finally, there is nothing wrong with non-statistical, stylistic surveys like Muir's. One's responses to literature are often made up of subjective judgments about which scenes are lively, or colorful, or unexpectedly creative, and so arguing likely authors by subjective stylistic readings can produce hypotheses just as valid or invalid as stylometric analyses. Stylometric analysis merely offers another kind of proof.

Statistical Probability

Bruno de Finetti makes a surprising claim at the beginning of his book series *Theory of Probability*: "PROBABILITY DOES NOT EXIST" (x). He calls probability "an illusory attempt to exteriorize or materialize our true probabilistic beliefs," and from a purely physical standpoint, this is true (x). In the physical universe, things either happen, or they don't (except on the quantum level, which is far beyond my purview), and probability results from the human need to assess whether or not things will happen. It is a subjective discipline. In general and apart from the broadest philosophical or epistemological questions, statistical probability deals with the attempt to negotiate, numerically and scientifically, the chances of some unknown event happening (or having happened; the math is indifferent to time). But to decipher the likelihood of the event accurately, the event must first be translated into a new language. Harold Larson highlights the importance of the translation: "In the study of probability and statistics an exact medium of communication is extremely important; if the meaning of the question that is asked is confused by semantics, the solution is all the more difficult, if not impossible, to find" (1). The language of statistics, as unclouded by semantics as it can be, is "set theory" (1). Set theory notation looks nothing like semantic language, consisting of letters and a series of mathematical symbols. If semantics cloud statistical situations, then it is difficult to account for stylometrics. It is a statistical study obsessed with semantics. Even if the actual statistical propositions (that X words in play N correspond to Y words in play P in Z fashion) are phrased mathematically in the statistical portion of the stylometric study, the problem of translating the set theory question and answers into mutually understandable language remains. Even statistics, phrased in set theory as clearly as it can be, is still subjective.

Statistical probability is rhetorical. I have discussed above how statistics, in the case of stylometric analysis, relies on epistemological probability for support, but even in the larger sense of statistics as a scientific or mathematical discipline, statistics emulates some characteristics of rhetoric. Like Aristotelian rhetoric, statistics is a half-science, having no primary subject area of its own, but capable of supporting and arguing with other branches of science. Even in the nineteenth century, statistics was viewed with skepticism, as Mary Poovey recounts:

> "Science," as the BAAS [British Association for the Avancement of Science] institutionalized the concept, was knowledge that was theoretical before it was practical, value-free and objective, and, above all, impervious to political controversy. Astronomy, especially as it had been practiced since Sir Isaac Newton, epitomized this kind of knowledge. Statistics, in stark contrast to astronomy, lacked a theoretical foundation, [and] was thought to be governed by the values of its practitioners. (401)

The idea that the discipline was not free from political controversy also ties statistics to rhetoric, since both were and are used to justify political positions. On the one hand, rhetoric can be dismissed as Sophistry or emotional manipulation, but on the other, statistics can be skewed and results can be falsified. Ultimately, according to Poovey, "As a form of representation, statistics was (and remains) a mixed genre; it juxtaposes numerical, often tabular, formations to discursive, sometimes historical or explanatory, narratives" (403). Stylometric analysis demonstrates this juxtaposition of statistical formations to narratives, and the examples of Smith and Slater give plentiful evidence of hypothetical narratives (that Shakespeare wrote *Edward III* then revised it later, or that he simply wrote it alone) supported by numerical evidence. Thomas

Merriam's stylometric analyses of *Edward III* will provide a more interesting view of statistical probability and its modification of rhetorical probability.

Merriam has authored several studies on the subject of *Edward III* and stylometrics. The first, "Marlowe's Hand in *Edward III*" (1993), is a very brief stylometric analysis of points of crossover between a small part of *Edward III* (3.1 and 3.2) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Merriam uses small, common words as his index-words (rather than Slater's "unusual words" or Smith's "first words of speeches"), and plots their use on graphs ("Marlowe's Hand in *Edward III*" 59). The results do seem to indicate a similarity between the two scenes of *Edward III*, *Tamburlaine*, and the questionably authored *Locrine* (60-61). But the sample is so limited that it could be hard to make a broader literary argument without overstepping the bounds of statistical implication. Merriam makes a modest claim, and quickly steps away from the stylometric analysis, devoting a mere page and a half to his statistical work. In an unexpected turn, the last two pages of the article (the entire article is only four pages long, though the journal's close spacing and dual-column format condenses the page number) are devoted to non-statistical stylistic analysis. Merriam abandons statistical language in favor of a comparison of battle descriptions between *Edward III*, *Henry V*, and *Tamburlaine*. The fact that the author has no compunction against including stylistic analysis, and its reliance on epistemological probability, alongside statistical probability speaks to the connection between the two types of proof. The assumption, in Merriam's stylistic comparison, is that if certain battle descriptions are similar, the likelihood is increased that those descriptions were written by the same author. Other explanations for the phenomena are possible: perhaps one playwright heard a moving description on stage and adapted it later; perhaps they refer to a common source; perhaps they are a minor trope in the theatre, arising independently. But these possibilities are less likely than a common

author. Relying on a heightened likelihood may be a fraught proposition, but it is the best proof modern scholars can find or generate to support any kind of authorship argument.

Merriam's later stylometric study, titled simply "Edward III" (2000), is a more extended work, modifying and specifying his previous argument. Merriam, too, is in favor of including *Edward III* in the Shakespeare canon, but he adds that it may have been originally written, or at least plotted, by Christopher Marlowe ("Edward III" 159). His technique is the most complex of the four stylometric analyses examined here, but suffice to say that he refers to common *and* rare words, and that his statistical methods are more sophisticated than previous authors' have been. Merriam provides a more mature, more realistic approach to stylometric analysis than Slater or Smith. Merriam admits that "Percentages by themselves can no more than suggest an answer to the question: is the play homogenous or not?" (171). Merriam works to shrink the divide between Poovey's numerical formations and discursive narratives by reducing the emphasis on the narrative. Gone are Slater and Smith's broad claims of authorial likelihood; Merriam makes only the points which his statistical research allows him to, and speculates in a measured tone afterward. The conclusions he draws are more sedate than previous authors: "the configuration of the play in Fig. 5 suggests a pattern of authorial division by acts (I, III, and V versus II and IV) found elsewhere in the dramatic literature of the time," which reduces the stress on the jump between statistical and epistemological likelihood (184). Because Merriam's claims are smaller, and the statistics more thorough, the two kinds of proof move closer together and become easier to negotiate. The metaphorical relationship between statistical and epistemological probability coheres better. The best testament may be that while I understand much less of Merriam's statistical analysis, his rhetorical skill in moderating and logically connecting statistical to rhetorical probability convince me of his claims far more than either Slater or Smith's articles.

Statistical probability, in the end, is not so far removed from epistemological probability. It is *different*, with its thoroughly enumerated and systematic approaches to its subjects, but the ways it interacts with evidence feels very familiar to Greetham's account of textual forensics. Again, quoting Mary Poovey:

> Statistics *produces* excess in two senses. First, as the 'raw material' for other 'sciences,' statistics enables others to generate theories and legislation that are figured nowhere in the numbers themselves. Secondly, as a discourse that *claims* a transparent relation to the objects its represents, statistical representation masks the meaning it does produce at the same time that it puts these meanings into play. Largely though not exclusively an effect of the categories by which statistical representation organizes materials, these meanings are being constructed before the statistics are compiled; they then radiate from the starkest tables. (420 italics original)

The historical, literary, and critical narratives have already been written by generations of previous scholars. In large part, the role of modern stylometric critics is to reject, embrace, question, or modify previous critics' narratives. Merriam corrects and reframes Slater. Smith rejects Slater. Nearly every scholar consulted interacts with Muir in some fashion. In spite of its mathematical trappings, stylometrics is a fundamentally narrative, and fundamentally rhetorical practice.

CHAPTER 3

THE BOOK AND NOTHING BUT THE BOOK: EDMOND MALONE AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Contemporary scholars aren't sure what to make of Edmond Malone. Some, like his biographer Peter Martin, venerate him for popularizing the use of documentary evidence in the study of Shakespeare. Others, like Margreta de Grazia and Jeffrey Kahan are more skeptical. Kahan sees him as an elaborate kill-joy, privileging lifeless documents over a more intuitive, semi-mystical appreciation of Shakespeare. De Grazia's view is more complex, bound up with Malone's particular editing technique and the intended result of his editions. Perhaps the difficulty with Malone stems not from his approach, but from his field. In an age increasingly concerned with the meaning of evidence and surety, the idea of probability negotiated the need for reliable experience and the understanding that experience was never reliable.

Malone seems to simultaneously put complete faith in his evidence, and argue for its probability. He trusts in the self-evident nature of texts, while arguing for their probable validity. He uses literary (and thus subjective) texts to make biographical and historical identifications. His use of evidence is rhetorical: the documents he finds and deploys are intended to prove a point, and his rhetoric is defined by a lack of interest in non-evidence based proof and argument. But Malone's use of evidence is more significant than as a rhetorical device, and while it may, as de Grazia argues, attempt to create a false narrative for Shakespeare based on eighteenth-century

perceptions of him, Malone is also attempting something essentially new. He is in the process of becoming what D.C. Greetham calls a "textual scholar" (Greetham 32, 33).

Greetham's "Textual Forensics" raises the idea that the study of texts is an essentially post-modern exercise, which "exemplifies the postmodernist breakdown of the 'master narratives' of intellectual discipline" (32). It is neither completely literary, nor completely scientific. It is subjectively objective; it is an "antidiscipline." Greetham poses a difficult question: is evidence found, or created? "The conjecture (the hypothetical forensics) depends on the prior construction of empirical data," such as performance dates, anonymous quartos, appearances of Shakespeare's name or aspect in contemporary literature (34). From the perspective of textual forensics, Malone creates evidence as he finds it. The act of offering evidence to fit an argument is an act of creation. From the body of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English texts, Malone culls a few, repurposes them, and sets them in the service of proving a point: that Shakespeare began his London writing career in 1589, that *King Henry VI, Part One* was not authored by Shakespeare, that Samuel Ireland's Shakespeare papers were forged, etc. Kahan believes that Malone created evidence to such a degree that he was akin to William Henry Ireland, who forged new "old" evidence for the reader. The reliance on external evidence, a rigorous requirement for authenticity, and the need to accumulate and replicate evidence are all scientific, but putting these pseudo-scientific concerns in pursuit of a singular answer or meta-narrative (or *bildungsroman*) is alarmingly non-scientific. Malone's fusion of literary and documentary sources creates serious complexities and difficulties in studying him, but in the end, he is not far from the postmodern concern for textual forensics (Greetham 32-34).

Scholars studying texts hope that what they are reading is genuine. Malone shared that concern, and answered it by resorting to authentication by age. Modern scholarship is anxious

over the prospect of multiple texts, and so creates variorum editions that chronicle the various changes, emendations, and mistakes made to a text. Some plays, like *King Lear* have so many different versions and such complex history that editors have constructed conflated editions, combining multiple versions of the play into a single, new play that was never originally performed. Malone saw this and devoted himself to trying to determine what Shakespeare really wrote. If modern editing practices are an indication, Malone's priorities have fallen out of fashion. Scholarship is not only interested in the "original" text, but finds value in adaptations, variations, and appropriations. This does not invalidate Malone's concerns or goals; rather, it shows that Malone was concerned with the same issues modern scholars are. While his answers may have fallen out of favor, the questions he tried to answer are still present in modern scholarship.

Edmond Malone was happiest among books. Born in 1741 to a distinguished upper-class Irish family living in Westmeath Ireland, his father was a member of the Irish House of Commons and a respected judge ("Malone, Edmond"). His uncle was a "distinguished parliamentary orator and chancellor of the exchequer," and his brother followed in his father's footsteps to become a member of the Irish House of Commons ("Malone, Edmond"). Malone tried to do the same, but took little pleasure in it. He entered the Inner Temple in London and became a practicing Irish barrister in 1767, but his years in London introduced him to Samuel Johnson, Johnson's circle of friends, and London literary culture (*Edmond Malone* 10, 11). He "plodded on as a lawyer" for seven years, suffering a blow when his romance with the today-unknown Susanna Spencer ended, and he spent the better part of two years depressed, unable to "read, to join in family activities, to practice law" ("Malone, Edmond," *Edmond Malone* 11). When Malone's father and uncle died and left him with a comfortable inheritance, Malone

abandoned the law and devoted his full attention to the study of English literature. George Steevens discovered Malone as a result of Malone's edition of Oliver Goldsmith's works, and the two would work together for most of their careers. Steevens was a Shakespearean scholar, then working with Johnson to produce the second *Johnson-Steevens* edition of Shakespeare's works, and he allowed Malone to submit supplementary information to the edition, perhaps surprising, since Malone had irritated Steevens previously by providing an insulting number of corrections and alterations to Steevens' edition. Around this time, Malone came out with his first major work on Shakespeare, the aptly titled *An Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays Attributed to Shakespeare were Written*. Though he later updated the list, it was, in Martin's words, "an early indication of the emerging literary biographer" ("Malone, Edmond").

Malone joined Johnson's Literary Club and continued to produce scholarship on Chatterton, Pope, Dryden, Goldsmith, Johnson, and most of all, Shakespeare. His professional contemporaries included Steevens and Johnson, but also Horace Walpole, Sarah Siddons, Philip Kemble, James Boswell, and Edmund Burke. Malone's inheritance aided his studies significantly, since "most other men of letters held salaried positions that consumed much energy and time" (*Edmond Malone* 21). Not so with Malone; he spent his days in book stalls and the British library, combing through records and examining texts. Perhaps if Malone had been forced to continue as a barrister, his famous scrupulosity would never have developed.

His most significant work, at least for this project, was *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*. The edition collects the plays and provides extensive annotation correcting former editors' mistakes, describing what the "original texts" included, and an entire prefatory volume. The first volume is a treasure trove of information on the editing of Shakespeare. Malone includes a critical introduction, copies of Johnson's, Steevens's, and Pope's prefaces to

Shakespeare's works, a list of classical texts available in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England (with publication names and dates), a brief version of his chronology of the plays, and the thoroughly annotated copy of Rowe's *Some Account of the Life, &c. of William Shakespeare*, among other documents. While this is a joy to those writing the editorial history of Shakespeare's plays, his remarkable attention to detail carries implications Malone never admits.

Evidence as Rhetoric

The idea that evidence can be used rhetorically is an old one, but the treatment of documentary evidence as significantly stronger than argument is a more recent development. Deep skepticism of evidence has re-emerged with post-structuralism and post-modernism, but as is often the case, Aristotle has already been there.

According to classical rhetoric, evidence is only a part of a larger rhetorical body—that of proof, or *pistis*. Greek rhetorical handbooks, typically focused on judicial rhetoric, suggested the following format:

> a *prooimion*, or introduction, designed to get the good will and attention of the jury, then a *diegesis*, or narration, of the facts of the case from the point of view of the speaker. There followed a *pistis*, or proof. Here the handbooks concentrated on what was called "argument from probability" to the neglect of using direct evidence. Greek juries distrusted direct evidence such as witnesses or documents because they thought these might be bribed or faked. (Kennedy 9)

The speech would be concluded with the *epilogos*, summarizing the argument and manipulating the jury's emotions. In his discussion of atechnic *pisteis*, or non-artistic proof, Aristotle coherently summarizes the difficulty with reliable evidence: a defendant without witnesses might

argue that probability can't lie or take bribes, but a defendant *with* witnesses would counter that if probability alone was sufficient evidence, then witnesses wouldn't be necessary (Aristotle 113). Ultimately, he argues, there is as wide a selection of witnesses and testimonies as there are rhetorical *topoi*, and so "Other points about a witness […] should be chosen from the same topics [topoi] from which we derive enthymemes" (114). According to Aristotelian rhetoric, documentary (or witnessed) evidence is just another type of proof, in the same category as topics and syllogisms, though using logical arguments is preferable to using evidence. Evidence can be falsified, but logic cannot. Then again, evidence can testify about specific events, where logic cannot.

Many rhetoricians in the eighteenth century were familiar with Aristotelian rhetoric. John Lawson and John Ward in particular were fluent in classical rhetorical strategies. Lawson in particular was familiar with Aristotelian, Platonic, and Ciceronian rhetoric, and emphasized the importance of imitation to rhetoric. According to Michael Moran, Lawson "modernized many of the ancient tenets by discussing them in the context of eighteenth-century philosophy and psychology" (144). Edmond Malone was almost surely familiar with all these texts. According to Sotheby's *Catalogue of the Greater Portion of the Library of the Late Edmond Malone*, Malone owned Lawson's *Lectures Concerning Oratory*, Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and Ward's *System of Oratory*. Given his familiarity with contemporary rhetorical theorists, Malone probably would have known about the eighteenth century's struggles with epistemology as well.

Eighteenth-century philosophers were beginning to question the standards of evidence Aristotle had set down, not necessarily in regards to rhetoric, but the growing preoccupation with the epistemology of evidence and probability were reflected in the period's rhetorical use of evidence. Decades before Malone published *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*,

philosophers, rhetoricians, and scientists were wrestling with how to classify and use evidence. Cartesian skepticism offered a serious challenge to seventeenth and eighteenth-century philosophers: relying on evidence requires reliance on one's senses, which are inherently flawed. If one's own senses cannot be trusted, then no empirical knowledge, or abstract knowledge gained from the empirical can be truly known. In addition, since the universe's physical laws are subject to God's divine intervention, then "any generalizations we might make about nature cannot be known as necessary truths. The 'laws' of nature depend on experience" (Osler 12). The answer was a compromise. In a subjective universe dependent on human observation and subject to divine intervention, nothing can be known for certain, but probability can fill in. Thinkers like Peter Gassendi and John Locke posited that while "we have no genuine knowledge of the material world; at best our knowledge is probable" (Osler 14). Evidence had become subject to probability.

This increased interest in epistemology, the probability of evidence, and experience contributed to a more critical view of supporting evidence. While eighteenth-century rhetorical texts like George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* widened the classification of evidence (Campbell's "testimony" included essentially any outside source, spoken or written), but Malone insisted on remaining within the confined classification of authenticated documentary evidence. Malone was a revolutionary scholar not because he pioneered new critical tactics, but because he retreated from them. Campbell's methodical classification and explanation of evidence will provide a useful eighteenth-century text against which to compare Malone.

Campbell based much of his rhetoric on faculty psychology, and subdivided evidence into two main areas: intuitive, and deductive evidence. Intuitive evidence includes mathematical axioms, that two and two equal four, etc.; consciousness, meaning physical sensations; and

common sense, which is a kind of fusion of the two, producing non-mathematical axioms like "there is a physical universe outside my mind." Consciousness and common sense make up "moral reasoning," which informs rhetoric. Demonstrative reasoning, the opposite of moral reasoning, is essentially mathematical proof, and impacts rhetoric by determining probabilities. Moral reasoning can make judgments and arguments, but demonstrative reasoning is needed to determine and express how likely those judgments and arguments are. The rhetorician makes use of moral reasoning, which includes narrated personal experience, analogy, and, most important to Malone's scholarship, testimony. Testimony can be oral or written, and is essentially the recounted experience of another individual; Henslowe's diary is testimony in its purest form. While Campbell states that testimony is of the most use to "history, civil, ecclesiastic, and literary; grammar, languages, jurisprudence, and criticism," it is not a completely trustworthy source (56). Like Aristotle, Campbell believes that testimony is contingent on many other factors, like "The reputation of the attester, his manner of address, the nature of the fact attested, the occasion of giving the testimony, the possible or probable design in giving it, the disposition of the hearers to whom it was given, and several other circumstances" (55). Evidence as a rhetorical technique must be contextual.

Malone and the Document

For Edmond Malone, however, evidence was beyond the need for context. Historically situated, thoroughly authenticated evidence took precedence over any other rhetorical proof or objective. Malone owned a small fortune in rare books and medieval and Renaissance documents, and had access to many more in the British Library where he spent much of his time. He employed evidence from documentary sources like wills, contracts, and theatre records, and

from literary sources like contemporary poems, plays, elegies, and essays[9] as proof. Samuel Schoenbaum, as he must, admires Malone's wide reading and devotion to providing the reader with every piece of evidence he can find. To Schoenbaum, Malone's presentation of wide arrays of evidence gives the reader the power to decide what is and is not legitimate (170). This is certainly the case at times, as I will discuss, but is not always. Sometimes Malone needed to prove a point, and deployed his masses of evidence for a rhetorical purpose, as was the case with his attack on the Shakespeare forgeries.

The Ireland forgeries will be discussed more thoroughly later, but for now, it is enough to say that William Henry and Samuel Ireland published a text entitled *Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments Under the Hand and Seal of W. Shakespeare*, which supposedly contained a treasury of lost Shakespearean documents. The texts, to modern eyes, are obviously forgeries, but they attracted many to their cause. Malone, as a staunch opponent to the papers, took it upon himself to publish *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of Certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments* etc., a four hundred twenty four page proof against the Shakespeare papers. Malone's text thoroughly shatters each forgery by the application of documentary evidence, and very little else.

One of Ireland's forged papers was an exchange of receipts between Shakespeare and John Heminges, in which the supposed Shakespeare writes "One moneth from the date hereof I doe *promyse to paye* to my good and Worthye Freynd John Hemynge the sume of *five Pounds and five shillings* English Monye as a recompense […] for hys trouble in going downe for me to statford *Witness my Hand* Wm Shakspere" (*Inquiry* 133). Malone leaves no detail unexamined. He refers to mercantile records from Elizabeth's reign to point out that sums of money were

9 Malone also uses diaries (especially Henslowe's) frequently, though the diary is situated in an odd space between documentary and literary evidence.

typically expressed in Roman numerals. Malone points out that the Globe theatre, referenced in the notes, was not built at the time of their dating. But the cornerstone of Malone's argument is the discussion of the signature. Much of the publicity regarding the Shakespeare papers had to do with the existence of new Shakespearean signatures (and those of other Renaissance celebrities like Queen Elizabeth), and to prove that these signatures were false, but also that they were all made by the same person would surely disprove the forgeries.

Malone begins his demolition by reminding his reader that "I determined, however, in every part of the present inquiry, not to rely on any general reasoning, but, whenever I could, to get at facts: and therefore spent some time at the Prerogative-Office with the hope of finding the original Will of this Actor [Heminges]" (138). Malone opposes "general reasoning," which we might call logical argument, with "facts" which could be found in an authenticated will or government office. One could hardly ask for a clearer statement of rhetorical priority than this. He eventually locates an appropriate document, and to make sure the reader understands the source, Malone describes it in detail: "a deed executed by John Heminges, Feb. 10th, 1617-1618, in performance of a trust reposed in him by Shakspeare, with which I have been furnished by Mr. Albany Wallis, and which will be found in the Appendix (No. III)" (138). The reader needs to take nothing on faith from Malone—a glance through the third appendix provides the reader with a full copy of the deed. Malone invites the reader to replace him in the authenticator's position whenever the reader feels the need. One can flip between the genuine, pedigreed deed and the forged deed and draw one's own conclusions.

The fact that Malone offers the reader all the evidence he has puts him in an odd place as a textual scholar. In Greetham's model, the textual scholar creates evidence at the same time he deploys it, since the evidence is part of a created, purposeful argument—but Malone frequently

creates evidence which both agrees with, is neutral to, and (in the case of *Henry VIII*) disagrees with his perspective (Schoenbaum 170). Malone's scholarship attempts to offer the reader the responsibility of the textual scholar, since as much of the issue is recreated within Malone's text as possible. One could imagine Edmond Malone as a barrister before a court of his readers, offering them every piece of evidence he has, and asking them to judge from his position. It is no coincidence that he begins *An Inquiry* as an address to a court (referring to "a literary tribunal," "evidence in the present case," etc.) (*Inquiry* 18).

When Malone finds inconsistencies or mistakes, he does not argue them, or reason with them; he treats them more like a checklist of errors: "In the spelling of this actor's name, as in that of Shakspeare, I have led the fabricator into another error" (138). As expected, Malone provides a list of other documented names, spelled correctly (with an added "s" as in "Heminges," "Combes," "Earles, etc.), and concludes by simply stating "Our forger, however, has given us *Hemynge*" (139). The evidence, one gathers, speaks for itself.

Malone's use (or overuse) of evidence is apparent, but his editorial reasons for relying to heavily on documentary evidence are telling of his rhetorical goals. Malone provides an account of his reason for editing a new edition of Shakespeare when he states on the first page of the preface to *Plays and Poems* that he has "endeavored, with unceasing solicitude, to give a faithful and correct edition of the plays and poems of Shakspeare" (i). With almost two hundred years worth of editorial alterations and corrections, one wonders what kind of changes would lead to a "faithful and correct" version. Malone provides the answer, claiming that "the true state of the ancient copies of this poet's writings has never been laid before the publick," and that he "shall consider the subject as if it had not been already discussed by preceding editors" (i). This is Edmond Malone's editorial philosophy: to provide a ten-volume collection of Shakespeare's

plays, faithful to the "ancient copies" of the texts, and to ignore, to the best of his abilities, the work of his preceding editors (it is ironic that Malone follows this statement by quoting ten pages of Samuel Johnson). This is the reliance on documentary evidence laid bare—editors are not to be trusted, unless they restore a text to its original form.

The idea of an original Shakespearean text is more difficult to grasp than Malone would care to admit. Malone would have salivated over the prospect of a manuscript in Shakespeare's hand, but unfortunately, none survived, at least until William Henry Ireland "resurrected" several. Similarly alluring were the 'prompt books' or 'play books' which included stage directions and notes, but again, no playbooks survived (Maguire 584). Folio versions of the plays also presented problems, since they frequently disagreed with one another, and were published long after performances ended. Even the much-admired first folio of 1623 is problematic, since Heminges and Condell were forced to choose some versions over others (though they included multiple versions of several plays), notably excluding the short quartos (Maguire 588). Malone acknowledges the difficulty in finding a reliable "ancient copy," and details the various quarto editions and their relative merits and drawbacks. He goes on to compare the various quarto versions and point out printers' errors, needless emendations, and other "gross corruptions" *(Plays and Poems* xvii*)*. In the end, Malone decides that, in general, "the first edition of each play is alone of any authority, and accordingly to no other have I paid any attention" (xviii). Malone's chosen editions are reliable and "authentic" because they occupy a certain physical and temporal space, and their texts exhibit certain characteristics, not because they have been argued for, or because they are dynamic reflections of other editors' attempted improvements.

Debating the authenticity and reliability of different versions of Shakespeare's plays was not new to the eighteenth-century editors, of course. Heminges and Condell engaged in the same debate in their preface to the first folio: "those [corrupted texts] are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them" (Heminges and Condell, qtd. Maguire 587). Malone tends to agree with them, at least when there are no older quarto editions to rely on, largely because Heminges and Condell had had less time, and thus fewer chances to sully Shakespeare's original words. Malone assaults the second folio: "the editor of that book was entirely ignorant of our poet's phraseology and metre, and that various alterations were made by him, in consequence of that ignorance, which render his edition of no value whatsoever" (xx). The divergences Malone points out are convincing to a point, but the absolute rejection of the second folio ("no value whatsoever") on the basis of divergences from the older versions can be read as a rejection of the editing process. Malone styled himself less an editor than a curator, cleaning off centuries of vandalism and mistake. Still, given the fact that Malone painted Stratford's bust of Shakespeare a uniform white to return it to its supposedly original state, one might doubt the accuracy of his restorations.

Malone's preoccupation with primary documents and objective evidence belied a more rhetorical part of his work. His emendations may be more reliant on primary documents than preceding editors, but the *intent* of the edition participates in an active exchange of ideas with his fellow editors. Samuel Johnson offered a winking look at the early career of any Shakespearean editor: "The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of the former editors and shewing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and absurdity of the old reading," then "producing the true reading, with a long paraphrase" (Johnson qtd. de Grazia 65). Malone follows this formula almost unerringly.

The preface, after a long quote from Johnson on the duties of the editor of Shakespeare, lists Shakespeare's most prominent editors, and knocks each down in turn. Johnson's belief in actors' texts was mistaken, and Pope paid insufficient attention to the now-outdated rules of Elizabethan grammar. Both protests are true, and Malone is thorough in his corrections, but one must look more critically at his statement that he will go forward ignorant of other editors' work (i). He may provide more original commentary, and make his changes with less reference to his fore-editors, but the preface's long-winded responses to other editors and their flaws demonstrates that Malone is willingly participating in an editorial dialogue. If Malone really is participating in a discourse, then it stands to reason that his own statements must be constructed and deployed for a reason. In other words, one must look with more skepticism at his claims of neutrality through use of evidence. Evidence, as Greetham reminds us, is a creation of the editor.

The very act of re-publishing Shakespeare's work in *Plays and Poems* is a position statement. De Grazia argues, along with Greetham, that "in reproducing a text, in making it again available and accessible, the apparatus dictates the terms of its reception" (11). This is to say that Malone publishing Shakespeare's drama and poetry, with Malone's critical commentary, is taking a particular stance on how the text should be read. Malone's lengthy list of emendations, previous editors' mistakes, and "original versions" is, if nothing else, an argument that documentary evidence is key, older sources are more reliable sources, and the best Shakespeare is that which is closest to the First Folio.

To point out the inconsistency of Malone's participation in a discourse which he claims to avoid is not, of course, to dismiss his aim. He may participate more than he likes to admit in an editorial genealogy, but this does not invalidate his work. His emphasis on the solidity of evidence is hyperbolic, but has been ultimately beneficial to the study of Shakespeare. To view

Malone in a rhetorical context, behaving like a rhetorician is not to belittle his methods, but to place them within a rhetorical tradition. The debate between Peter Martin and Margreta de Grazia on the subject of Malone's editing might be mediated by my argument that Malone's documentary practices were indeed new, and potentially misguided, but that his editions participated in the editorial discourse as much as his predecessors. Martin argues that Malone freed Shakespeare from unreliable editions and instituted a new order of editorial practice, and protests strongly against de Grazia who claims that Malone attempted to freeze Shakespeare in time and place with his obsessive need to restore.

Malone should not be rejected for his conservative tactics; the devotion to historicity is admirable, if presumptuous. Rather, his single-minded reliance on evidence to prove his arguments should be interrogated closely. De Grazia argues that "Malone's overpowering preoccupation with objectivity marks a significant shift in the focus of Shakespeare studies from what might be termed the discursively acceptable to the factually verifiable," and this move from discourse to fact would shape the future of Shakespeare studies (5).

Malone's Complicated Rhetoric[10]

Malone's treatment of evidence is not as simple as it first appears. He engages with probability on a certain level, and his intention of presenting all of his evidence to the audience for them to judge on their own is less neutral than he would like to admit. He claims that his documents do not stand alone as verification, and occasionally admits the importance of probability in his verifications, stating in the introduction to his chronology of Shakespeare's plays that "In the following attempt to trace the progress of his [Shakespeare's] dramatick art,

10 All citations of Malone in this section come from *Plays and Poems* vol. I.

probability alone is pretended to" (*Plays and Poems* 264). The word "probably" and disclaimer phrase "I believe" appear often throughout Malone's writing, and he frequently admits the shakiness of positive historical identification since "we have so few lights to direct our inquiries" (267). Still, the fact that Malone was honest about the lack of surety in Shakespeare studies does not invalidate de Grazia's claims about his overuse (or abuse) of evidence. His references to probability are helpful to the reader, but in the midst of a proof, Malone rarely mentions probability in a meaningful way. Rather, his probabilistic language should be read as an acknowledgment of a persistent epistemological uncertainty.

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated probability's usefulness in measuring and mitigating epistemological uncertainty, but probability is not the only way to deal with uncertainty. Appealing to authentic documents, many of which came from reliable government, church, or commercial sources, allows Malone to remove some uncertainty too (or so he hopes). Consulting original documents should be able to cut out almost two hundred years of editorial and legendary modification. Finding records of John Shakespeare's tenure as High Bailiff in Stratford, for instance, eliminates the need for Rowe's vague recollection of John being a wool dealer. Of course, this kind of reliable evidence is not available for all, or even very much, of Shakespeare's life and play-writing history. If the Stationers' Register were perfectly reliable, there would be no need for debate on the chronology of Shakespeare's plays, but of course it is not. Uncertainty will always creep back in. Evidence, then, cannot substitute for probability, because as long as gaps in the evidence exist, there will be no way of knowing positively one way or the other, and one must fill those gaps with statements of likelihood. Malone, as mentioned previously, does not deny the uncertainty involved in his work, so it seems curious that the language of probability and likelihood do not invade his writing more. His writing is full

of positive statements made after the presentation of evidence, but he also shows understanding of epistemological understanding and the need for probability. This is less of a contradiction, and more of a tacit assumption on Malone's part. Malone assumes that his reader, with all the evidence of the case (whatever case it may be) arrayed before her, will be able to judge the likelihood of a particular outcome on her own. This reliance on the reader was apparently unwelcome by some of his readers. Reviewers of *Plays and Poems* complained about little besides the length of the notes (where Malone referred to documentary sources), and he was accused of pedantry by Burnaby Green ("Malone, Edmond"). Perhaps Malone's assumptions about his readers' capacities were too optimistic. In addition to his wrestling with probability, the genre of the evidence Malone employs also raises questions about the usefulness of an all-evidence approach.

Many of the sources Malone relied upon were literary works. His method for dating Shakespeare's plays involved finding contemporary references to Shakespeare, his plays, or lines from those plays, in Elizabethan poets' elegies, protests, parodies, or addresses and triangulating those with known dates from Shakespeare's life and contemporary references in his plays. For instance, when Malone attempts to locate the exact date of Shakespeare's arrival in London, he relies on sources like Spenser's *Tears of the Muses* (which refers to "Willy"), and Robert Greene's posthumous *Groatsworth of Witte*, which exhorts Marlowe, Shakespeare, and others to abandon their theatrical writing. Malone cannot be sure that Spenser's "Willy" was Shakespeare (his ambivalence on the subject is so perfect that one wonders why he included the detail at all), but the fact that Greene wrote his final piece just before his death in 1592 decisively proves, for Malone, that Shakespeare was known in the London performing community by 1592. Malone takes the fact that Shakespeare's name does *not* appear in Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetry*

or Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* as proof that Shakespeare was not yet publishing plays in 1586 or 1589. Still, Malone tries to phrase his arguments in the language of probability. "Is it imaginable," he asks his reader "that Harrington should have mentioned the Cambridge *Pendantius*, and *The Play of the Cards* […] and have passed by, unnoticed, the new prodigy of the dramatick world?" (269). It seems improbable to Malone that Harrington ignored Shakespeare who, to Malone, would surely have been an instant prodigy (268-272).

In other instances, however, Malone leaves behind all language of likelihood. One might expect him to embrace such surety after, say, finding Shakespeare's work listed in the Stationer's Register, but Malone makes his positive statement after finding a probable reference to Shakespeare in *A Groatsworth of Witte*. Malone insists that "it is *certain* that Shakespeare had commenced a writer for the stage, and even excited the jealousy of his contemporaries, before September 1592. This is now *decisively proved* by a passage extracted […] from Robert Greene's *Groatsworth of Witte*" (272, emphasis added). Malone points out that the passage refers to "a*n upstart crow beautified with our feathers* […] *with his* tygres heart wrapt in a players hide," and assumes that the "upstart crow" must be Shakespeare, since Greene appropriates a quote from *The Third Part of King Henry VI* (273, emphasis preserved). Given this evidence, it seems likely that Greene's reference is to Shakespeare, but how does one know for sure? Greene could have been using the quote to protest a playwright besides Shakespeare. This is not likely, but the point stands that Malone relies on probability without admitting it to his reader. Most scholars would agree that Greene is referencing Shakespeare, but the fact that Malone accepts the premise without argumentation, giving evidence instead, confirms that Malone elides logical argument. Instead of arguing for or against each piece of evidence, Malone believes that the reader is capable of making judgments and decisions for himself, and so does not feel the need to make

his own arguments. This may be logical from his perspective, but it can be difficult for the reader to process evidence without better guidance from the author. Logical argument has the benefit of giving an argument transparency, and Malone's arguments rarely feel transparent. Instead, they often feel glib or hasty without explanation. To demonstrate the ways in which Malone creates and deploys evidence, I will examine his rhetoric against that of a more rhetorically balanced modern scholar, Gary Taylor.

Malone, Taylor, and the Balancing Act

Edmond Malone's "Dissertation on King Henry VI" and Gary Taylor's "Shakespeare and Others: The Authorship of *Henry the Sixth, Part One*," are both concerned with the authorship and authenticity of *King Henry VI, Part One*. Contrasting them will demonstrate Malone's creation of evidence at the expense of probabilistic reasoning by providing Taylor as a counter-example of a more rounded, argumentative rhetoric. I will examine what kinds of evidence both scholars look for, the probabilistic or non-probabilistic methods with which the scholars examine the texts, and the divergent conclusions resulting from their methods. Proof will retain its centrality, and I will demonstrate that Malone's rhetoric is peculiar for its lack of logical reasoning and its overwhelming reliance on a narrative hypothesis, while Taylor's relies on a balance of textual evidence and logical argument regarding the probability of Shakespearean authorship.

Malone and Taylor wrote their texts with similar goals: to discover the author or authors of *King Henry VI, Part One*. Malone revisits an earlier idea, that all three Henry VI plays are by the same author, and now proposes that *1 Henry VI* is not Shakespearean. Taylor's goal, like his article generally, is less straightforward, partially because his study builds on centuries of prior

research, but also because Taylor argues by accumulating and connecting evidence. For him to state clearly at the beginning what he will prove by the end would reduce the article's rhetorical power. Malone and Taylor use similar sources (though Taylor obviously has more scholarship and computing power available): the Stationer's Register, the forerunner plays *The First Part of the Contention Between the Houses of Lancaster and York* and *The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York*, the first folio, and other Elizabethan texts. Gary Taylor, as a twentieth-century critic, also consults prior Shakespeare scholars, including Malone.

Malone makes a helpful distinction in his analysis between internal and external evidence, "internal" consisting of elements within the play (specifically "the diction, versification, and allusions"), and "external" logically referring to elements outside of the play like contemporary documents and other plays ("Dissertation" 379). Malone states several times that he is interested in examining "the diction, versification, and allusions" in the play to see whether or not they mesh with Shakespeare's confirmed plays. An examination of diction and prose-style will sound familiar to modern scholars, and studying the differences between *1 Henry VI*'s diction and the diction in Shakespeare's (and the other proposed authors') texts sounds initially like stylometrics. Skimming Taylor's pseudo-statistical work, however, establishes some important differences.

Taylor interrogates inconsistencies in *1 Henry VI*, assuming that consistent patterns of difference will help determine authorship of the various parts of the play. For example, one of Taylor's variables is the word "here." He sets up his argument by referring to the documentary evidence available (Malone's "external evidence,") remarking that "the use of the word 'here' in stage directions is relatively rare in the Shakespeare canon: outside *1 Henry VI* it occurs only twenty-four times in authoritative texts" (157). Taylor refers to other issues with the documents

which may interfere: scribal interference, bad attribution, etc. The crux of this argument is in the supremely uneven distribution of the word "here": nine of the ten occurrences of the word are in the first act. Once he's laid out his evidence, Taylor moves into enthymematic rhetoric, making an argument about probability based on logical discussion of the evidence. He begins his explanatory paragraph coyly: "Act 1 […] therefore apparently contains nine examples of an authorial habit rare in the rest of the play and rare in Shakespeare" (158). The implications are clear, but Taylor expands this argument for a paragraph before making the argument explicit, that "The only reasonable explanation for the distribution of '*here*' directions is that the author of act 1 did not write much of the rest of the play or much of the Shakespeare canon" (159). Using a combination of atechnic proof and logical reasoning, Taylor makes a strong argument for collaborative authorship of the play from an easily overlooked piece of evidence. The rest of his article follows a similar pattern, eventually coming to larger and larger conclusions as his minor arguments like this one coalesce into believable statements about the number and identities of Shakespeare's collaborators on *1 Henry VI*. Taylor's argument does not rely on statistical probability as true stylometric critics do, and so his use of likelihood is confined well within the rhetorical side of probabilistic reasoning.

Malone uses essentially the same body of evidence as Taylor for much of the "Dissertation," evidence from within the play and from other similar Elizabethan plays, but his rhetoric essentially lacks the logical argument Taylor relies on to connect his evidence to his claim. Malone is clear at the start about what he intends to prove. Before he begins amassing evidence, he states that "*The* first *part of King Henry VI* (as it is now called) furnishes us with other *internal* proofs also of its not being the work of Shakespeare" ("Dissertation" 391). "Proof" is central to this miniature thesis statement. Malone chooses to discuss first some

discrepancies in the play's logical consistency (which Taylor also mentions): doubt exists, between *1 Henry VI* and *2 and 3 Henry VI*, about how old the king actually is. Malone summarizes the plays' treatment of the king's age (essentially that *1 Henry VI* has Henry VI remembering something his father said, while *Part Two* and *Part Three* both contain references to the fact that Henry V died while Henry VI was an infant), including several quotes for each play, then immediately comes to the conclusion that since "Shakspeare, as appears from the two passages […] knew that the king could not possibly remember anything his father had said; and therefore, Shakspeare could not have been the author of the *first* part" (391 emphasis preserved). Any number of explanations exist for the inconsistency. The most likely, certainly, is that which Malone points out, but other possibilities should be dealt with. If Shakespeare had written the first part after the other three, enough time had passed that he may have forgotten. Even if, as seems probable, Shakespeare did not write the inconsistent lines, he could still have written other portions of the play. Malone's use of evidence is convincing, but feels incomplete without logical, probabilistic proof, in addition to the documentary proof.

Malone does occasionally refer to probabilities, coincidences and alternative explanations, most often when he attempts to disprove a dissenting opinion. He notices a line in *1 Henry VI* that is later repeated in *Henry V* (the phrase "work/ working of my/your thoughts"), but states immediately that "this is too slight a circumstance to overturn all the other arguments that have now been urged to prove this play not the production of our author" (394). Shakespeare could have seen the play elsewhere and remembered the line when he composed *Henry V*, or this could have been one of the few lines that Shakespeare included when he revised *1 Henry VI* (394). Rhetorically, it seems logical to phrase one's own arguments with more surety than one's opponents, but in this case, Malone takes that logic a step too far and seems able to

think critically only about his opponents' arguments. Nevertheless, Malone's use of particular evidence seems to presage stylometrics, if in a nonspecific, non-statistical way. He counts rhymed lines in *1 Henry VI* versus other Shakespeare plays, though he does not give the exact counts. This level of trust in his audience is out of character for Malone. His expectation that the audience will trust and follow him stands in stark contrast to Taylor, who also assaults his reader with evidence, but whose logic makes the evidence more convincing and inescapable in combination than Malone's evidence, which tends to work alone. Logical argument holds evidence together in most rhetorical settings, but Malone does not place himself in a normal rhetorical setting—his arguments are, at their core, an early attempt at textual forensics.

Given the stress Aristotelian rhetoric places on logical argument, the skepticism with which it views atechnic evidence, and Malone's confirmed familiarity with it, one wonders why Malone excises all proof but the documentary. His scholarship clearly suggests that he was more interested in documents than anything else, but interest alone cannot explain such a significant rhetorical absence. Instead, I return to the idea that Malone was a forerunner of the textual forensics movement, and that the absences in his rhetoric result from the struggle to approach text in a modern (or post-modern) way. The anti-discipline of textual forensics calls into question evidence as a kind of rhetorical proof. If the discovery of evidence is not only the construction, but also interpretation and explanation of evidence, as Greetham claims, then Malone's basic lack of explanation could be seen as a then-unprecedented approach to evidence as argument. Rather than evidence supporting a syllogism or narration, the evidence becomes its own interpretation. Malone does not abandon logical argument because he feels superior to it, but because the discovery and presentation of evidence have already spoken for him. But even though Malone is departing from traditional rhetorical models, his goal is still fundamentally

rhetorical. Greetham, drawing on Jerome McGann, describes the reliance on evidence in textual forensics as a "'dialogical' and 'rhetorical event'" (McGann 166, 167 qtd. Greetham 34). If Malone's scholarship lacks some of the ease or clarity of other more rhetorically-rounded authors like Taylor, it may be because Malone attempts the difficult leap from approaching the editing process as an extended dialogue with past and contemporary editors, to making it an early "anti-discipline" (Greetham 32-34). Still, as discussed previously, careful logical proof is crucial, even in stylometric studies, because it connects the proof to the argument.

Edmond Malone was the first textual scholar to apply his discipline to Shakespeare. His deployment of evidence was really a creation of evidence, since even in supplying all the documents he could for his readers' judgment, the fact that he provided them within a particular rhetorical context with a particular rhetorical goal (whether that was to disprove forgeries, to argue for a chronological order, or to dispute authorship of a problem play) meant that the evidence was a rhetorical tool: a proof. The proof stood on its own, however, since Malone rarely bothered to connect his proof to his rhetorical purpose, assuming that his reader would see the connection. This omnipresent assumption in Malone's rhetoric makes it harder to trust his arguments, no matter how much evidence he provides. Without some sort of logical argument providing connections, Malone's reliance on documentary evidence is lopsided and incomplete. What to make of Edmond Malone is a difficult question. He is not fully a pedantic boor as Kahan would have him, nor an abuser of evidence as de Grazia would have him, nor a patron saint of Shakespeare studies as Martin would have him. He is some of all three, but ultimately, he is a prototypical textual scholar.

CHAPTER 4

TRUE BELIEF IN FALSE PAPERS: BELIEF AS THE BEGINNING AND END OF RHETORIC

> "Probability results from evidence, and begets belief. Belief invigorates our ideas. Belief raised to the highest becomes certainty" (George Campbell, *Philosophy of Rhetoric* 81)

So far, I have discussed rhetoric's use of evidence and probability in detail, but have neglected much that surrounds them: the context in which rhetoric is situated, the reader or listener's response, and the final goal of rhetoric. While I cannot offer a complete view of rhetoric, I can dissect one final aspect of rhetoric that is closely bound to eighteenth-century authentications of Shakespeare: belief. The word "belief" has several meanings within the rhetorical context, and I will focus on two of them: belief as doxa, and belief as devotion.

Belief is both the first and last necessary element of a rhetorical argument. Before the speaker speaks or the writer writes, there must be a commonly held set of beliefs and assumptions between the rhetor and the audience, or the argument will fall flat. I will refer to this kind of belief by the Greek word "doxa," since this form of belief is more frequently associated with Aristotle. Once the arguments have been made, the evidence brought forward and the probability shored up as much as possible, the audience should ideally believe the writer's claim. In the case of Shakespeare authentication, the writer wants the reader to believe in the authenticity (or lack thereof) of whatever text is under review, such as Merriam's stylometric defense of *Edward III* as a text with both Shakespearean and Marlovian elements.

The statistics and logical arguments were meant to make the audience believe his claim. This belief in an argument does not occur only at the end of an argument. Audiences often enter a debate or authentication with a particular belief already in mind (as opposed to doxa, which includes many beliefs and assumptions), and if the writer's argument coincides with this belief, the argument will be strengthened and made more lively for that listener.

The Strange, Mostly[11] True Case of the Shakespeare Papers[12]

The literary forgeries popularly titled the Shakespeare Papers were perhaps the most spectacular case of belief, rhetoric, and Shakespeare authentication in the eighteenth century. The accepted story is that William Henry Ireland, the son of hobbyist collector and admirer of Shakespeare Samuel Ireland, forged an incredible number of documents written by or related to William Shakespeare. These forgeries convinced much of the literary world, until a combination of the botched production of the forged play *Vortigern*, and Edmond Malone's *Inquiry into the Authenticity etc.* turned the tide of belief against the Irelands. The story is much more complex than this, but the literary no-man's-land of forgery provides an interesting proving ground for belief. At its most basic, the forger's art involves convincing a reader or viewer that an inauthentic work is authentic—in other words, it involves the creation of belief where no belief is warranted. The mechanics of belief, both rhetorical and devotional, are much more complex when applied to the Shakespeare papers, and the complexities will be discussed, but first it will be helpful to offer the story of the so-called "great Shakespeare fraud" in more detail.

11 I say "mostly" because of the allegations Jeffrey Kahan makes in *Reforging Shakespeare* that William Henry Ireland was not the only, or even the primary forger of the Shakespeare papers, and that he and his family of forgers were motivated primarily by financial gains. While I acknowledge that Kahan's arguments are convincing, the identity of the forger is not *particularly* important here, and so I work from the more common version in which William Henry is the primary forger.

12 This account of the Shakespeare Papers is drawn from Schoenbaum (189-233), Kahan's *Reforging Shakespeare* (21-185), and Patricia Pierce's *The Great Shakespeare Fraud* (16-207).

Samuel Ireland was a failed weaver, the nephew of a bricklayer, and a collector of rare books and historical artifacts. He owned "a bit of Wyclif's vestment, Oliver Cromwell's buff leather jacket, part of a cloak belonging to Charles I, a garter worn by James II at his coronation […] Sir Philip Sidney's cloth jacket embroidered with silk knotting, and a pocket knife used by Addison to pare his fruit" (Schoenbaum 193). The son of this avid collector and self-styled man of letters was William Henry Ireland, also collector of books, collector (and occasional maker) of antique arms and armor, and budding literary forger. Contemporary and modern commentators suggest that William Henry was the illegitimate son of the Earl of Sandwich by Samuel's mistress and housekeeper Anna Maria Freeman (Schoenbaum 194). Legitimate son or not, Samuel placed no faith in his son's mental competence, but shared with William Henry his love of Shakespeare. Samuel held readings from Shakespeare nearly every night, though William Henry preferred Chaucer[13]. Sometimes, however, Samuel read from other sources. *Love and Madness* by Herbert Croft, especially the parts concerned with young forger Thomas Chatterton, supposedly spurred William Henry on to begin his forgery.

More than any other experience, however, William Henry's trip to Stratford with his father in 1793 encouraged him to begin forging documents. Samuel Ireland was an author of several illustrated tour books, and their trip to Stratford was in order to produce *Picturesque Views on the Upper, or Warwickshire Avon*. While in Stratford, Ireland toured and shopped for Shakespearean relics. Stratford was home to a cottage industry of Shakespeariana production: cups, chairs, vases, and other wood objects carved from the wood of a mulberry tree Shakespeare had planted. Samuel Ireland returned home with several curios, including Shakespeare's courting chair. Samuel was led by the industrious tour-guide and (according to Kahan)

13 Interestingly, the boy wrote a poetic address to Chaucer in the persona and name of Lydgate (*Reforging* 45).

accomplished lore-forger John Jordan who provided his guests with tales of Shakespeare's bawdy youth in Stratford, and William Henry could not have been ignorant of his father's rapture. He noted that "a dozen full-grown mulberry trees would scarcely suffice to produce the innumerable mementoes already extant" (Ireland qtd. *Reforging Shakespeare* 51). After they returned home with their treasures, William Henry began his forgery in earnest.

His father had sought original Shakespearean signatures in Stratford, fruitlessly, and at one point was even tricked by a farmer and his wife into believing that they had burned a sheaf of pages with Shakespeare's signature a few weeks prior. William Henry, whether to please his inattentive father or to claim the reward of rare books Samuel had offered, began his forgery career with an ostentatious piece: a letter from Queen Elizabeth to Shakespeare, written on period paper using aged-looking ink, thanking the playwright for some verses and commanding a future performance:

> Wee didde receive youre prettye Verses goode Masterre William through the hands off oure Lorde Chambelayne ande wee doe Complemente thee onne theyre greate excellence Wee shalle departe fromme Londonne toe Hamptowne forre the holydayes where wee Shalle expecte thee withe thye beste Actorres thatte thou mayste playe before oureselfe toe amuse usse bee notte slowe butte comme toe usse bye Tuesdaye nexte asse the lord Leycesterre wille bee withe usse.
>
> Elizabeth. R. (*Inquiry* 25-26)

A note was attached, reading "Thys letterre I dydde receyve fromme mye moste gracyouse Ladye Elizabethe ande I doe requeste itte maye bee kepte withe alle care possyble. Wm. Shakspeare" (*Inquiry* 26). Despite the bizarre orthography, Samuel accepted the forgery as genuine. His test case a success, William Henry began forging other documents with

Shakespeare's signature. The first was a contract between Shakespeare and John Heminges which pleased Samuel to no end. Samuel gave William Henry a book from his library, and pressed his son to return to the treasure trove from which these two false documents had come.

William Henry's explanation of the documents' origins was similar to the old trunk in which Chatterton had supposedly discovered his Rowley poems. The story went that William Henry knew a young aristocrat, named only "Mr. H" who, after hearing of William Henry's interest in Shakespearean signatures, told the boy that he had many old documents, and that William Henry was welcome to whatever he found. Mr. H's mystifying generosity would be explained later, but for the moment, Samuel was only hungry for more papers. If William Henry had discovered the contract between Shakespeare and Heminges in only a few minutes, what other treasures might lie in Mr. H's rooms? William Henry made frequent trips to Mr. H's residence, finding untold treasures over the course of several months, but promising even more. According to Patricia Pierce, William Henry "insanely promised priceless artefacts to come. He claimed he had seen a seal of cornelian stone set in gold […] a full-length life-sized contemporary portrait of Shakespeare in black draperies […] two copies in folio of Shakespeare's works with uncut leaves" and a completely new play (56). Why Mr. H would part with such treasures would be filled in later. In reality, William Henry worked largely alone as a clerk for a Mr. Bingley at the New Inn in an unsupervised office after one of his two coworkers died and the other was fired (Pierce 41-42). He was free to browse London's book stalls in search of seventeenth-century paper and facsimiles of signatures. He found a copy of Shakespeare's signature in Malone's 1790 *Shakespeare*, but he was forced to invent signatures for historical figures without a ready example.

Within several weeks in January 1795, William Henry had produced another promissory note from Shakespeare to Heminges, a contract between Shakespeare and John Lowin, another between the playwright and Henry Condell, a sketch of Shakespeare's head, a letter from the Earl of Southampton to Shakespeare, the reply, and remarkably, a profession of faith from Shakespeare (Pierce 199). In it, William Henry painted the dying Shakespeare as a staunch protestant (and indulged in a much-discussed simile comparing Jesus Christ to a "sweete Chickenne") (*Reforging* 60). The next month, William Henry took a turn for the romantic, forging letters and verses from Shakespeare to Anne Hathaway (one letter included a lock of the poet's hair, later bundled into rings and sold by Samuel), and a new will which was kinder to Hathaway than the original will had been. The forgeries grew more audacious and surprising with time: sometime in the summer of 1795, a document appeared explaining why Mr. H was so generous in giving the bard's papers to William Henry. According to the "Deed of Gift," they were the Ireland family's by right.

In a letter and set of tributary verses dated 1604, the supposed-Shakespeare explains that he and some friends, including one William Henry Ireland, were boating on the Thames and drinking. The boat capsized, and everyone but Shakespeare made it to shore. Ireland, seeing his friend in distress, cast off his shirt and dove into the river after him, saving the poet's life. Shakespeare repaid this kindness by giving over "the rights to *King John*, *King Lear*, *Henry IV*, and *Henry V* as well as an unknown play, *Henry III*" to Ireland and his descendants (*Reforging* 89). The new will, called the Deed of Trust, also promised rights to a hitherto-unknown play called *Vortigern*. Putting aside the titanic egoism William Henry displayed in making his same-named ancestor Shakespeare's literal savior (and master, if Shakespeare's forged laudatory verses are to be believed), one must wonder where these three plays would come from (the nonexistent

Vortigern and *Henry III*, and *King Lear*, dated too early). The answer was simple: William Henry would write them.

Ireland's first attempt at rewriting Shakespeare's plays was with *King Lear.* Rewriting *Lear* was nothing new to the eighteenth century; Nahum Tate had given the play an entirely new ending in which Cordelia was paired off with Edgar, and Lear lived. William Henry's emendations weren't quite as extreme as Tate's, but he did remove some of the play's coarser content. The forger also wrote an earlier fragment of *Hamlet*, calling it *Hamblette*. Finally, and most significantly to his career, William Henry attempted to write an entirely new play: *Vortigern and Rowena* modeled on an episode from Holinshed. The boy gave it to his father one page at a time, as a transcription, rather than an original, and it was eventually published along with the rest of the Shakespeare papers. The play's performance in April of 1796 was sponsored by Sheridan's Drury Lane theatre and performed just once by Philip Kemble . The play was a disaster. Kemble and several other performers acted the play as though it were a farce, and the un-Believing portion of the audience laughed riotously at prearranged moments in the play. Supporters of the Shakespeare papers calling themselves the Believers did their best to support the play, but by the time of its performance, public opinion had turned against the Shakespeare papers, and Malone had published his devastating attack on them. Malone's book was not the death-blow to the papers, but his antagonism was well known even before his treatise was published (which was, coincidentally, the day before the play opened). Support for the papers eventually waned, since the two best-known critics of Shakespeare George Steevens and Malone had made their judgments known; the Shakespeare papers (and the texts condemning them) were widely available for public reading; and the press had turned public opinion against the forgeries.

Even before Malone's systematic disproving of the forgeries, critics were attacking the papers. Non-Believers pointed out the bizarre spellings, incorrect dates (the first contract between Shakespeare and Heminges refers to the Globe theatre, when the Globe wouldn't be constructed for another seven years), wrong signatures, the lame-sounding verse, and the improbability of the discovery-story. Even with all this criticism, William Henry had done some things right. The material documents were generally ignored, partially because Samuel kept strict control over who saw the original manuscripts, but also because William Henry's materials were convincing. He used period-accurate paper (frequently taken from seventeenth-century books' backs), appropriately brown ink ("aged" by slight scorching); he even found genuine seals and cleverly grafted them to new wax to seal documents. The physical evidence may have convinced his father, but the public had only the words to rely on, since they could only experience the manuscripts through Samuel's publication *Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments under the Hand and Seal of W. Shakespeare*. If only William Henry had researched orthography and history as much as he had paleography, perhaps more would have taken the papers seriously. The other major strength of the papers, in addition to their convincing appearance, was their frequent self-reference. Forgeries referred each other, tying them into a more cohesive whole. For example, William Henry mentioned *Lear* in the Deed of Gift, dated 1604, and while the true *Lear* was likely written later (if Boaden, Foakes, and Kermode are to be believed), William Henry's version was dated significantly earlier. The explanation was that the older *Lear* (William Henry's) must be the original, written by Shakespeare, and that the later quarto versions must have been actors' copies. This explanation led James Boaden to comment that "It at once converted the PLAYERS into the most elaborate and polished masters of versification, and SHAKESPEARE into a writer without the necessary ear for rhythm—a man

[…] not being able to number ten syllables upon his fingers" (7). By 1797, the case of the Shakespeare papers was essentially closed. Samuel Ireland continued to circulate apologies and attacks, and published *Vortigern* again in 1799, but the world had moved on. Samuel died in 1800, and William Henry continued life as a novelist and hack writer. The storm of the Shakespeare manuscripts had taken up only two years—from January of 1795, when William Henry first presented Queen Elizabeth's note, to 1797.

Samuel Ireland never admitted that the manuscripts were fake, though William Henry published an exhaustive confessional entitled *The Confessions of William Henry Ireland* in 1805. More interesting than the protestations of Samuel, or the confessions of his son, however, are the words and actions of the men who believed in the forgeries. The best known attestation of faith came from James Boswell who, after perusing the papers and asserting their legitimacy, fell to his knees and kissed them, saying "Well; I shall now die contented, since I have lived to witness the present day" (Boswell, qtd. Pierce 93). Other notable believers included Colonel Francis Webb, Samuel Parr, scholar John Tweddell, playwright Hannah More, collectors John Byng and James Bindley, the Duke of Clarence, the Prince of Wales, and Sir Herbert Croft, author of *Love and Madness*, the book rumored to have inspired William Henry in the first place. Perhaps most significantly, James Boaden was (for a time) a vocal defender of the papers. Boaden was a modestly successful playwright specializing in the gothic and a biographer, and according to his biographer John Steevens, he "was fascinated by literary puzzles but his premature endorsement of Vortigern and the other so-called Shakespearian discoveries of William Ireland (The Oracle, Feb–April, 1795) was unequivocally retracted in his Letter to George Steevens, Esq. (1796)" ("Boaden, James"). To examine the role of belief in supporting, and later destroying the Shakespeare papers, I will examine three points of view: Samuel Ireland's introduction to, and

defense of the papers, Malone's attack on the same, and most importantly, Boaden's dual view. Boaden was able to view both sides of the conflict, first as a Believer, then as a critic of the papers, and his writing on the event will prove enlightening. First, however, the broader definition of belief as doxa should be examined.

Doxa as Belief

Doxa (or endoxa, as it is also known[14]), is sometimes translated as "opinion," but I prefer the translation "belief," since that term implies a more deeply held idea than "opinion." In its Aristotelian sense, doxa is both a rhetorical concern and a foundational element of the rhetorical situation. At its broadest, doxa is the sum of the beliefs, opinions, ideals and assumptions of an audience which a speaker or writer must acknowledge in order to communicate effectively. Doxa, like probability, originates with uncertainty, since "in all domains where there can be no absolute truth, like social affairs and political life, people can only resort to what seems plausible and reasonable. They look for verisimilitude rather than for Truth and build on doxa (common opinion) rather than on episteme (scientific knowledge)" (Amossy 467). Any speaker could assume that virtue is good and should be pursued, that injustice should be righted when possible, that the innocent should not be punished, etc. The rhetorical concern follows naturally from the idea of foundational doxa. To tailor one's speech or writing to a particular audience, one must understand the assumptions and beliefs that audience holds. Aristotle elaborates on the idea of doxa in *Topics*:

> Once we have reckoned up the opinions of the public, we shall speak to them, not from the beliefs of others, but from their own beliefs, changing their minds about

14 I have opted for the term "doxa," since it is slightly broader than "endoxa."

> anything they may seem to us not to have stated well. It is useful in relation to the philosophical sciences because if we have the ability to go through the difficulties on either side we shall more readily discern the true as well as the false in any subject. (101a30-101a37)

Doxa, therefore, is not merely a demographic concern, but it is a cognitive exercise as well. Knowledge of one's own beliefs and assumptions can lead to an understanding of the opposing side's beliefs and assumptions, and that knowledge can help the speaker discern truth. Doxa is not a purely rhetorical concept: understanding doxa can lead one to truth, not just to sharpening one's rhetoric. Aristotle also suggests that there are multiple levels of doxa. There are "the beliefs of others" which sometimes conflict with "their [the audience's] own beliefs," and the public can be convinced to endorse one or the other. Doxa, therefore, is more than the broadest possible beliefs of a culture. One public might believe that virtue is innate, while another might claim that one must work to develop virtue. A speaker would have to understand which of these audiences she is speaking to in order to communicate effectively. Theoretically, there could be any number of levels of doxa. From a held-in-common belief that certain virtues belong only to the upper classes, to the common belief that text written by Shakespeare has a detectable essence that marks it as Shakespearean. Doxa is the imagined application of belief to an audience within a rhetorical situation.

Doxa is a negotiation with the audience, an attempt to understand and leverage the audience's beliefs. Belief, with its emphasis on the individual participating in the rhetorical situation (whether the writer or speaker conveying, experiencing, or being motivated by a belief, or the audience being swayed or confronted by a belief), focuses on the participant. Probability concerned the likelihood of an argument, and evidence concerned the subject of the argument,

but belief is a human element. Still, doxa is fundamentally uncertain. The speaker must guess his audience, or, in Walter Ong's terms, must imagine his audience.

Ong begins from the uncertainty involved with writing, since "words are never fully determined in their abstract signification but have meaning only with relation to man's body and to its interaction with its surroundings" (57). Words are interpretive; written words separated from the author by time and space are even more so. An author attempting to cross these gulfs using only the medium of words needs a way to connect with their likely recipient, in other words, needs doxa. But the remoteness of the writing situation requires the author to imagine the readers, even if she does not imagine them directly. The writer, according to Ong, "does have to take into consideration the real social, economic, and psychological state of possible reader," and he also has to imagine some sort of common ground with them (58). There are other problems associated with a writer's audience. The audience is not a collective group: it is a large number of individual readers, so even the conception of an "audience" as a single group is a misnomer (58). The audience, as in the title of Ong's article, is always a fiction, both because the "audience" as such does not exist, and because both author and reader must imagine it as a collective in order to write to or receive the arguments or stories.

The writer must imagine her audience, but the audience must simultaneously imagine itself as an audience. A written text requires some assumptions on the part of its reader based on the time period and genre of the text. A personal letter requires its reader to imagine himself in conversation (though the "conversation" is not so straightforward) with the letter's author. In the same way, a publication of Greek epic expects the reader to imagine herself as a listener to the text. This kind of suggested imagining is a form of doxa, a set of beliefs the audience takes on, based on the assumed beliefs of the author. To appreciate the author's text, there must be a

common set of beliefs assumed by both author and reader. In the case of the personal letter, the author and reader both operate from a common understanding of the other, though this understanding is imagined at both ends. Doxa is the imagined foundation to rhetoric. Doxa on a narrower level can also be a way to connect more intimately to the audience, based on a knowledge of their preexisting beliefs. The doxa of the Believers was a prevalent force in eighteenth-century England: bardolatry.

While "bardolatry" is a more recent term[15], admirers of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century used the same metaphor. George Chalmers, in his 1797 book *An Apology for the Believers in the Shakespeare Papers which were exhibited in Norfolk Street*, accounts for the readiness of the Believers to accept the papers by stating that

> While the admirers of Shakspeare were worshiping *the God of their idolatry*, in Castle street, a new discovery of SHAKSPEARIANA was announced, in Norfolk street […] Whether *Idolatry*, and *Credulity*, be cousins in the first, or second, degree, must be left to the decision of those critics "who have read Alexander Ross over." (9, emphasis preserved)

Chalmers accuses "admirers of Shakspeare" of the sin of idolatry twice in one page—and from an earlier passage praising Shakespeare as singular and miraculous, Chalmers must be numbering himself among those idolaters. Bardolatry became widespread in the latter half of the eighteenth century, after the decline of strict neoclassical taste (which objected to Shakespeare because he was irregular and "violated decorum by his excursions into grossness") (Schoenbaum 147). Between Pope and Johnson's endorsement (some might say forgiveness) of Shakespeare, and a new translation of the *Poetics* which revealed no Aristotelian support for the so-called

15 First used by George Bernard Shaw in the preface to *Plays for Puritans* ("Bardolatry").

classical unities, Shakespeare was cleared of his charges and ready for public consumption. He was frequently referenced as the "Poet of Nature," or, according to Martin Sherlock's *Fragment on Shakespeare*, "the darling child, of Nature; and, like thy mother, enchanting, astonishing, sublime, graceful, thy variety is inexhaustible" (Sherlock 14, qtd. Schoenbaum 149).

This admiration was reflected by the century's history of stage performances. The four most popular tragedies in the century were *Hamlet* (601 London performances), *Macbeth* (558), *Romeo and Juliet* (495), and *Othello* (441) (*Reforging* 25). Part of Shakespeare's popularity was likely the difficulty with which new dramas were accepted—an age venerating the past did not take well to new inventions, unless they resembled old inventions. New plays often billed themselves as being "in imitation of Shakespeare," like Nicholas Rowe's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore. Written in Imitation of Shakespear's Style*, William Havard's *Charles the First, in the imitation of Shakespeare*, or William Kenrick's *Falstaff's Wedding, a Comedy in the Imitation of Shakspere* (*Reforging* 31-32). Collectors like Samuel Ireland sought and bought tremendous amounts of "Shakespeariana," or mementos owned by or associated with Shakespeare. The rain-soaked Stratford Jubilee of 1769 was another testament to the attraction and veneration of Shakespeare. Plans had included "a procession of Shakespearean characters, with a satyr-drawn triumphal chariot containing Melpomene, Thalia, and the Graces," and "the crowning of the Bard," and although these events were rained out, their associations with royalty and divinity are markers of the public's bardolatry (Schoenbaum 156). This kind of widespread cultural phenomena is indicative of a strong doxa: Shakespeare, the bard, the poet of nature, is to be admired and venerated.

Bardolatry seemed to occur mostly in the ranks of Shakespeare hobbyists. Malone displayed few, if any, signs of bardolatry. Johnson, while admiring, never seemed to *worship*

Shakespeare (Johnson was a noted absence at Garrick's Stratford Jubilee; if Johnson was a fanatical bardolater, he would likely have attended). George Steevens, like Malone, appears to have been too professionally involved with Shakespeare to be a fanatic—and his own Shakespearean forgeries would be too blasphemous for a true bardolater to commit. On the other hand, the group of Believers was populated by non-professionals, collectors, or non-Shakespearean scholars. The difference between the hobbyist bardolaters and Shakespeare scholars is not in intelligence, or skill; rather, it is in belief, in doxa. The doxa of the hobbyist Shakespeareans was built around admiration for Shakespeare—they collected his ephemera, attended, read, and collected his plays out of appreciation. The doxa of the scholarly Shakespeareans was built around the study of Shakespeare as a man (for the life-writers and biographers) and of his works as texts. One group sought to enjoy and appreciate, the other to study and understand. It should come as no surprise that enjoyment and appreciation, taken to their extreme, should become worship. Worship needs an object, and the plays were no longer enough. Shakespeare's devotees needed a new relic, and William Henry Ireland obliged them. From the prominence of documents in the forgery scandal, one might expect the Believers to stand as heavily on documentary evidence as Malone, but they did not. If they had, they probably would have seen what Malone saw: inconsistent spellings, badly imitated handwriting, copious factual errors. Instead, the Believers focused their attentions on belief, and thus, on themselves as audience and their responses to the papers.

Devotional Belief

Considering the audience's imagination is not new to Walter Ong. George Campbell was already considering the role of the imagination in rhetoric in his 1776 text *The Philosophy of*

Rhetoric. While he holds himself back from delivering a treatise on belief, Campbell does admit that "Thus much however is indubitable, that belief commonly enlivens our ideas; and that lively ideas have a stronger influence than faint ideas to induce belief" (73). To Campbell, belief enhances rhetoric. This type is what I previously called devotional belief (as opposed to doxa): a personally held trust or faith in an argument or idea. Still, the power of belief to enliven is not the same thing as an automatic validation. Campbell goes on to say that

> Vivacity of ideas is not always accompanied with faith, nor is faith always able to produce vivacity. The ideas raised in my mind by the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, or the Lear of Shakespeare, are incomparably more lively than those excited by a cold but faithful historiographer. Yet I may give full credit to the languid narrative of the latter, though I believe not a single sentence in those tragedies […]. The ideas of the poet give greater pleasure, command closer attention, operate more strongly on the passions, and are longer remembered. (73-74)

But the beliefs of the Believers were founded on the pleasure of Shakespeare's vivacity. Campbell is enough of a scholar to "give full credit to the languid narrative" of the historian, but for the hobbyist Believers, the liveliness of Shakespeare was the ultimate validation. For Campbell, belief was part of a progression within an argument, conjoining with probability and evidence. Belief for Campbell is not an end of rhetoric, but a stage of rhetoric, assisted by probability, which is created by evidence.

> Probability results from evidence, and begets belief. Belief invigorates our ideas. Belief raised to the highest becomes certainty. Certainty flows either from the

> force of the evidence, real or apparent, that is produced: or without any evidence produced by the speaker, from the previous notoriety of the fact. (81-82)

This statement almost seems to have been written with the Shakespeare papers in mind. In more typical rhetorical situations, relevant evidence presented well results in a sense of heightened probability for the writer's argument. That probability should evoke a sense of belief, and probability stacked upon probability, belief upon belief, should result in a sense of certainty by the end of the argument. But the Shakespeare papers are not an ordinary rhetorical situation. Certainty for the Believers leaped over the accumulation of evidence, presentation of probability, and forming of belief, instead beginning with certainty "from the previous notoriety of the fact," the fact in this case being the semi-divinity of Shakespeare.

This emphasis on belief over evidence is demonstrated by the Believers' own testimonies[16]. I have already described James Boswell's reverent response to the papers—the act of falling on his knees alone was religious, let alone kissing the relics and claiming that he could die happily. Boswell's proclamation that he could "die contented" mimics Simeon's blessing of the Christ child after his presentation in the temple: "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2:29-30). The parallel may not have been intentional, but it is telling. Even if Boswell was not intentionally making himself into a Shakespearean Simeon, kneeling before a relic and naming it his life's fulfillment is doubtlessly religious. Earlier, Samuel Ireland read the Profession of Faith aloud to Dr. Joseph Warton, "a clergyman, poet, critic, and 'patriarch of English letters'," and the gentleman responded rapturously: "'Sir, we have many very fine passages in our church service,

16 The genre of these testaments is troubling. Many of the Believers' most intense confessions of belief were written in personal letters, while later attacks on and defenses of the papers were books. Books criticizing the papers far outweigh those defending them, and the defenses are frequently lame, often attacking Malone for being mean-spirited, or claiming that the Believers meant well, but were misguided. Most interestingly, both sides tend to use legal language in books, presumably as an attempt to excise belief from their arguments.

and our Litany abounds with beauties; but here, sir, here is a man who has distanced us all'" (Pierce 52, Ireland qtd. Pierce 54)[17]. Again, the language of religious belief suffuses the response to the manuscript. Warton believed, or at least said he believed, that the Profession of Faith outstripped the Anglican litany. In a sense, this places Warton's belief in Shakespeare's ability above his belief in his own litany.

Boaden, too, applies the language of the church to the papers, though in a less complimentary fashion. After changing his mind about the papers' validity, Boaden spat that "You must be aware, sir, of the enormous crime you committed against the divinity of Shakespeare. Why, the act, sir, was nothing short of sacrilege; it was precisely the same thing as taking the holy chalice from the altar, and ******* therein!!!!" (Ireland qtd. "Shakespeare and the Forging of Belief" 26). Boaden's exclamation is rich in meaning for more reasons than his colorful simile. Ireland's crime is not merely civil, or literary, it is sacrilege, a crime against a divinity, and forgery does not merely resemble Ireland relieving himself in the chalice, it "was precisely the same thing." Boaden's early devotional belief in Shakespeare is nowhere clearer than in this passage.

Expressions of the Believers' devotion were not limited to ecclesiastical language; attestations to the papers' legitimacy took more general believing tones. Francis Webb said of Shakespeare that

> He was a peculiar being—a unique—he stood alone. To imitate him, so as to pass the deceit upon the world were impossible […] [the papers] bear indisputable proofs of his sublime genius, boundless imagination, pregnant wit, and intuitive

17 This is the same Profession of Faith containing the sentence "O Lorde[…] take usse alle to thye Breaste O cherishe usse like the sweete Chickenne thatte under the coverte offe herre spredynge Wings Receyves herre lyttle Broode ande hoveringe oerre themme keeps themme harmlesse ande in safetye" (*Reforging* 60).

> sagacity […] It must be Shakespeare's and Shakespeare's only. It either comes from his pen or from heaven. (Webb qtd. Pierce 94)

Elsewhere, Samuel Parr attested that "they were either written by Shakespeare or the devil" (Parr qtd Pierce 94). Again, Shakespeare's semi-divinity is apparent, but more important is the fact that (according to Parr and Webb), it is literally impossible to imitate Shakespeare. The fact that either man *believes* that the text is Shakespearean becomes indisputable proof; if it were a forgery, it would not carry with it the Shakespeare-ness that the men believe they see in the papers. The Believers' doxa is belief. Believing in the papers is enough to validate them.

Boaden, once a firm Believer, eventually realized that the papers were forgeries. He provides a telling narrative of his belief and change of heart, which displays the workings of belief, and a picture of a changing doxa. James Boaden acknowledges this flawed logic at the beginning of his *A Letter to George Steevens*, describing the sincerity and intensity of his (and others') belief, and explaining to Steevens the experience of believing so adamantly.

> To a mind filled with the most ardent love and the most eager zeal, disarmed of caution by the character too of the gentleman who displayed them, it will not be a subject of severe reproof, that the wished impression was made. I remember, that I beheld the papers with the tremor of the purest delight—touched the invaluable relics with reverential respect, and deemed even existence dearer, as it gave me so refined a satisfaction. He, who has long combatted with the arts of literary imposture, may smile at the simplicity of this avowal, although he should be unable to refuse his praise to the candour by which it was dictated. (2)

To boil down Boaden's brief narration of belief: love and excitement for Shakespeare made him eager to believe, Samuel Ireland disarmed him, and the impression of authenticity was complete.

Boaden's belief created a personal experience of rapture at coming into contact with connections to the subject of his love and zeal, and he believed. Earlier, Boaden describes the initial experience of seeing the papers as though the verification process is a preliminary step: "They bore the character of the poet's writing—the paper appeared of sufficient age—the water-marks were earnestly displayed, and the matter diligently applauded" (2). The handwriting looked right, and there were watermarks, so the physical evidence was accounted for. Malone would have cried.

Doxa in Conflict

The evidence sunk in for Boaden later. He began to doubt because of "the light of history […] the rule of chronology […] the records of biography," and with that revelation, his old belief was crushed. Still, Boaden implies that it did not disappear, but was replaced: "all of the knowledge I had received as undeniable, all of the fact I had relied on as true, was of necessity to be sacrificed to the new creed of the recent discoveries. I went no more" (Boaden 3 B2). His initial belief had been "undeniable," and he had relied on it, but rational thought and documentary evidence destroyed it, and in place of belief, the "recent discoveries" became "the new creed." Boaden's fundamental assumptions about the Shakespeare papers had shifted with time and rational thought. The doxa of bardolatry was replaced by a doxa based more on documentary evidence. When the old doxa disappeared, the rhetoric changed. Boaden's admission that "[Shakespeare] is frequently turgid and diffuse; his meaning is often buried under the pomp of his expression, and a very feeble thought lies like a titled idiot entombed in marble" would have sounded like treason if spoken by Parr or Webb (8). Boaden does not love Shakespeare less; he simply sees more of him without the assumptions of belief, and it provides

a more rounded picture of the playwright "who, if he had not thus erred, would have been too perfect for humanity" (8). Boaden's letter is suffused with the language of documentary evidence. He compares texts of *Lear*, demonstrates an understanding of multiple texts and editions, and provides lists of spelling comparisons between confirmed Shakespearean manuscripts and the Shakespeare papers (comparing Ireland's "Innefyrmytyes" to Shakespeare's "Infirmities" and so on) that might just as easily be found in Malone's writing. A change in doxa, in assumed beliefs, necessitates a change in writing from the old perspective which held the forgeries at first with "reverential respect," to the new perspective which compares spurious spellings in table form. Changing doxa changes the rules of an argument, and Boaden and much of the eighteenth-century reading public were eventually persuaded that Malone's assumed beliefs were stronger. To see the workings of the winning doxa more clearly, it might be helpful to examine the doxa of the Believers' chief antagonist.

Edmond Malone held doxic beliefs, but distrusted devotional belief. In the second chapter, I established that Malone's rhetoric relied primarily on documentary evidence, but left out any mention of belief. Malone's emphasis on evidence does not mean that he was without beliefs (rhetorically, not religiously); Malone's beliefs are simply different than the unproven devotion of the Believers. As Richard Whately points out, "*Disbelief is belief*; only, they [the contrary position to belief] have reference to *opposite conclusions*" (325, emphasis preserved). Malone believed in documentary evidence; his assumed belief was that original, primary documents make the best witnesses, and that if literary truth is to be had, it must be had from original sources. This belief, this doxa, may have blinded him to certain things, like the importance of a critical genealogy, and may have led him to create false narratives based on his beliefs. As I showed in the second chapter, Malone's attack on the Shakespeare papers amasses

document upon document to disprove each of Ireland's forgeries. Dozens of pages are devoted to disproving just the first note from Elizabeth to Shakespeare, when Malone admits that the disparity between signatures alone would solve the issue. The Believers accused Malone of mocking the papers by accumulating so much evidence, but I argue that Malone was attempting to be fair. He simply distrusted belief. According to his assumed belief, documentary evidence is the best way to prove a literary issue, so for him to simply make one damning argument against each piece and leaving it to the audience to accept it would be to rely too heavily on the belief of the audience. Instead, he provides the audience with volumes of contrary documents so that the audience does not *need* to trust him—they can read the documents for themselves. Malone admits this, excusing his apparent excessive display by saying that

> by […] producing at once a genuine representation of her Majesty's hand-writing, I might certainly save myself some trouble; but I choose rather to follow the course I have chalked out [examining models for the forgery, orthography, and handwriting], and to take a wider range; because, though I am perfectly aware that the disquisition is supererogatory, *it may tend to produce a more full and complete conviction in the minds of many of my readers*. (*Inquiry* 31, emphasis added)

The accumulation of documentary evidence is nothing if not convincing. Malone spends one hundred and eight pages disproving just the note from Elizabeth to Shakespeare, covering everything from the fact that the Globe had not been built on the date of the note, to the style of Elizabeth's signature, to common spellings from the late medieval period up to Elizabeth. Malone's proof is a treasure trove of Shakespearean documents in and of itself. He provides genuine notes to and from Shakespeare, many examples of Queen Elizabeth's writing, and whole pages of text from the time of the note's writing. The result is staggeringly effective. By the end

of the section, there is no need for belief beyond trusting Malone to be honest about his sources (i.e. not to be a forger). Malone's doxa is powerful, but then so is belief. Still, when doxa conflict with one another, as the Believers' devotional belief and Malone's documentary evidence do, one side's rhetoric always loses credibility.

Belief is still a powerful rhetorical tool. Rhetoric between a speaker and an audience who both hold the same doxa is highly effective. Samuel Ireland, when defending the forged copy of *King Lear*, wrote that "to the *sound* CRITIC […] it will appear, that the alterations made in the *printed* copies of LEAR are manifestly introduced by the *players*, and are deviations from that *spontaneous flow of soul* and *simple diction* which so eminently distinguish this great *author of nature*" (Ireland, qtd. Boaden 6, emphasis preserved). Here, Ireland convinces an audience he imagines to be bardolaters with his own delicate sense of propriety of the forged *Lear*'s validity by playing to their belief. Many eighteenth-century readers of Shakespeare, like Boaden, considered Shakespeare's occasionally overblown descriptions a flaw, and Ireland argues that his *Lear* is the real version, because it does not display that flaw. His imagined audience believes that Shakespeare is an essentially perfect author, so Ireland's argument uses that to shore itself up. The doxa of the writer and his Believing audience are the same (that Shakespeare is basically flawless), and so the argument would be convincing for Believers. Boaden, on the other hand, holds a new doxa, based on documentary evidence and logical fact-finding, so Ireland's argument falls flat. Boaden, as mentioned earlier, dismisses this argument because it makes the players into better poets than Shakespeare. To craft an effective argument, the writer or speaker must correctly align his doxa with that of his audience, or attempt to alter the audience's doxa. Samuel Ireland, and many of the Believers, prove to be poor proselytizers.

Samuel Ireland's defense of the Shakespeare papers sound weak next to Malone's massive book disproving them because Ireland is, in a sense, fighting on enemy ground. In 1797, after most of the commotion over the Shakespeare papers had passed, Samuel Ireland published *An Investigation of Mr. Malone's Claim to the Character of Scholar, or Critic, Being an Examination of his Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Shakespeare Manuscripts, &c.*, which, as the title suggests, attempts to discredit Malone's character as a scholar. From the very first lines, Samuel takes issue with Malone's evidence-heavy rhetorical technique, signaling to the reader the incompatible doxas. "The advantage which the author [Malone] derives, from this redundant and desultory method of pursuing his subject, is very obvious. If he does not overpower his adversaries, he at least overwhelms his readers" (1 A). Ireland noticed the same thing that I did above: Malone's presentation of overwhelming amounts of evidence does lend his argument credibility. What Ireland does not discuss, however, is the factual validity behind most (but not all) of Malone's points. Yet Ireland is clearly attempting to argue on Malone's own grounds: "I shall now follow Mr. Malone, according to the method in which he proposed to examine the subject," that is, by documentary evidence (7). Ireland makes predictable jabs at Malone's supposed egotism and vanity, and notes with displeasure that "his own possession of the documents relative to the bard, seem to be the only standard, by which he tries the merits of the controverted papers" (6). Here, one can see the two doxas beginning to clash. Ireland objects to a trial by documentary evidence alone, which, he claims correctly, is Malone's technique. The fundamental assumptions of the two men are incompatible.

Ireland tries to follow Malone's arguments exactly. Where Malone objected to the wild orthography of the note from Elizabeth to Shakespeare, Ireland responds with a list of citations which, according to him, contain examples of the spelling in question (though Ireland includes

only citations, no quotes or examples). For instance, "awensuers, (for answers)" is reproduced in *Lodge's Illustrations*, "vol. 2, p. 182" (13). Ireland seems to be correct that the queen did have some spellings that resembled the forgery's (atte, contynewaunce, farre, etc.), but almost none of the words he cites with alternate orthography are present in the note from Elizabeth from Shakespeare. Had Ireland been able to find a precedent for each word Malone claims is false, the argument could have been devastating. As it is, the best argument of the section is the one in which Ireland notices, correctly, that Elizabeth *does* use the spellings "ande" and "forre" in a letter to Mary, when Malone claimed that she always spelled the words "and" and "for." The list of alternate Renaissance spellings feels inadequate, since Ireland refers to it consistently throughout the rest of his treatise as a solid proof against all of Malone's orthographical points. After his list of citations for alternate spellings, Ireland states hopefully that "I presume that Mr. Malone's objection to the letter of Elizabeth on the grounds of its orthography, being irreconcileable to the orthography of the age, is completely invalidated" (20). The treatise goes on for another hundred and thirty pages, with Ireland offering alternate explanations, excuses, or condemnations of Malone's scholarly practice. Unfortunately for him, by the time of the book's publication, the damage was done, and even the places Ireland did correct Malone (and there are some) were not enough to save the reputation of the Shakespeare papers. Samuel Ireland attempted an interesting rhetorical experience, altering his doxa and method to match his opponent, but ultimately found himself outmatched. To return to Aristotle briefly, Ireland may have failed because he did not attempt to change his audience's doxa. Malone altered his audience's doxas, and if Boaden can be taken as representative, it worked.

Ireland may not have shifted the doxa, but three centuries later, Jeffrey Kahan did the job for him. Kahan's article "Shakespeare and the Forging of Belief" points to the bardolatry of the

Believers, and the kinds of devotional language I have already mentioned, to conclude that William Henry Ireland and the Believers had a legitimate and under-appreciated perspective. In coming to the defense of the Believers, Kahan attacks Malone for "lack[ing] the crucial creative and imaginative capacity for such engagement, relying instead on what the more sympathetic Howard Felperin terms his 'material logic'--a trait remarked on by contemporaries" (21). Malone's "ignorance" of the Believers' faith makes him a lesser critic in Kahan's eyes, and he seems to side with Samuel Ireland's condemnation of Malone's reliance on cold evidence[18]. While I agree with Kahan that more attention should be paid to the Irelands and their extraordinary literary accomplishments, I disagree with Kahan's statement that Ireland was a worthier successor to Rowe and Johnson than Malone. Ireland and Malone worked from different doxas, both valid within their own realms, but incapable of making headway within the other's world. Ireland could not stomach Malone's use of evidence, just as Malone could not stomach Ireland's flippant and factually incorrect forgery.

I will close by appealing once more to Aristotle: "It [doxa] is useful in relation to the philosophical sciences because if we have the ability to go through the difficulties on either side we shall more readily discern the true as well as the false in any subject" (101a34-101a37). Malone has pointed out the difficulties on the Believers' side, and Kahan has pointed out the difficulties on Malone's side, but one can gain understanding from both perspectives. From the Believers, one might see what Kahan does: an admiration and imitation of Shakespeare as a living poetic principle, and an engagement with the constant reinvention and adaptation that keeps Shakespeare fresh and relevant. From Malone, one might see Greetham's textual forensic

18 In the conclusion of the article, Kahan snaps that "to Malone, Shakespeare was a dead man, who might be measured by the quintessence of his authenticative dust, but to Ireland, Jordan, Boaden, and the coming generation, Shakespeare was a living, poetic principle, in form and expression, how like a god" (29). Malone may be stodgy, but his accomplishments warrant more admiration than Kahan admits.

scientist, discovering, creating, and interpreting evidence, trying to leave as much belief out of the work as possible. Unfortunately for both Malone and the Believers, the question of the Shakespeare papers was so polemical that essentially no middle ground existed. The language of probability was almost entirely lacking. The papers applauded the forgeries one month, and pilloried them the next. Malone savaged the Believers, and the Believers did the best they could to attack Malone in turn. Had a calmer voice of Aristotelian reason prevailed, perhaps it could have been admitted that while the papers were *probably* not Shakespearean, they were entertaining, and participated in the culture and business of eighteenth-century Shakespeare.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study could easily expand into other Aristotelian rhetorical elements and investigative sites, such as *topoi*, techniques for elocution, or the particular concerns for audience involved in scholastic rhetoric. One could also study the concept of polemical writing, and the effect of the popular press on critical rhetoric. But perhaps the most promising area for study is that of the syllogism.

In Aristotelian rhetoric, there are fewer ideas more important than the syllogism, and its cousin the enthymeme. At its core, the syllogism is a way of logically proving something based on universal or accepted truths, in order to prove something more specific. The most used example of a syllogism is the statement "All men are mortal (the broadest accepted truth). Socrates is a man (a particular accepted truth). Therefore, Socrates is mortal." The syllogism is not revolutionary, but its logic is without flaw. The syllogism played a key role in Aristotelian rhetoric, since it allows one to make essentially inarguable statements, but it appears very rarely in eighteenth century authentications of Shakespeare. Due to the limitations of time and space, I have regretfully been forced to go without a full discussion of syllogistic reasoning and Shakespearean authentication. I have already mentioned briefly that Malone tends to elide it, as do the Believers, and Campbell speaks out strongly against it. Syllogism and enthymeme both involve the issues of epistemology, belief, and evidence that have been discussed so far.

According to Aristotle, the enthymeme is “the 'body' of persuasion” (30). A type of syllogism, an enthymeme could be considered a partially assumed logical equation, or “an argument based on merely probable grounds,” since part of the formula is assumed (“enthymeme”). Aristotle provides a lengthy description of the enthymeme's relation to the syllogism, worth quoting at length:

> rhetorical *apodeixis* [demonstration][19] is enthymeme (and this is, generally speaking, the strongest of the *pisteis*) and the enthymeme is a sort of syllogism [or reasoning]... it is clear that he who is best able to see from what materials, and how, a syllogism arises would also be most enthymematic—if he grasps also what sort of things an enthymeme is concerned with and what differences it has from a logical syllogism; for it belongs to the same capacity both to see the true and [to see] what resembles the true, and at the same time humans have a natural disposition for the true and to a large extent hit on the truth; thus an ability to aim at commonly held opinions [*endoxa*] is a characteristic of one who also has a similar ability to regard to the truth. (33)

The enthymeme, then, is an attempt to make the syllogism manageable, and appropriate for the audience and *kairos*, or time of the rhetorical situation. Like proof, enthymeme is reliant on the rhetorical context to inform its use. The syllogism is an unwieldy tool, since one can assume nothing and prove each step of the logical process, but the enthymeme streamlines the syllogism in exchange for a degree of accuracy. Just like the transition from numerical set theory to the English language in the study of probability, the move from syllogism to enthymeme hides some of the self-expressed functions of the language in order to express itself clearly. In essence, the

19 George Kennedy, footnote 10 (33).

syllogism assumes nothing, while the enthymeme assumes the obvious. The true difference between syllogism and enthymeme, however, is that "the enthymeme, ...[is] addressed to an audience that cannot be assumed to follow intricate logical argument or will be impatient with premises that seem unnecessary steps in the argument" (Kennedy 42 note 60). The division, then, is based on audience, though the spirit of logical association and proof is still primary.

The syllogism had fallen out of favor in the eighteenth century. George Campbell called it "both unnatural and prolix," and that "the whole [syllogizing] bears the manifest indications of an artificial and ostentatious parade of learning, calculated for giving the appearance of great profundity to what in fact is very shallow" (62). Campbell would shake his head at the classic Socrates syllogism. Of course Socrates was mortal; one doesn't need an elaborate proof to show it. To Campbell, proof should be specific, focused on the concrete and the empirical since "all inferential knowledge about real objects is constructed from particulars through the process of experience, rather than through deduction by means of either strict demonstration or the syllogism" (Bitzer xxix). Both Malone and the Believers might agree with this synopsis, since both groups take great pains to experience real objects (though they differ in what kind of experience that is), but Richard Whately, another eighteenth century rhetorical theorist, provides another perspective which will explain the lack of syllogistic reasoning in Malone's and the Believers' rhetoric.

Whately, like Aristotle before him, privileges the role of logic in proving and conveying an argument to an audience. Whately wrote slightly later than Campbell, publishing around the turn of the nineteenth century, and held Campbell in high regard, accompanied only by Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and Bacon in the ranks of the great rhetoricians. Whately's emphasis on the role of logic as a means to acquiring truth resembles Aristotle's: "I believe it to be a prevailing

fault of the present day, not indeed to seek too much for knowledge, but to trust to accumulation of facts as a *substitute* for accuracy in the logical process" (286). Trusting facts over the logical process is precisely why Malone leaves out syllogistic and enthymematic reasoning: to him, the facts speak for themselves.

Whately believed that writers in the eighteenth century had lost sight of the need for rhetoric. In a section entitled "Disavowal of Rhetorical Studies among the Moderns," Whately writes that "Such is the distrust excited by any suspicion of Rhetorical artifice, that every speaker or writer who is anxious to carry his point, endeavours to disown or to keep out of sight any superiority of skill; and wishes to be considered as relying rather on the strength of his cause, and the soundness of his views, than on his ingenuity and expertness as an advocate" (286). The Believers immediately spring to mind, since the strength of their cause (that is, the strength of Shakespeare) was enough for them to convince themselves of their own rhetoric.

In a sense, the rationale of the enthymeme had been carried too far. Writers assumed too much, leaving out potentially unwieldy or intricate arguments in favor of presenting a single form of proof, meant to stand on its own. All three forms of proof (and regardless of their Aristotelian heritage, probability, evidence, and belief are used as proof by their various advocates), without the support of a strong logical argument, have serious shortcomings that destabilize them.

Without epistemological certainty, one needs an ability to estimate likelihoods. Even if the reliance on probability goes unstated, there must be a tacit acknowledgment that little can be known for sure. Statistical probability can estimate degrees of epistemological uncertainty precisely, but, like evidence, measures of probability are a type of created evidence, and subject to the same user-errors as evidence. To connect statistical probability to rhetorical probability

requires the kind of enthymematic rhetoric that Whately describes, but many stylometric authors mistakenly see the correlation between their statistical surveys and firm conclusions regarding the history of Shakespeare's plays as causation. Eighteenth-century critics like Malone have a different problem entirely. They acknowledge epistemological uncertainty, and sometimes mention probability, but rely too heavily on their proof to speak for them.

Malone was a pioneer in the use of documentary evidence. Where Nicholas Rowe had hired an actor to go to Stratford and return with details of Shakespeare's life, Malone not only discovered legal and personal documents relating to Shakespeare, he offered them to the reading public in an accessible manner. Scholars of Shakespeare's life and bibliography have little to work with, and Malone opened the door to all sorts of documentary criticism. Schoenbaum, for instance, would probably never have written either *Shakespeare: A Documentary Life* or *Shakespeare's Lives* without the precedent set by Edmond Malone. What's more, Malone set a rigorous standard for the use of documentary evidence, and brought textual criticism to a place where it could engage with texts both on an emotional, a stylistic, *and* a bibliographical level. Malone was one of the first of Greetham's textual scholars.

But Malone's use of documentary evidence is not without flaw. As Margreta de Grazia points out, he tends to construct his evidence in accordance with his own hypothetical narratives (creating a potentially false *bildungsroman* for Shakespeare's life and works). He tended to abandon logical argument in favor of the presentation of evidence alone, and the sense of distance from Shakespeare and need for probabilistic reasoning is lost in the morass of documents. Reading his prose can be tedious, often taxing the reader's attention. Since the author creates evidence as she deploys it (and the editor creates evidence as he frames the original texts in critical apparatuses), it is too easy to create false narratives, and thus false

evidence. William Henry Ireland is the perfect example of this too-easy creation. The author's power to create evidence is abused by Ireland to, among other things, claim royalty rights to several of Shakespeare's most popular plays, and put Shakespeare's historical ghost in debt to the Ireland family. I understand that this puts my own use of evidence in a tenuous position. If I am operating as a textual scholar, creating and deploying evidence to suit my own rhetorical needs, then it is entirely possible that, without knowing it, I made a puppet out of an example, and forced it to say what, in a larger context, it did not say. If this has happened, my reader has no choice but to trust my intent, and, following Malone's suggestion, judge the evidence I provide on his or her own.

That said, I expect that my audience shares some of my own assumed beliefs. I assume that my readers and I believe that, even if he is not a perfect or always applicable rhetorical theorist, Aristotle makes some valid points. I assume that my readers believe, as I do, that studying the history of Shakespeare studies can inform and assist modern Shakespeare studies and, moreover, that Shakespeare is worth studying in the first place. Ultimately, I assume that my readers will be at least open to the points I make. This is the *doxa* of this thesis, and it allows me to imagine my audience, and write more appropriately for them. Malone deployed evidence the way he did under the assumption that his audience would not want to take his claims on faith or argument alone. Those assumptions are a large part of why Malone was frequently criticized for his cumbrous use of documents, his length, and his slow publishing speed. Doxa connects the writer to his audience, just as devotional belief makes an argument more vivid. If, for instance, my reader already believes that Malone was an admirable but flawed editor, my arguments to that effect will be heightened for her. The Believers took this to such an extent that

they believed in a forgery because it felt vivacious (to them, the chief quality of Shakespeare), and it felt vivacious because they believed in it.

But belief can be taken too far. A writer imagining an audience's doxa could become too specific, and so could easily lose touch with them, as Samuel Ireland did when he attempted to defend the papers to an audience who had abandoned him. The Believers lost the force of their rhetoric when Malone was able to change their foundational beliefs. Belief is an important support, but cannot bear an argument on its strength alone. But neither can evidence, or probability; logic is needed to cement proof into a convincing rhetorical statement.

An ideal authenticative rhetoric would balance proof with rhetorical force, expressed as a series of logical assertions binding the *pistis* to the claim without badgering the reader, or leaving too much to his imagination. The goal, first and finally, should be balance between epistemological uncertainty, and the certainty that proof can provide: the perfect measure of enthymematic reasoning. Logical reasoning can help to alleviate epistemological uncertainty, because it is transparent. Syllogistically or analytically reasoning from one concept to the next until a desired rhetorical goal is reached leaves no room for uncertainty, but as Campbell reminds, this is an empirical world, and logical arguments are rarely enough—especially when it comes to Shakespeare. Instead, a combination of proof and argument must be combined to negotiate the hazards of assumption and uncertainty.

Present critical writing over eighteenth century issues of authentication debates how we as an academic community should see Edmond Malone, William-Henry Ireland, and the Believers, but perhaps the better discussion is one of use. The editors and forgers, authors and appreciators I have discussed are more than static figures to be judged and shelved; they are dynamic examples, subject to the same critical forces they enacted on Shakespeare's corpus. We

as a scholastic community should attempt to study the critical rhetorics of the past not only to understand our modern critical situation, but also to adjust and improve it. We should mark the ghosts of Boaden and Malone, Ireland and Steevens when they speak, and their sometimes foul and unnatural rhetoric, avenge with logic and argument as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love.

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