

SHAKE UP THE CLINIC

At our SPHEX Club Annual Dinner May 16, 2018 ^B Arelia asked Sandra if I took notes on things she said for possible quotations later. In Sandra's case I write down instructions rather than quotations. I then began taking notes from Dr. Khyati Y. Joshi's excellent presentation "Where We've Been and Where We are Going: Race, immigration, and Citizenship." A great evening hosted at the time of Lynchburg College changing its name to the University of Lynchburg.

As you may know from a presentation two years ago I like quotations. We suggested that if quizzed about the originator of a quote, guessing Winston Churchill or Mark Twain was often a safe guess. But if you look at collections of quotations, one name predominates—William Shakespeare. The most quoted book? The Bible. Shakespeare and the Bible share a common feature; their most famous lines or quotations are often taken out of context.

While high school English under Mr. Harry McCann gave an introduction to Shakespeare, the most memorable exposure was the English Lit elective taught by Professor John Clubbe our junior year at Duke. Memorable because it was a class Sandra and I shared as our relationship evolved in spite of her advice on Milton's *Areopagitica* at exam time. Ask her about it. Professor John Clubbe later attended our wedding.

Is it true that William Shakespeare is no longer part of public education? Regardless of religious beliefs, without background in the Bible or Shakespeare exposure how can one understand literary allusions so important in writings?

For thirty years I taught Family Practice Residents and occasional medical students or nurse practitioners at my office. Their month long rheumatology rotation included rheumatology texts and selected articles pertinent to patients we saw. It also included the recommendation that they read some Shakespeare.

Why? Shakespeare provides insight into so many aspects of human nature the physician will experience over the years. Sir William Osler, a pioneering godfather of clinical medicine stated that "The true physician has a Shakespearean breadth of interest in the wise and the foolish, the proud and the humble, the stoic hero and the whining rogue. He cares for people."

Perhaps more specific to rheumatology was the comment by Titania, queen of the fairies, in Act II; Scene 2; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* "that rheumatic diseases abound."

Now help me as we shake up, that is, bring Shakespeare into the clinic. First, of interest, who read any Shakespeare in school? Who liked it? Who hated it; found it useless? As Dr. Joshi stated at our annual dinner, these are not trick questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

Perhaps a more general Shakespearean quote of relevance to our SPHEX presentations was found in *Hamlet* Act 2; Scene 2 when Polonius addresses the King (Hamlet's Uncle/Stepfather) and the Queen (Hamlet's mother)—“...brevity is the soul of wit,..” The more complete quote being “Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,..I will be brief:--your noble son is mad:” — Hmmm. A straight forward, rather blunt way of presenting a diagnosis to parents.

Sometimes the patient's symptoms or history may be confusing. It's important to remember this line from *The Comedy of Errors* (Act 2; Scene 2; exchange between Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant Dromio of Syracuse; confusion with two sets of twins) “Every why hath a wherefore.” For example: Why did my 70 yr old white female have fever, cough, chest pain, joint pain, and inflamed eyes? The wherefore or reason was found to be Wegener's Granulomatosis.

Is it a little disconcerting to you that Shakespearean lines related to medical diagnosis would be found in a play titled *The Comedy of Errors*? Further dialogue may be more unsettling: “When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?” It implies there is no rationale for whatever is going on because there's no pattern (rhyme) nor logic (reason) behind it.

Early in the resident or student rotation I introduce him or her to a mnemonic I created to help with differential diagnosis—IOMSIF. It **Only Makes Sense If It's Fun**. Inflammatory, **O**steoarthritis, **M**etabolic, **S**ystemic, **I**nfectious, **I**nfectoid, **F**ibromyalgia. Then we discussed what they might do to keep their practice fun. In this time of incredible med school debt—up to \$250,000 in some cases and the 40 to 50% rate of physician burnout, Fun is no minor consideration. I hope he or she will achieve what Portia, the rich heiress, says to Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* (Act 4; Scene 1): “He is well paid that is well satisfied.”

Case report: M.S. was a 57 yo housewife who had been my patient over 25 years with RA. She had come to the office for a follow up appointment regarding her RA. However, before any rheumatologic evaluation started she asked me if someone could die of a broken heart. “And thereby hangs a tale.” (*As You Like It*; Act 2; Sc 7). Dr. Eugene Stead, one of my mentors in med school, suggested that the introductory greeting for your patient was, “What brings you to see me?” Then take the time to listen to the patient; hear their tale. She married her high school sweetheart 40 years ago when she was 17. They had one grown daughter. Her husband was running around and her arthritis and diabetes were understandably worse.

Doesn't this evoke thoughts of the many faces of love portrayed in Shakespeare's works? Do you remember these? Any special tales or quotes you recall? When we consider couples like Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Ophelia, Othello and Desdemona, Antony and Cleopatra, one quote stands out: “The course of true love never did run smooth” (*Midsummer Night's*

Dream—Lysander making this statement as an aside in conversation with Hermia; Act 1; Scene 1).

Ken West in his first SPHEX presentation “If You See Cupid in the Road” might agree with these quotes: “Men are April when they woo, December when they wed.” (*As You Like It*; Rosalind to Orlando; Act 4, Scene 1); “Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.” (Hero to Ursula; *Much Ado about Nothing*; Act 3; Scene 1); and “Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind; and therefore wing’d Cupid painted blind” (*Midsummer Night’s Dream*—Helena statement alone; Act 1; Scene 1).

On a lighter note: “If music be the food of love play on”; (*Twelfth Night*; Orsino [Duke of Illyria; suitor to Curio; Act 1, Scene 1).

“**Frailty, thy name is woman**” (*Hamlet*; Act 1; Scene 2; Hamlet to himself) Maybe in cases like Ophelia and Juliet frailty would apply but certainly not when considering characters like the shrew Katharine Minola (Kate) or Lady Macbeth. While they both went through great changes “frailty” was never part of their nature. The comedian Georgie Jessel often used the line, “That’s no lady, that’s my wife.” Shakespeare might modify it to: **That’s no lady**: “that’s a shrew” or “that’s Lady Macbeth”.

Lady Macbeth ran a gamut of human nature manifestations. She was ambitious, evil, scheming, deceptive, manipulative, ruthless, and unrelenting in her drive to become queen. But the most common quote that reminds me of Lady Macbeth is “Out, damned spot! Out, I say!” (Act 5; Scene 2). Her constant hand washing to remove imagined blood stains on her hands from her role instigating the king’s murder is a great example of obsessive-compulsive behavior. OC is a defense mechanism; in her case attempting to placate her guilt ridden conscience. Somnambulism was another result of her tormented mental state. But to no avail and she commits suicide.

As we know, **suicide** is a problem on the increase; more suicides in a year than fatalities from MVA’s. A classic quote from Macbeth follows his notification of Lady Macbeth’s death (Act 5; Scene 5) “Out, out, brief candle! Life’s but a walking shadow; a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” Now, would you hire this guy as a life coach? Antony’s famous speech after Caesar’s murder (*Julius Caesar*; Act 3; Scene 2) isn’t any more consoling about death: “The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones,” For my resident these passages show him what **not** to say to the family after a patient’s suicide.

There probably is no better example of the troubled patient contemplating suicide than Hamlet’s soliloquy in Act 3; Scene 1: “To be, or not to be, --that is the question: Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or take arms against a

sea of troubles, and by opposing to end them? To die—to sleep: No more; and, by sleep, to say we end the heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks”. Message for my resident? Call for a mental health consult.

Another character who, like Lady Macbeth, emits no sense of human warmth is Cassius. He is summed up well in Caesar’s comment to Brutus, (Act 1; Scene 2; *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar*): “Yond’ Cassius has a lean and hungry look; He thinks too much: such men are dangerous...he loves no plays, hears no music, seldom smiles, (is) never at heart’s ease while (he) beholds a greater.” Unlike Lady Macbeth, there was no remorse for his actions. Caesar had him pegged.

“Lean and hungry” might apply today to the eating disorders such as anorexia or binge eating seen more frequently now but eclipsed by **obesity** as a major medical problem today. When we think of Shakespearean larger than life characters Sir John Falstaff looms big in personality as well as physical size. But we are reminded that, like so many of our patients, he once was svelte. “I was not an eagle’s talon in the waist; I could have crept into an alderman’s thumb ring.” (*Henry IV; Pt 1; Act 2; Scene 4*) But heavy drinking and compulsive eating resulted in morbid obesity by today’s jargon. His pal Prince Henry asks—“How long has it been, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee?”

While Falstaff seems like a jovial fat man—part rogue, part con man, he often imparts wisdom from his life experiences. He embodies this quote from (*King Lear* Act 5; Sc 3) “Jesters do often prove prophets.” Is this the nature of late night television shows like Jimmie Kimmel, Jimmy Fallon, Stephen Colbert, and SNL? Is some of their political satire prophetic of things to come?

In the heat of battle as things are going poorly, Falstaff feigns death. The observation: “The better part of valor is **discretion**.” (*Henry IV, Pt1; Act 5, Sc 4*) is a classic; perhaps a reminder to swallow your smoke, control your anger especially in this time of road rage and excessive gun violence. Think, don’t talk; (*Hamlet* Act 3; Scene 3 King Claudius to himself) “My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: Words without thoughts never to heaven go.” Country singer Dierks Bentley parodies this sentiment in his song “I know what I was feeling—but what was I thinking”

Falstaff should be a prototype **gout** patient. Othello’s speech just before stabbing himself (*Othello* Act V; Sc 2) relates to love’s misadventures but could be the gout victim’s explanation of dietary indiscretions in food and drink—“I am one who loved (read “ate”; or add “food”) not wisely but too well.” In *Henry IV, Pt 2 ; Act 2, Scene 1* Falstaff is brought before the Chief Justice by Mistress Quickly. While complaining that Falstaff reneged on a marriage proposal she also comments on obesity and the setting for gout: “He hath eaten me out of house and home (any

of you raised teenage boys?); he hath put all my substance into that fat belly of his:" Yet she loved him and was with Falstaff when he died.

My residents and students were exposed to **genetics** at a more sophisticated level than I experienced--especially involving molecular biology. What could Shakespeare have to say along those lines? "The fault dear Brutus is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." (Cassius to Brutus; *Julius Caesar*; Act 1, Scene 2). More relevant to the question of nature and/or nurture is Ophelia's comment to Hamlet (Act 4; Scene 5): "We know what we are, but know not what we may be." Julie Doyle discussed Ancestry.com as a way of allowing us to "know what we are". 23 and Me is another popular method. I remain disappointed and skeptical of my 23 and Me results—Northern European and Iberian. I was sure native American would show up, because we West Virginians were taught in 5th grade state history that we're all related to Pocahontas.

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) will be an ever present part of the resident's or student's practice. What might Shakespeare have to say along the lines of cybersecurity or identity theft? First a question—"What's in a name? A rose by any name would smell as sweet." (Juliet to Romeo; Act 2; Scene 2) The name incidentally was Montague.

Iago, a soul mate of Cassius, addressing Othello (Act 3; Scene 3)—"Good name in man and woman, dear my lord, Is the immediate jewel of their souls: Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing; 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands; But he who filches from me my good name Robs me of that which not enriches him (S wrong here in modern times), And makes me poor indeed."

Most of the family practice residents I taught were going into primary care. In a past SPHEX lecture I talked about "Obecalp"—"placebo" spelled backwards and the effectiveness of placebos as an indicator of mind effect on health; an important part of the care for all patients. Shakespeare may allude to this in Act 2; Scene 2 when Hamlet addresses Rosencrantz, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

Through 35 years of teaching and practice the doctors' **dress norms** changed toward more casual relaxed appearance. Older patients seemed more comfortable with the traditional white coat, and tie. Advice along these lines came from Polonius (*Hamlet* Act 1; Scene 3) "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy, for the apparel oft proclaims the man." Polonius was noted for using excessive verbiage; ignoring brevity such as "Clothes make the man."

A tie has become almost extinct and jogging or athletic shoes are the norm for comfort. In *Hello, Friend* (compiled stories about Dr. George Craddock—former SPHEX member) the late Dr. William Barney (also a SPHEX member) relates a story involving a Christmas gift from his sons, a

pair of bright orange slacks. With a blue blazer these would complete a UVA fan's ensemble. He wore his new outfit on rounds. When he encountered Dr. Craddock at the hospital, George looked at Bill's combination and simply said, "Bill, I like your coat."

Who can guess what changes will occur? A suggestion comes from Act 3; Scene 3 *Much Ado About Nothing*; Conrade addressing Borachio (followers of Don John)—"I see that fashion wears out more apparel than the man." Maybe that explains the trend toward men's sport coats and blue blazers that are getting shorter and tighter. Always makes me think they borrowed their little brother's sport coat. That's not a problem in women's fashions, is it, ladies?

Fibromyalgia is a disease of our time. In the vignette from my book "When You Take Care of Mom You Take Care of the Whole Family" I talk about the setting for fibromyalgia and why it's more common in females. In "It's So Nice Not to See You" hypochondriasis is discussed. The resident in primary care will be bombarded with symptomatic complaints. When the patient presents with a legal pad sheet of paper filled out completely with symptoms to discuss at that visit, the physician may recall the response of Hamlet's mother when asked how she was enjoying the play arranged to dramatize the murder of Hamlet's father and his mother's quick marriage to her brother-in-law. Act III; Scene 2 "The lady doth protest too much, methinks".

Preventive Care is a goal for our family practice residents. The reason for this is expressed in *Macbeth*; Act 5; Scene 1 "...what's done, cannot be undone." (Lady Macbeth addressing her doctor). In rheumatology there is concern for early treatment to prevent joint damage. We talk about a window of opportunity for treatment; related to preventive care. In business, Sally Selden might consider things like opportunity cost. Here is Shakespeare's take from *Julius Caesar*; Act 4; Scene 3 "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows, and in miseries." Brutus speaking with Cassius.

I always encouraged my residents to make time for their own exercise as well as encouraging their patients to **exercise**. For some people, the habit of exercise is not always enjoyable. In *Henry IV, Pt 1; Act 1; Scene 2* (Prince Henry aside to himself) "If all the year were playing holidays, to sport would be as tedious as to work."

Sleep health receives increasing attention. Anyone here using a CPAP machine for sleep apnea? One sign of sleep apnea was waking still feeling tired. I never had this. I woke up feeling great, but apparently Sandra was not well rested upon awakening. Seems her sleep was interrupted through the night by snoring—either the dogs' or mine. You can't CPAP a ShiTzu. Our goal for the patient is "O sleep, O gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse" (*Henry IV; Pt 2; Act 3; Scene 1*—King Henry to himself)

Atul
Gawande

The **Hospice** specialty has become increasingly necessary in the setting of our aging population and is generally highly regarded by patients and their families. Books like *Being Mortal* by ~~Anwar Gupta~~ change attitudes about coping with death and dying. Does it surprise you that Shakespeare would address this in *Hamlet*? Always so cheerful and upbeat. Act 3; Scene 1 (Hamlet's famous soliloquy): "To die:--to sleep: No more; and, by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, tis a consummation devoutly to be wished." The goal of hospice is death with dignity. The hospice experience would be considered a success if this line from Shakespeare was apropos: "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it." (*Macbeth* Act 1; Scene 4 Malcolm the son to his father Duncan King of Scotland)

The family practice resident will be dealing with grief of surviving family members. Shakespeare alludes to the serious nature of grief in this quote from *Much Ado about Nothing* Act III; Sc 2: "Every one can master a grief but he that has it." (Benedict gentleman of Padua to Claudio young gent of Florence favorites of Don Pedro.) Logic or common sense may be unrealistic in managing grief as suggested by the statement from *Winter's Tale*; Act III; Sc 2 "What's gone and what's past help should be past grief." Paulina wife to Antigonus to Leontes King of Sicilia. I often referred the resident to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross book *On Death and Dying* outlining the five stages of grief: (1) Denial; (2) Anger; (3) Bargaining; (4) Depression; (5) Acceptance.

Over 50% of the young doctors will be sued for malpractice during their career. Every day liability fears will affect their practice: ordering excessive labs and tests as defensive medicine. But if sued the process can be a long drawn out affair—two to three years in two cases I know of involving physician friends. It's little consolation but Shakespeare's observation may still be pertinent from *Measure for Measure* Act II; Scene 2: "The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept." Angelo, Lord Deputy in the Duke's absence to Isabella, Claudio's sister.

I will conclude with a guideline not for my clinic teaching but one that Shakespeare clearly intended for SPHEX presentations:

"Have more than thou showest, (your title)
Speak less than thou knowest." (preparation for post presentation questions)
(Fool to King Lear—Act I; Scene 4)
And remember brevity

SHAKE UP THE CLINIC

1. **"...that rheumatic diseases abound"** Why the rheumatology elective; D (Act 2; Sc 2)
2. **"...brevity is the soul of wit..."** Diagnosis; A (Act 2; Sc 2)
3. **" Every why hath a wherefore."** Diagnosis; H (Act 2; Sc 2)
4. **" He is well paid that is well satisfied."** IOMSIIF; debt; burnout; I (Act 4; Sc1)
5. **" And thereby hangs a tale."** History (5-10); J (Act 2; Sc 7)
6. **" The course of true love never did run smooth."** D (Act 1; Sc 1)
7. **" Men are April when they woo, December when they wed."** J (Act 4; Sc 1)
8. **" Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps"** G (Act 3; Sc 1)
9. **" Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind; and therefore wing'd Cupid painted blind."** D (Act 1; Sc 1)
10. **" If music be the food of love play on."** K (Act 1; Sc 1)
11. **" Frailty, thy name is woman."** (Patient mental status profile) A (Act 1; Sc 2)
12. **" Out damned spot! Out, I say!"** (Obsessive Compulsive) B (Act 5; Sc 1)
13. **" Out, out brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."** (Death and Suicide 13-15) B (Act 5; Sc 5)
14. **" The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."** F (Act 3; Sc 2)
15. **" To be or not to be,--that is the question:..Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing to end them? To die—to sleep: No more; and by sleep, to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks."A** (Act 3; Sc 1)
16. **"Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look; He thinks too much: such men are dangerous...He loves no plays, hears no music, seldom smiles, is never at heart's ease while he beholds a greater."** (Eating disorder; anhedonism) F (Act 1; Sc 2)
17. **"How long has it been, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee?"** (Obesity and gout 17, 21, 22) L (Act 2; Sc 4)
18. **"Jesters do often prove prophets."** C (Act 5; Sc 3)
19. **"The better part of valor is discretion."** (Road rage; angry patients 19, 20) L (Act 5; Sc 4)
20. **"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: Words without thoughts never to heaven go."**A (Act 3; Sc3)
21. **"I am one who loved (read 'ate' or add 'food') not wisely but too well."** N (Act 5; Sc 2)
22. **"He hath eaten me out of house and home; he hath put all my substance into that fat belly of his."** M (Act 2; Sc 1)
23. **"The fault dear Brutus is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings."** (Genetics 23-24) F (Act 1; Sc 2)

24. "We know what we are, but know not what we may be." A (Act 4; Sc 5)
25. "What's in a name? A rose by any name would smell as sweet." (HIPAA 25, 26) E (Act 2; Sc 2)
26. "Good name in man and woman, dear my lord, is the immediate jewel of their souls: Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something nothing: 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands; But he who filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed." N (Act 3; Sc 3)
27. "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." (Obecalp/Placebo) A (Act 2; Sc 2)
28. "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, but not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy, for the apparel oft proclaims the man." (Appearance 28, 29) A (Act 1; Sc 3)
29. "I see that fashion wears out more apparel than the man." G (Act 3; Sc 3)
30. "The lady doth protest too much, methinks." (Fibromyalgia) A (Act 3; Sc 2)
31. "...what's done cannot be undone." (Preventive medicine 31, 32)B (Act 5; Sc 1)
32. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows, and in miseries" F (Act 4; Sc 3)
33. "If all the year were playing holidays, to sport would be as tedious as to work." (Exercise) L (Act 1; Sc 2)
34. "O sleep, O gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse." (Sleep apnea) M (Act 3; Sc 1)
35. "To die:..to sleep: No more; and, by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, tis a consummation devoutly to be wished." Death and dying 35, 36) A (Act 3; Sc 1)
36. "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it." B (Act 1; Sc 4)
37. "Every one can master a grief but he that has it." (Grief) G (Act 3; Sc 2)
38. "What's gone and what's past help should be past grief." O (Act 3; Sc 2)
39. "The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept." (Liability) P (Act 2; Sc 3)
40. "Have more than thou showest" (SPHEX talks 40, 41)
41. "Speak less than thou knowest." C (Act 1; Sc 4)

The Play's the Thing A (Act 2; Sc 2)

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| A. Hamlet | J. As You Like It |
| B. Macbeth | K. Twelfth Night |
| C. King Lear | L. Henry IV, Pt 1 |
| D. A Midsummer Night's Dream | M. Henry IV, Pt 2 |
| E. Romeo and Juliet | N. Othello |
| F. The Life and Death of Julius Caesar | O. Winter's Tale |
| G. Much Ado About Nothing | P. Measure for Measure |
| H. The Comedy of Errors | |
| I. The Merchant of Venice | |