

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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The ISE is one of the most important Shakespeare sites on the internet—it is indeed becoming *the* indispensable site. Dedicated to producing up-to-date, fully edited, scholarly, and yet accessible, texts, it has enlisted an array of the finest Shakespeareans from many different countries as editors and Board members. These individuals volunteer their time, committed as they are to the basic principle that the ISE materials should be freely available on the web for users around the world.

The site includes not just the edited and modernized texts, some of which are complete, while many others are in progress, but facsimiles and transcribed versions of important early texts, a growing data base on performance, and critical and supplementary resources of many kinds. Each individual edition comes with embedded commentary, as well as supporting materials such as source texts, relevant political, religious, or social writing from Shakespeare's time, and information on early modern theatrical practice. A major advantage of online publishing is that this material can be constantly updated and, where necessary, revised and expanded, which means that the site will remain relevant as the years pass.

So far, the site has flourished under the visionary leadership of Michael Best, with the financial and moral support of the University of Victoria plus a number of grants from the Social Science and Humanities Council of Canada and other sources. But as the site expands, and in the process generates the need for more funds, a wider and more stable form of support needs to be established, which is why the Board has decided to appeal to the many institutions whose students use the site. We anticipate that worldwide usage will continue to expand as it has over the past few years, and believe strongly that we are providing a valuable, global resource for students, theatre practitioners, and the public in general.

Since libraries are at the very centre of the digital revolution, and since they represent hundreds of thousands of users of the ISE, we are appealing to you to help the site to grow, and thus ensure that your students, and indeed interested parties around the world, have access to the finest Shakespearean scholarship available anywhere.

Sincerely yours

Anthony B. Dawson  
Professor emeritus  
University of British Columbia