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Nota di contenuto	Prologue: Gary Taylor finds a poem -- ; pt. I. Donald Foster's 'Shakespearean' Construct. ; 1. 'W. S.' and the Elegy for William Peter. ; 2. Parallels? Plagiarisms? ; 3. Vocabulary and diction. ; 4. Grammar: 'the Shakespearean "who"'. ; 5. Prosody, punctuation, pause patterns. ; 6. Rhetoric: 'the Shakespearean "hendiadys"'. ; 7. Statistics and inference. ; 8. A poem 'indistinguishable from Shakespeare'? -- ; pt. II. John Ford's 'Funerall Elegy'. ; 9. Ford's writing career: poet, moralist, playwright. ; 10. Ford and the Elegy's 'Shakespearean diction'. ; 11. The Funerall Elegy in its Fordian context. Epilogue: The politics of attribution -- ; App. I. The text of A Funerall Elegy -- ; App. II. Verbal parallels between A Funerall Elegy and Ford's poems.
Sommario/riassunto	'Counterfeiting' Shakespeare addresses the fundamental issue of what Shakespeare actually wrote, and how this is determined. In recent years his authorship has been claimed for two poems, the lyric 'Shall I die?'

and *A Funerall Elegye*. These attributions have been accepted into certain major editions of Shakespeare's works but Brian Vickers argues that both attributions rest on superficial verbal parallels; both use too small a sample, ignore negative evidence, and violate basic principles in authorship studies. Through a fresh examination of the evidence, Professor Vickers shows that neither poem has the stylistic and imaginative qualities we associate with Shakespeare. In other words, they are 'counterfeits', in the sense of anonymously authored works wrongly presented as Shakespeare's. He argues that the poet and dramatist John Ford wrote the *Elegye*: its poetical language (vocabulary, syntax, prosody) is indistinguishable from Ford's, and it contains several hundred close parallels with his work. By combining linguistic and statistical analysis this book makes an important contribution to authorship studies.

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