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Hamlet: The Undiscovered Country, Second Edition

Steve Roth

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"Reveals facts about the play I've never seen discussed anywhere else."

"There is so much 'good stuff' in this book."

This book reads like a cross between a literary detective novel and a personal conversation with a passionate Shakespeare scholar. It unveils new realities about the play, explores troves of long-buried Hamlet lore, untangles centuries of commentary and criticism, and delivers the punch lines for a whole raft of Shakespeare's remarkably involved in-jokes.

Roth tackles old arguments like Hamlet's age (he's sixteen), lays out the intricate time structure that's embedded in the play, and unravels several of the play's endless allusions that so "puzzle the will." He depicts a dense, ironic, and multivalent web of political and dramatic tension in Elsinore (plus a great deal of very dark humor), and delivers one "Aha!" moment after another for lovers of the Bard's greatest tragedy.

Gotta rave about this. This book was a joy to find! It's a unique offering toward a new understanding of *Hamlet*... Roth has an easy writing style, not bogged down in academe-speak; I've enjoyed it a couple of times, pondering his intriguing points. Roth makes a fascinating and convincing case for Hamlet's age being half that commonly thought. This is no esoteric point--it profoundly affects the way I experience the play. - November 20, 2009 by KAH

"**Reveals facts about the play I've never seen discussed anywhere else.** Roth's analysis cuts deep into the text, addressing questions of character and cosmology with rare insight. Amidst the great, swirling sea of critical ink that's been spilled on behalf of Shakespeare's greatest work, this book stands out as being fresh, funny, and best of all, truly useful." -Anthony Powell. Associate Artistic Director, Denver Center Theatre Company

"**There is so much 'good stuff' in this book.** You've been able to cut to the chase, and avoid the muck that has accumulated around the play for 400 years." -Terri Bourus. Associate Professor, Indiana University

"**This book will be enjoyed by anyone who enjoys the play *Hamlet*.** Combining detailed historical context, impressive new critical readings, and an informal but well-informed style, it speaks as fluently to scholars as to non-specialists." -Dr. Gabriel Egan. Editor, *Shakespeare: The Journal of the British Shakespeare Association*

"**This is an unusual and appealing book.** Academic criticism has often been criticized for having become an arcane pursuit only worth reading by the initiated. This book succeeds in bridging the gap between the professional academic and the general reader." -Dr. Matthew Steggle. Editor, *Early Modern Literary Studies*

"**Travelers into Roth's uniquely researched 'Undiscovered Country' will find new pathways towards an understanding of Hamlet, prince and play.** An exciting and informative experience for all readers of Shakespeare." -Jan Kinrade. Lecturer in English, Epping Forest College

A fun and, hard to believe, innovative approach to Hamlet. More has probably been written

about *Hamlet*, both play and character, than any other topic in the English language. And yet, here is something new. There's a persuasive, textually justified take on Hamlet's age, casting him as the teenager we all kind of know he is; but more, there's a comprehensive and fascinating approach both to the actual timeline of the play, and how that matches up against known events in Shakespeare's life. And that's not all--there are a wealth of links to other resources on the web, making it just the starting point for a thorough exploration. This is not a huge volume, but that's not a bad thing. The author avoids scholar-speak and impenetrable academic convolutions in favor of clear, conversational presentation of his ideas. There's more than enough here to merit inclusion in a syllabus for a class on Hamlet. A real find. -March 29, 2011 by WriteStuff

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