A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599

As he admits himself, this is mostly speculation and cannot ever be confirmed, but it's an imaginative If you're looking for a standard biography of Shakespeare then this definitely isn't it: Shapiro eschews the usual methods of writing a life and instead concentrates on a single year in Shakespeare's life. Those whose main concern is the four plays doubtless a majority of his readers may be impatient with the length and detail Shapiro devotes to the Irish venture and the Spanish threat in particular. Add in a few notable storms, many going hungry or landless, and censors examining everything written, and you can see a lot of Shakespeare's challenges. View all 9 comments. The greatest book of literary criticism I have seen in years, possibly decades. Shapiro argues that these plays were a turning point in his career — as he moved away from popular and formulaic plays to a more demanding spectacle. As Shapiro openly states, we know so little about what exactly led Shakespeare to write his plays, and about specific events in his life, that anything is by necessity conjecture - but he'd still A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 stick to what is probable, not just possible. Nice combination of history, biography, and criticism. James Shapiro. Shelves: literature, biography, and criticism. James A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 illuminates both Shakespeare's staggering achievement and what Elizabethans experienced in the course of sending off an army to crush an Irish rebellion, weathering an A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 threat from Spain, gambling on the fledgling East India Company, and waiting to see who would succeed their aging A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 childless queen. No doubt being an English literate helps to appreciate this book. I did get fiction withdrawal though and had to sneak in a couple of short stories over the period of reading this. He also made one of his rare journeys from London back to Stratford. A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 book also discusses this and why his versions are such improvements on the originals. We learn how the angst of the time was reflected in his work. Sep 23, Alan rated it it was amazing. I am absolutely agog over the brilliance of James Shapiro. I read James Shapiro's three hundred and six years after its subject, the year it came out. The literary analysis held me spellbound: he looks closely at how Shakespeare revised his manuscripts and it's utterly fascinating to see this From the first page account of the deconstruction no, not the French mind-game, but a carpentry event of the Theater at night to prepare for the construction of the Globe miles south and across the river, this bo I read James Shapiro's three hundred and six years after its subject, the year it came out. Sort order. Well here is a local lad who did quite well for himself- Shakespeare. The Globe Rises. It is the best written book on Shakespeare I have read in decades, and since Shakespeare is only known I love the specifics in this book, and it will require more than one reading to absorb everything. This book focuses on the year because it was a prolific year for Shakespeare, the Globe Theater was built this year, and it was also a year of great turmoil in Elizabethan England. For instance, I knew he used Holinshed as a source for Macbeth and other histories; what I didn't know was that he lifted every play from something else although his sonnets were all original. There are of necessity time when Shapiro must use speculation and qualifications because of the lack of direct documentary history of his subject. James Shapiro. Shelves: literature, fiction. Then on pageShapiro mentions Hamlet and the reader sits up. Essex and his downfall are discussed. Band of Brothers. He finds "Hamlet" remarkable for many reasons beyond its sheer greatness as literature. As a result, my understanding of Shakespeare has undergone a massive shift. Dec 31, Rex Fuller rated it really liked it. In addition to the warning above, he's also pretty upfront about the fact we can never really know Shakespeare because he didn't really leave much behind other than his work. Chapter Four, A Sermon at Richmond, is among my favorite parts of the book. Not exactly a "light" read, but not a work targeted solely to scholars, either. When I read Shapiro's books I do feel a lot closer to Shakespeare than I do reading almost anything else. Shapiro didn't unearth anything revolutionary, but instead works with what we know to give us an insight into what he was likely to have been like. And at the same time the world was shrinking to the "wooden O" of the Globe Theater that Shakespeare and his acting troupe constructed that year from timbers torn from a previous venue north of the Thames. With an aging monarch, the Tudor era was coming to an end and there was much uncertainty about the future. My fear is your displeasure; my curtsy, my duty; and my speech, to beg your pardons. During that year, Shakespeare wrote four of his most famous plays: Henry the Fifth, Julius Caesar, As You Like It, and, most remarkably, Hamlet, Elizabethans sent off an army to crush an Irish rebellion, weathered an Armada threat from Spain, gambled on a fledgling East India Company, and waited to see who would succeed their aging and childless queen. Audiences at the Globe soon found themselves, like Hamlet, straddling worlds and struggling to reconcile past and present. No trivia or A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 yet. Nov 28, Mercedes Rochelle rated it really liked it. Erudite and judicious, Oberammergau is a fascinating and important look at the unpredictable and sometimes tragic relationship between art and society, belief and tolerance, religion and politics. Shapiro's analysis goes beyond the plays. Great stuff from James Shapiro and I have ready to Biography, yes. It was wonderful to learn so much about the political and social environment in which Shakespeare wrote. Shapiro takes on the task of showing how the events of the world affected the plays of the author. There is no convenient critical pigeonhole into which to thrust this book. Reading the 20th I admit I wasn't expecting something this astute, this poetic. It's an entertaining mix of history and literary criticism. It was only the third strand that slightly disappointed, in that unless you have got a good textual
knowledge of the plays in question, their discussion can feel a little dry. Although Shakespeare was a boy of just 7 or 8 when the chapel at Stratford was painted over, Shapiro uses that event to speak to the many small changes the Protestant Reformation made in the lives of ordinary people, among them the loss of holidays which were so often rooted in Catholic liturgy but which meant a rest from labors to most of the populace.

The author is clearly a fan of the Bard, and it shows through in various ways. England was dealing with an uprising in Ireland as well as threats from the Spanish Armada. I first discovered James Shapiro A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599 accident when stumbling across a documentary called "Shakespeare, The King's Man". Most certainly I learned some things about Shakespeare and about his writing. During that year, Shakespeare wrote four of his most famous plays: Henry the Fifth, Julius Caesar, As You Like It, and, most remarkably, Hamlet; Elizabethans sent off an army to crush an Irish rebellion, weathered an Armada threat from Spain, gambled on a fledgling East India Company, and waited to see who would succeed their aging and childless queen. Shapiro is acutely aware of how little concrete evidence we have on the man, the mystery, that is Shakespeare which would allow us to make assumptions about what kind of man he really was. Toggle navigation Menu.

Whereas that book focused on every vice in Elizabethan England or Shakespeare's life and gave extensive detail, this book might admit that Shakespeare was probably having an affair, but it didn't go into immense detail about why that is believed.