

## Literary Lies, Hoaxes and Impostures: A Lie to Tell a Truth?

Whether to seek fame, to make money, or out of sheer devilment, writers have been lying to us for centuries: women have pretended to be men; young poets have pretended to be medieval; nobodies have pretended to be somebodies.

In these talks, we'll discuss a range of notorious hoaxers:

- Thomas Chatterton
- James McPherson
- Clifford Irving
- the entirely imaginary Australian poet "Erne Malley"
- the Intellectual Impostures of Alan Sokal
- the forger who "found" new poems by Emily Dickinson, and whose crimes led to murder...

We will of course examine the famous scandal that ruined the reputation of an esteemed academic and peer of the realm (and which launched the career of Robert Harris...) and we'll look at William Boyd, not least for his biography of the fictional artist Nat Tate.

We'll go on to ask deeper questions:

- Is it okay to tell a lie, sometimes, in order to tell a greater truth?
- Is it okay to perpetrate a cruel hoax, so long as it's for artistic reasons and no money changes hands?
- And just what is the connection between fiction and story-telling, anyway? Between deception and wishful thinking? Just where is the dividing line between Literature and Lies?

CALL is a not-for-profit voluntary organisation which promotes lifelong learning in Cambridgeshire.



## Literary Lies, Hoaxes and Impostures



**A Short Course with Michael Wilson**

**Saturdays 1st and 8th February 2025**

**On Zoom 10:00 – 12:30**

**Price £10.00 per screen**

**Booking Instructions.** Please read carefully.

**To make a booking, please provide your email address, without which we cannot send you the joining instructions**

Payment of **£10.00 per screen** can be made:

**Either:**

Pay online to:

**Cambridgeshire Alliance of Lifelong Learners**

Account no.52501360

Sort code 30-90-89

**Or:**

Please send your email address and a cheque payable to  
**Cambridgeshire Alliance of Lifelong Learners**

to: Mrs Vera Williams, 59, High Street, Offord Darcy,  
St Neots, PE19 5RF.

Please **DO NOT** use the abbreviated title '**CALL**' when making any payment, (online or cheque) as the bank software will be unable to match this with our account.

**How to contact CALL:**

**Website:** [www.call-ed.org.uk](http://www.call-ed.org.uk)

**Email :** [info@call-ed.org.uk](mailto:info@call-ed.org.uk)

**Phone :** 01480 810353

**All CALL group activities are listed on: [www.call-ed.org.uk](http://www.call-ed.org.uk).**

## Literary Lies, Hoaxes and Impostures

Saturdays 1st and 8th February by Zoom

### Programme

**9:30 am** The Zoom room will open

**10:00 am** Morning Session  
**2 hours of lectures**  
**with a break for refreshments**

**12:30 pm** Close of Session

Note: In the week between the two sessions, you'll be invited to play Literary Detective - will you know what to look for, in order to distinguish the plausible fake from the genuine article?



### Using Zoom.

If you have not used Zoom before, and would welcome guidance on how to install the software, please contact us.