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The data for political studies are most commonly drawn from history, either in accounts of lives, events and institutions, or in the writings of earlier systematic students. But to probe the meaning and relationships of ultimate ends like justice and truth, no actual happenings are needed; imaginative fiction and drama can supply the food for thought. Why then should we not as reasonably and profitably look for lessons in political wisdom in the works of our greatest poet? View Tom Stoppard Research Papers on Academia.edu for free. After using catastrophe theory and quantum mechanics in his earlier texts Professional Foul and Hapgood, Stoppard borrows some of Arcadia’s key concepts from thermodynamics and chaos theory. This article explores the strong epistemological continuity of Stoppard’s references to science, which provide him with metaphors for the systematic instability of knowledge asserted by his plays. The analysis focuses on the poetic use of entropy, unpredictable determinism and iteration in Arcadia, and their structuring role as metaphors of emplotment. View Tom Stoppard Research Papers on Academia.edu for free. This article explores pastiches of The Importance of Being Earnest (1895) in comic British plays about World War I. Beginning with the example of Alan Bennett’s Forty Years On (1968) and then dealing more substantially with Tom Stoppard’s Travesties (1974), it examines the ideological implications of these intertextual allusions.