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978-0-521-70507-3 - The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare's Poetry

Michael Schoenfeldt

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*The Cambridge Introduction to  
Shakespeare's Poetry*

Shakespeare's poems were enormously popular in his lifetime, but, aside from the enduring appeal of the Sonnets, are today much less familiar than his plays. This *Introduction* celebrates the achievement of Shakespeare as a poet, providing students with ways of understanding and enjoying his remarkable poems. It honors the aesthetic and intellectual complexity of the poems without making them seem unapproachably complicated, outlining their exquisite pleasures and absorbing enigmas. Schoenfeldt suggests that today's readers are better able to analyze aspects of the poems that were formerly ignored or the source of scandal – the articulation of a fervent same-sex love, for example, or the incipient racism inherent in a hierarchy of light and dark. By engaging closely with Shakespeare's major poems – *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, "The Phoenix and Turtle," and the Sonnets and *A Lover's Complaint* – the *Introduction* demonstrates how much these extraordinary poems still have to say to us.

MICHAEL SCHOENFELDT is Professor of English at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* and *Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship*, and he has contributed to publications including *A Companion to Shakespeare's Sonnets* and *Imagining Death in Shakespeare and Milton*.

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Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <i>Acknowledgments</i>   | page vii |
| <b>Chapter 1 Shakespeare and English poetry</b>  | 1        |
| Versification and meter  | 4        |
| Shakespeare and early modern poetry  | 11       |
| <b>Chapter 2 Shakespeare's banquet of sense: <i>Venus and Adonis</i></b>                 | 19       |
| Carnal and verbal pleasure   | 21       |
| Wordplay and foreplay  | 24       |
| Love and lust  | 31       |
| The death of Adonis and the birth of erotic unhappiness                                  | 34       |
| <b>Chapter 3 Constraint and complaint in <i>Lucrece</i></b>                              | 38       |
| Tarquin and predatory lust   | 40       |
| Lucrece: resistance and complaint  | 46       |
| Founding the Roman republic  | 54       |
| <b>Chapter 4 Mysteries of the Sonnets: Dedication, publication, sequence, characters</b> | 57       |
| Publication and dedication   | 57       |
| The temptations of autobiography and sequence  | 60       |
| Characters and reception   | 64       |

|    |  |     |
|----|--|-----|
| vi | <i>Contents</i>  |     |
|    | <b>Chapter 5 Time and mortality in the Sonnets</b>   | 69  |
|    | Time and progeny   | 69  |
|    | Time and poetry  | 76  |
|    | Time and love  | 80  |
|    | Time and the afterlife   | 84  |
|    | <b>Chapter 6 Friendship and love, darkness and lust: Desire in the Sonnets</b>                       | 88  |
|    | The master-mistress: Sonnet 20   | 90  |
|    | The marriage of true minds: Sonnet 116   | 92  |
|    | Olympian restraint: Sonnet 94  | 96  |
|    | The Dark Lady  | 98  |
|    | Love and appetite  | 103 |
|    | Love and disease   | 105 |
|    | <b>Chapter 7 Solitary and mutual flames: <i>A Lover's Complaint</i> and "The Phoenix and Turtle"</b> | 112 |
|    | <i>A Lover's Complaint</i>   | 113 |
|    | "The Phoenix and Turtle"   | 122 |
|    | <b>Chapter 8 Fantasies of Shakespearean authorship</b>   | 130 |
|    | <i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i>  | 132 |
|    | John Benson, editor  | 134 |
|    | Occasional verse   | 135 |
|    | Passionate pilgrims: "Shall I die?" and the <i>Funeral Elegy</i>                                     | 140 |
|    | <i>Notes</i>   | 144 |
|    | <i>Further reading</i>   | 152 |
|    | <i>Index</i>   | 157 |

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