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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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Acknowledgments

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