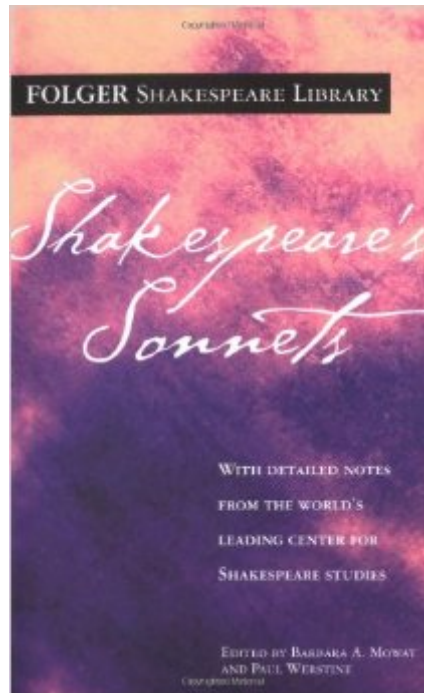


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Shakespeare's Sonnets (Folger Shakespeare Library)



Synopsis

A bestselling, beautifully designed edition of William Shakespeare's sonnets, complete with valuable tools for educators. The authoritative edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets from The Folger Shakespeare Library, the trusted and widely used Shakespeare series for students and general readers, includes:

- Full explanatory notes conveniently placed on the facing page of each sonnet
- A brief introduction to each sonnet, providing insight into its possible meaning
- An index of first lines
- Illustrations from the Folger Shakespeare Library's vast holdings of rare books
- An essay by a leading Shakespeare scholar providing a modern perspective on the sonnets

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, is home to the world's largest collection of Shakespeare's printed works, and a magnet for Shakespeare scholars from around the globe. In addition to exhibitions open to the public throughout the year, the Folger offers a full calendar of performances and programs. For more information, visit Folger.edu.

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Customer Reviews

One of my friends recently reviewed a compilation of "Shakespeare's Sonnets," edited by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine. I regret to say that I have not attended to the Bard's sonnets in many a year. Recently, I read Bryson's sprightly biography of Shakespeare, and this--combined with my friend's review--sparked me to purchase this volume. In the Editors' Preface, they note (Page ix): "This edition. . . reflects these current ways of thinking about Shakespeare." Their Introduction on "Shakespeare's Sonnets" provides nicely constructed context for the poems themselves. Editors

notes that (Page xiii): "Few collections of poems--indeed, few literary works in general--intrigue, challenge, tantalize, and reward as do Shakespeare's Sonnets." The years in which the author produced these sonnets are described as (Page xxxii) ". . .among the most exciting in English history. . . ."But it is the poems themselves that are the heart of this. The Editors do a wonderful job of providing context, but--in the end--each reader must make of these works what they will. Given my age, I do find this poignant (Sonnet 22): "My glass shall not persuade me I am old So long as youth and thou are of one date, But when in thee Time's furrows I behold, Then look I death my days should expiate." One of my favorites (Sonnet 29): "When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes I all alone beweep my outcast state. . . . Haply I think on thee, and then my state, Like to the lark at break of day arising. . . ." And (Sonnet 87): "Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing, And like enough thou know'st thy estimate."

Shakespeare's Sonnets come from the Bard's deepest thoughts, his passions, suffering and the expression of the ultimate Joy of Beauty, Poetry and Love. Here are the words of a suffering soul, in love with "someone" much younger than himself, thus his references to age being no barrier to true Love in many of the verses. All or most scholars agree, the Sonnets were written about and to a single person. The argument, of course, is who this person was... Oscar Wilde speculated the object of the Master's heart was a young male actor, due to the law, had to play all the female parts as acting in the 16th century was purely a man's job. Shakespeare himself has become a mystery as to his true identity for many years. Interestingly, Sigmund Freud's "free time", was devoted to revealing the Bard's true identity. For me, when reading the Sonnets, Who wrote them or Who they were written For makes no difference. Because the Sonnets are the most beautiful Ode to Poetry, the Muse and Real Love and its Tragedy, that all too often, is true Love's end result. This particular edition claims to be the best study of the Sonnets and the Bard himself. This is perhaps true, but the verses have not changed in 500 years. Over the last three nights, reading or more accurately 're-reading' these wonderful verses, my admiration for the English language, its beauty and cadence, its ability for subtle irony and truth is astounding. One of my favourites: LXXV.

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