

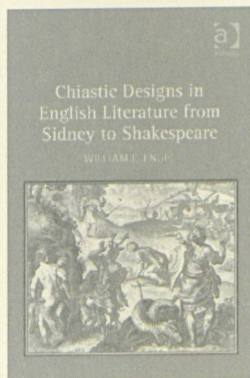


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Chiaistic Designs in English Literature from Sidney to Shakespeare

William E. Engel, The University of the South

Paying special attention to Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and Shakespeare's romances, this study engages in sustained examination of chiasmus in early modern English literature. The author's approach leads to the recovery of hidden designs which are shown to animate important works of literature; along the way Engel offers fresh and more comprehensive interpretations of seemingly shopworn conventions such as *memento mori* conceits, echo poems, and the staging of *deus ex machina*.

The study, grounded in the philosophy of symbolic forms (following Ernst Cassirer), will be a valuable resource for readers interested in intellectual history and symbol theory, classical mythology and Renaissance iconography. *Chiaistic Designs* affords a glimpse into the transformative power of allegory during the English Renaissance by addressing patterns that were part and parcel of early modern "mnemonic culture."

"William Engel's work is always learned, instructive and adventuresome and *Chiaistic Designs* is no exception. Engel uses his knowledge of biblical and classical authors and rhetorical writers of the Renaissance to reveal their reliance on chiasmus—the rhetorical figure of ABC:CBA, a double movement forward and backward—which results in patterned words and ideas including mirroring and echoic effects as well as ring structure and triadic designs. These principles of organization lead to a fresh understanding of how the works of Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Quarles might have been constructed."

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"Building on his two richly suggestive previous studies, Bill Engel examines the chiaistic patterning that was part and parcel of early modern mnemonic culture. In the process he considerably enhances our understanding not only of a wide variety of texts, but also of the philosophy itself of symbolic form."

—Michael J. B. Allen, University of California, Los Angeles

Contents: Introduction: speaking of chiasmus; Learning justice and practicing penance: Phlegyas and David; Echo in *Arcadia*: Sidney's legacy; Mirror and allegory: Spenser's calling; Extreme dramatic symmetry: Shakespearean triads; Conclusion: chiaistic echoes; Bibliography; Index.

Includes 3 b&w illustrations and 2 tables
June 2009 166 pages
Hardback 978-0-7546-6636-3
www.ashgate.com/isbn/9780754666363

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