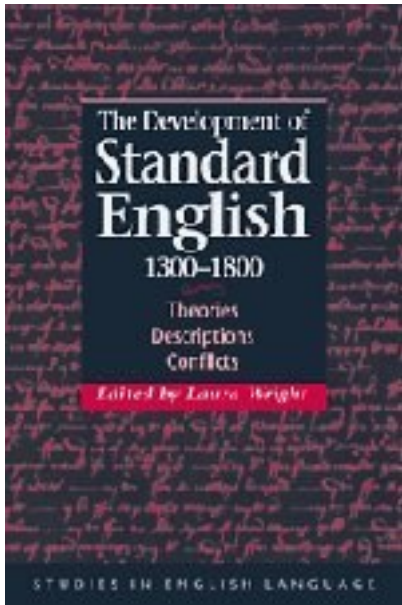# The Development of Standard English, 1300-1800

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There are many questions yet to be answered about how Standard English came into existence. The claim that it developed from a Central Midlands dialect propagated by clerks in the Chancery, the medieval writing office of the king, is one explanation that has dominated textbooks to date. This book reopens the debate about the origins of Standard English, challenging earlier accounts and revealing a far more complex and intriguing history. An international team of fourteen specialists offer a wide-ranging analysis, from theoretical discussions of the origin of dialects, to detailed descriptions of the history of individual Standard English features. The volume ranges from Middle English to the present day, and looks at a variety of text types. It concludes that Standard English had no one single ancestor dialect, but is the cumulative result of generations of authoritative writing from many text types.

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