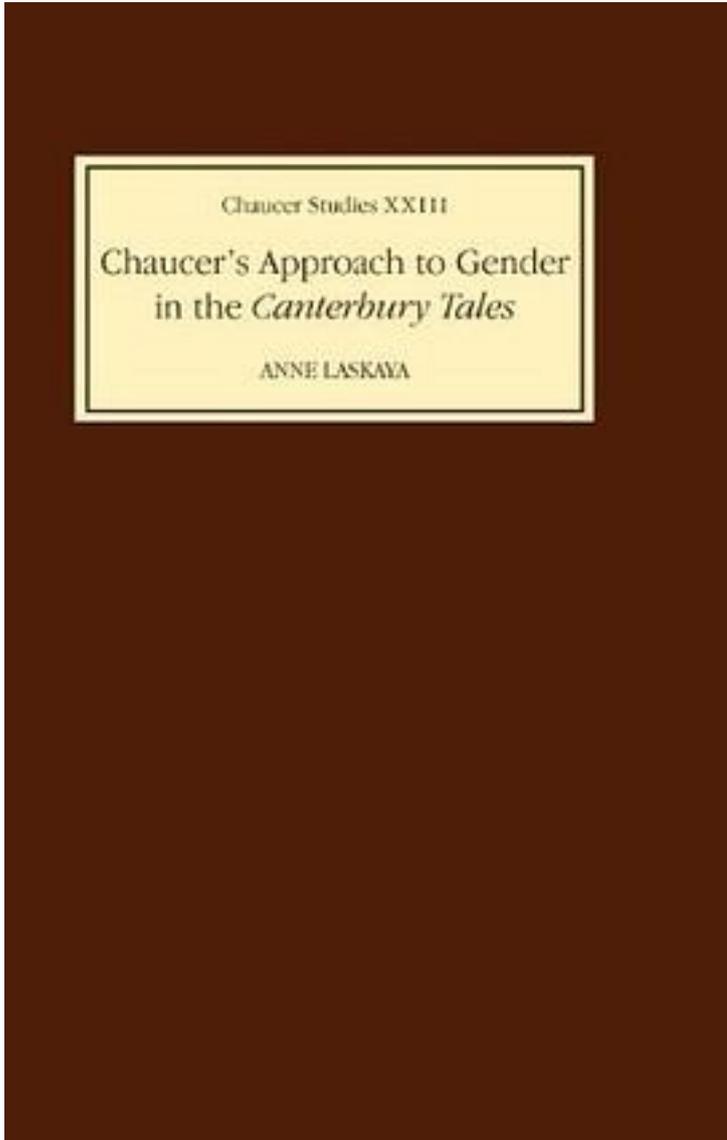


# Chaucer's Approach to Gender in the "Canterbury Tales"



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This volume presents a feminist approach to the 'Canterbury Tales', investigating the ways in which the tensions and contradictions found within the broad contours of medieval gender discourse write themselves into Chaucer's text. Four discourses of medieval masculinity are examined, which simultaneously reinforce and resist one another: heroic or chivalric, Christian, courtly love, and emerging humanist models. Each chapter attempts to negotiate both contemporary assumptions of gender construction, and essentialist readings of gender common to the middle ages; throughout, the author argues that the 'Canterbury Tales' offers a sophisticated discussion of masculinity, and that it strongly indicts some of the prevalent medieval notions of ideal masculinity while still remaining firmly homosocial and homophobic. The book concludes that on the question of gender issues, the 'Tales' are best studied as male-authored texts containing representations and negotiations revealing much about late medieval masculinities. Dr ANNE LASKAYA teaches in the English Department at the University of Oregon.

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