



# **The Making of Chaucer's English: A Study of Words (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature)**

*Christopher Cannon*

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The Making of Chaucer's English undertakes a substantial reappraisal of the place Chaucer's English occupies in the history of the English language and the language of English literature. It attacks the widespread presumption that Chaucer invented literary English and argues instead that Chaucer's English is generally traditional. It shows that Chaucer's linguistic innovation was as much performance as fact, but it also traces the linguistic strategies that made (and make) the performance of 'originality' so believable. It also includes a valuable history of every word Chaucer uses. The book also interrogates the theory and methodology of historicising languages, so even as it explores how Chaucer's words matter, it also questions why these particular words have acquired such importance for poets and scholars alike for 600 years.

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