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Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the Critical Insights Series: *Critical Insights: Geoffrey Chaucer*

Edited by James M. Dean, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Delaware, this volume contains essays that constitute an interesting mélange of thoughts, ruminations, perspectives, and approaches that are as diverse a look at Geoffrey Chaucer and his “Canterbury Tales” as any in print today. Despite Chaucer’s legacy as the first and, next to Shakespeare, ultimate English poet, many of the essays in this volume aim to address the transnational aspect of his work. The authors illustrate the context of Chaucer’s work through historical analysis and comparative examinations of other medieval literature and Chaucer’s influences.

Within these thirteen essays, introduction, biographical sketch, chronology, author’s bibliography, and academic bibliography, the reader will find a great many discussions and fresh interpretations. From the historical and biographical context of Chaucer’s diplomatic career across Europe to the question of interpreting Middle English for the modern reader, users will find a fulfilling variation of perspectives to develop a foundational understanding of this iconic poet.

In the **introductory essay**, Scott Lightsey gives a biographical sketch of Chaucer detailing the historical context of his writing along with insight into possible influences from his personal life as a Diplomat for the King. In the **Critical Contexts** section of the book, Gregory M. Sadlek contextualizes the “Canterbury Tales” pilgrimage as European in nature, furthering the argument for Chaucer as influenced by his exposure to European cultures. Kevin J. Burke next considers the ways that Chaucer’s use of the *Consolation of Philosophy* by the late Roman philosopher, Boethius, brings his work into conversation with that of his contemporaries and predecessors. In the Critical Lens Section, Susan Yager offers her perspective on Chaucer, reading lessons, and difficulties with interpretation. Finally, Roger A. Ladd’s piece considers the “estate satire,” a once prominent literary genre used in the *Canterbury Tales*, which died out shortly after the medieval period.

Next comes the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- “Chaucer’s Language” Susan Yager
- “Transnational Chaucer” Kathryn McKinley
- “Chaucer’s Reality Fiction” James M. Dean
- “Chaucer, John Donne, and ‘The Flea’: A ‘Robertsonian’ Perspective” Robert C. Evans
- “Charting Chaucer: Travel, Mechanical Magic, and Controlling the Narrative” Francis Tobienne Jr.
- “Chaucer’s International Presence” Scott Lightsey
- “The Mortal Spectable: History in *The Monk’s Tale*” James M. Dean
- “Chaucer, Nashe, and the ‘Choice of Valentines,’” Robert C. Evans

- “Chaucer as a Sociolinguist: Understanding the Role of Language in Chaucer’s Internationalism”
Jonathan Fruoco

In the final section, **Resources**, easy-to-follow lists are given in order to help guide the reader through important dates and moments in the author’s life. A selection of further reading is then provided. Each essay in *Critical Insights: Geoffrey Chaucer* includes a list of Works Cited and detailed endnotes. Also included in this volume is a **Bibliography**, biographies of the **Editor** and **Contributors**, as well as an alphabetical **Index**.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world’s most studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia’s most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: Geoffrey Chaucer* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

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Critical Insights: Geoffrey Chaucer

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