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0521842360 - Philosophical Chaucer: Love, Sex, and Agency in the Canterbury Tales

Mark Miller

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## Philosophical Chaucer

Mark Miller's innovative study argues that Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* represent an extended meditation on agency, autonomy, and practical reason. This philosophical aspect of Chaucer's interests can help us understand what is both sophisticated and disturbing about his explorations of love, sex, and gender. Partly through fresh readings of the *Consolation of Philosophy* and the *Romance of the Rose*, Miller charts Chaucer's relation to the association in the Christian West between problems of autonomy and problems of sexuality, and reconstructs how medieval philosophers and poets approached psychological phenomena often thought of as the exclusive province of psychoanalysis. The literary experiments of the *Canterbury Tales* represent a distinctive philosophical achievement that remains vital to our own attempts to understand agency, desire, and their histories.

MARK MILLER is Associate Professor of English at the University of Chicago. He has published on medieval literature and culture in *Speculum* and *ELH*.

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