



Mark Allen and Stephanie Amsel, eds. *Annotated Chaucer Bibliography, 1997-2010*

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In many ways, my review header would seem to contain everything you need to know about the *Annotated Chaucer Bibliography*. Mark Allen (the long-time bibliographer for the annual journal *Studies in the Age of Chaucer [SAC]*) and Stephanie Amsel (his worthy successor) continue the sequence of volumes compiled by a century's worth of distinguished Chaucer bibliographers — Eleanor Prescott Hammond, Dudley D. Griffith, Willard E. Martin, Lorraine Y. Baird, Hildegard Schnuttgen, and Bege K. Bowers. In order to continue this bibliographic tradition, Allen and Amsel coordinate a group of scholars responsible for sifting through reams of scholarship, for finding and reading pertinent examples, and (as has been the practice since 1986, when the bibliography became affiliated with the SAC, the journal sponsored by the New Chaucer Society) for writing annotations. Not apparent in the title is the bibliography's second life, a searchable online version. Housed at an easily navigated, open-access website at the University of Texas - San Antonio, the Online Chaucer Bibliography provides a reliable resource for scholars and students alike. That final fact raises an important question not easily extracted from the header: if these entries are freely available online, then why the need for a printed volume?

For those of us whose careers began with print bibliographies and card catalogs, there's a certain sensory pleasure gained from handling Allen and Amsel's fat volume. Working my way through its more than 800 pages housing 4632 entries (as well as author and subject indices), I also re-experienced the intellectual pleasures of now obsolete search tools: the gratification of being led astray by adjacent entries or the satisfaction of following the bread crumbs of a "see also," delights of a different order than clicking through hyperlinks.

Beyond this appeal to old-timers, however, the hefty volume allows the editors to highlight in print some significant reorientations in the field of Chaucer Studies. The first change breaks with past practice by acknowledging the growing fields of medievalism and reception studies. Unlike previous volumes, this bibliography introduces sections on Chaucer's popular reception, such as "Chaucer in fiction" and "Chaucer's influence and later allusions." The second change broadens our sense of where we look for contributions to the field. Although the editors initially present this change as an *errata*, identifying it through a cluster of "more than 650 items not included in the SAC bibliographies for [1997-2010] or missed in previously



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printed cumulative bibliographies of Chaucer" (ix), this group of entries primarily represents items in places often seen as outside the scope of Chaucer Studies: literary but non-medieval journals, non-literary journals, and publications from beyond the U.S.-U.K.-Canadian-Australasian mainstream of Chaucer Studies.

The *Bibliography's* two-prong reorientation is good news for Chaucer Studies. Even as Chaucer and other medieval literature are being squeezed out of the curricula in many English literature departments in the U.S., U.K., Canada, and Australasia, the latest *Annotated Chaucer Bibliography* suggests they are finding a foothold beyond the usual confines. Similarly, at the same time that electronic sources seem to be replacing those coming off the printing press, the bibliography's print publication ensures a stable format for one of Chaucer Studies' most important reference works. In these ways, the *Annotated Chaucer Bibliography* both records the field's changing landscape and promotes the value of maintaining an older technological format less prone to obsolescence alongside electronic versions which, though very convenient, can become quickly outdated.

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