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Introducing English Medieval Book History: Manuscripts, their Producers and their Readers. **By RALPH HANNA.**

Introducing English Medieval Book History: Manuscripts, their Producers and their Readers . By Ralph Hanna. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 2013. xx + 233 pp. + 40 plates. £70. ISBN978 0 85989 871 3.

[Kathryn Dutton](#) ✉

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THIS VOLUME EXAMINES 'common topics or situations that typically engage the interests of medieval book historians' (p. 1), using a set of texts and manuscripts ranging from *Beowulf* and *The Canterbury Tales* to more obscure, individual manuscripts from medieval England, particularly fourteenth-century Yorkshire. Although Hanna makes it clear that this is neither a guide to codicology nor a handbook for book history, the volume is explicitly aimed at students; indeed, its individual chapters are based on Hanna's postgraduate teaching at Oxford.

Unlike a handbook or guide which synthesizes approaches to medieval book history, the chapters of this volume each deal with specific problems or questions relating to individual manuscripts or sets thereof. Thus Chapter 1 essentially presents an overview of recent debates on *Beowulf*, with an emphasis on contextual-izing the text thoroughly within its manuscript (BL, MS Cotton Vitellius A. xv),...

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