



# Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern (Series Q)

*Carolyn Dinshaw*

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In *Getting Medieval* Carolyn Dinshaw examines communities—dissident and orthodox—in late-fourteenth and early-fifteenth-century England to create a new sense of queer history. Reaching beyond both medieval and queer studies, Dinshaw demonstrates in this challenging work how intellectual inquiry into pre-modern societies can contribute invaluable to current issues in cultural studies. In the process, she makes important connections between past and present cultures that until now have not been realized.

In her pursuit of historical analyses that embrace the heterogeneity and indeterminacy of sex and sexuality, Dinshaw examines canonical Middle English texts such as the *Canterbury Tales* and *The Book of Margery Kempe*. She examines polemics around the religious dissidents known as the Lollards as well as accounts of prostitutes in London to address questions of how particular sexual practices and identifications were normalized while others were proscribed. By exploring contemporary (mis)appropriations of medieval tropes in texts ranging from Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* to recent Congressional debates on U.S. cultural production, Dinshaw demonstrates how such modern media can serve to reinforce constrictive heteronormative values and deny the multifarious nature of history. Finally, she works with and against the theories of Michel Foucault, Homi K. Bhabha, Roland Barthes, and John Boswell to show how deconstructionist impulses as well as historical perspectives can further an understanding of community in both pre- and postmodern societies.

This long-anticipated volume will be indispensable to medieval and queer scholars and will be welcomed by a larger cultural studies audience.

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