

The canterbury tales

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This affect of creating characters who are unaware of how they are perceived by others is expertly shown in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The narrator of the story establishes that he too is also a character. In his book, even though he calls himself Chaucer, the reader should be cautious to take his words as his own opinion. In the Prologue the narrator depicts himself as an amicable character, but then he is blamed to be sullen.

Relying on his memory, the narrator describes his impressions of the other pilgrims based on whether or not he likes them, and what specifically he chooses to remember, or not to remember. This method is referred to as a unreliable narrator. In the case of the " Pardoner" Chaucer's narrator is a very unreliable character. Proving this, the Pardoner sings " Com hider, love, to me! a ballad with which is accompanied by the Summoner, degrading his already questionable virtue of a man that works with the Church.

Presenting himself as a man of ambiguous sexual nature, the Pardoner further challenges the social normalcy of the the Church. The Pardoner also takes with him on his journey to Canterbury the tools of his trade, which are objects that are used to deceive others in to thinking they are worth more than they appear, like the other pilgrims on the trip.

The Pardoner finds out that special relics are valued on this pilgrimage, and he wishes to make a profit any way he can by selling materials to the other pilgrims whether it be pieces of paper with promises to forgive their sins or animal bones to ward off evil. Furthermore, the Pardoner preaches a sermon on greed that illustrates his own hypocrisy. The narrator is unable to see how the Pardoner deceives those around him, and fails to see who he really is

thus showing the reader how the narrator of the story cannot always be trusted, but provides the reader with an interesting angle.