

O.e.a. style response

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Couse Section/# O. E. A. Question The Wife of Bath relates a story that is actually neither contradictory nor affirmative of the misogynistic tendencies that existed during Chaucer's time with relation to women. The reasons for this will be related within this brief analysis. Firstly, Alisoun is presented as the typification of a chaste and humble village girl that aptly displays the misogynistic virtues of womanhood from a male's perspective. However, this seemingly chaste and perfect example of the young wife quickly melts away as a determined young woman, fully in command of her own sexuality and aware of the power therein is soon displayed.

Although she mocks misogyny and shows through her unbelievable wit and cunning that such actions are plainly ill-informed and only serve to weaken the relationships that men and women can enjoy, the fact remains that Chaucer sets this woman up as the exception to the rule and not the typification of it. In this way, although the woman herself is a clear case against the misogyny of the times, the simple nature and stupidity of what could only be described as the "majority" only serves to reinforce the image that was so popular during the times. Lastly, what is of peculiar interest with relation to this particular story is the fact that although Alisoun displays an amazing ability to break free of some of the constraints of womanhood that were ever-present within the society of her time, she eventually acquiesces to the demands that the society places upon her and assumes the role of the "good wife".

Question 2)

With respect to the role of religion in the Miller's Tale, there are several examples of non-traditional way that religion is portrayed. For instance, in many of the other stories of the time, religion is dealt with in a positive light

<https://assignbuster.com/oea-style-response/>

and oftentimes spurs characters acts of morality and goodness. However, this is not the case in the Miller's story. Firstly, this can be seen in the way that Absolon uses a very shallow and contrived form of religion in an attempt to woo Alisoun through his inclusion in a local "miracle play".

Furthermore, religious piety is equated to a form of madness in that John conceives of an entirely absurd vision in which an apocalyptic flood will again destroy the earth and all that is in it; the only way that salvation will be provided is to float away in provision bath tubs. John's foolish apocalyptic fear serves to further paint the character on the periphery of reason as he is acutely attuned to the supposed will of God yet absolutely clueless to the fact that his young wife is engaging in adultery before his very eyes and within his very house.

Furthermore, religious piety and belief is further lampooned as John's belief that Nicholas study of the heavens is in some way tantamount to peering into God's private parts (Chaucer 38). In such a way, the author brings the reader to the understanding that the religious piety displayed by the various participants is either a hollow and empty display that is intended to achieve a desired result or the direct result of a simple minded and narrow view of the world. This idea is further mocked by the author in the fact that John suspends two bath tubs from the roof of his abode in preparation for the flood that God is supposedly sending. These two bathtubs serve as a lewd demonstration of the "private parts" of God that were mentioned to some effect earlier in the story as John warned Nicholas concerning the dangers of studying astronomy.

Question 3)

Perhaps the most important lessons that can be found from reading the <https://assignbuster.com/oea-style-response/>

Canterbury Tales relate to the nature of humanity and not any specific questions that one will likely face on a day to day basis. Although truisms are found within each of the stories, the broader point is that humans are flawed; they can be given to drunkenness, extreme acts of violence, rage, jealousy, adultery, impiety, cowardice, and stupidity. Rather than giving the reader a one dimensional view of the world, the Chaucer serves the audience a healthy dose of humanity as it exists – from religious clergy, to toughened knight, to bawdry common workers, the reader is greeted by a refreshingly real servings of what true humanity engenders. Strictly at odds with the idealist portrayals of virtue, honor, and love that were so tirelessly incorporated to many of the oral and written traditions in and around his time, Chaucer endeavored to provide a more realistic and varied approach to what human nature truly resembled.

Work Cited

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury tales : an illustrated selection*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.