

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR *THE WIFE OF BATH'S PROLOGUE AND TALE*

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NOTE

The focus of these sources is to provide you with information in regard to *The Wife of Bath's Prologue* and *The Wife of Bath's Tale*. These sources primarily focus on the Wife of Bath's character herself, viewing her through multiple lenses such as her femininity, her morals, and her disability.

Alford, John A. "The Wife of Bath versus the Clerk of Oxford: What Their Rivalry Means." *The Chaucer Review* 21, no. 2 (1986): 108-32.

Summary:

In his article, John Alford discusses the rivalry that is present in the *Canterbury Tales* between the Wife of Bath and the Clerk of Oxford. Alford begins his article by outlining the offenses that the Wife and Clerk have caused each other such as the Wife's unorthodox views on marriage and the Clerk telling a tale to reinforce the obedient nature of wives. Alford makes the argument that the fight between the two is more historical than personal, a fight between logic and rhetoric. Alford notes that this battle arose not from the Wife and Clerk but began all the way back in Ancient Greece when the ideas and schools of thought of logic and rhetoric came about. He states that the Wife and Clerk are personifications of these schools of thought, with the Wife being rhetoric and the Clerk being logic. The Clerk is studying logic and is linked to Aristotle, while the Wife's ostentatious clothing and her confrontational personality tie her to rhetoric. Alford also argues that the Wife's partial deafness was included by Chaucer as a criticism towards rhetoric thinking, showing that she cannot hear what she is saying.

Evaluation:

John Alford is a retired professor who taught at Michigan State University, the University of California-Irvine, Leeds University in the U.K., and more. He has written multiple books and articles on Chaucer and the *Canterbury Tales*. One way to get to know a character and to understand their beliefs and motivations is to see a character that is the exact opposite of them so that you can come to know who they are and who they are not. Looking at the differences between the Wife of Bath and the Clerk of Oxford allows us to see who the Wife of Bath is not, and thus gain a better sense of who she is and how that impacts the beliefs and ideals that she holds.

Bjork, Robert E. "The Wife of Bath's *Bele Chose*." *The Chaucer Review* 53, no. 3 (2018): 336-349.

Summary:

This essay focuses on the linguistics the Wife of Bath uses when she is discussing her vagina. This is relevant because Bjork concludes the connotations of the euphemisms, she uses differ drastically from each other, some invoking shame while others invoke power. The way she uses these phrases are a reflection of herself and her own beliefs of women at the time. Bjork defines the connotations of the euphemisms by discussing the origins of the phrases, synthesizing the multiple definitions/translations of the specific words and looking at them as used in the contexts in other medieval works. He also looks at the common euphemisms of the time that the Wife of Bath did not use, and how this plays into her character.

Evaluation:

Robert E. Bjork is an English Professor at Arizona State University, where he taught courses about medieval language and literature with a focus on the Anglo-Saxon period. He taught for 24 years. Also, at ASU, Bjork directed the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, which hosted a number of programs. Additionally, he is a fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. But what makes him most

qualified to write this particular essay is that he is general editor for the Oxford Middle English Dictionary. His extensive knowledge in medieval linguistics makes him an expert on the linguistics discussed in his essay.

Colmer, Dorothy. "Character and Class in "The Wife of Bath's Tale." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 72, no. 3 (1973): 329-39.

Summary:

In this article, author Dorothy Colmer discusses how class plays a role in the development of the Wife of Bath's Character. She debates about whether or not the Wife of Bath was a reliable narrator, and how different aspects of her character and storytelling play into this. One of the most compelling arguments is how carelessly the rape of the young woman is brushed off by the queen in her tale. Colmer argues that her class is seen through the fact that she has an occupation of weaving, though she has left it idle for a long time.

Evaluation:

This source is from *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* by the University of Illinois Press, which is a peer reviewed publication. The author herself is from the University of Adelaide and there she published works through the University of Adelaide Press. The claims in the work are well supported with textual evidence. The only possible issue with this source is that it is published in 1973. Though *The Canterbury Tales* have not changed, the context of how western society views women and class has changed. It is important to note these changes in contexts when reading and interpreting this article.

Harris, Carissa M. "The Wife of Bath's Tale." The Open Access Companion to the Canterbury Tales. Wordpress, September 2017. <https://opencanterburytales.dsl.lsu.edu/wobt1/>.

Summary:

This article is a chapter from a scholarly website focusing solely on Chaucer. It focuses on the idea of rape justice and justification in the middle ages, and how the *Wife of Bath's Tale* challenges the reader to accept the historical continuities between the past and the present day. In the tale, the woman the knight rapes disappears from the story right after it happens. Harris discusses how this is reflective of modern-day rape, where perpetrators get away without suffering punishment. She supports this argument by bringing up how women were viewed as property at the time, so a rape was actually considered a crime against a woman's father or husband, rather than against her. This focuses on rape and rape justice specifically as a woman's issue through the lens of women not having legal rights to their own bodies, even in acts of violence.

Evaluation:

Carissa M. Harris is an associate professor of English at Temple University, with an expertise in medieval literature, obscenity, sexuality and sexual violence. She has taught many classes focusing on these areas since she joined Temple University in 2013. She earned her degree in English with an emphasis on medieval studies from Northwestern University. She also earned a degree in Women and Gender Studies from Washington University in St. Louis. Her extensive education in the two primary themes of her article make her perfect to discuss topics of medieval gender and sexuality.

Huppé, Bernard F. "Rape and Woman's Sovereignty in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*." *Modern Language Notes* 63, no. 6 (1948): 378-81.

Summary:

This article looks at women's sometimes severe interactions with each other and how those play into the *Wife of Bath's Tale*. The author studies the status of the woman who was raped by the Knight in the tale. It is assumed that she is a peasant due to the way the outcry over her rape was presented to the king and queen. The author looks at how the queen is following rules set out by the court of love, and not those by the king.

Through these examples, Huppé claims, that in her story the Wife of Bath believes women are sovereign. However, he also claims that Chaucer is telling an anti-feminist tale though still showing that lovers must understand the necessity of being obedient to women.

Evaluation:

This article was published by the Johns Hopkins University Press in *Modern Language Notes*. The author Bernard Huppé, has many published articles in relation to texts from the middle ages and the idea of courtly love. He uses many primary and secondary sources to support his claims, and because of this, this article is often referenced by others investigating the *Wife of Bath's Tale*. The article is short, to the point, and easy to understand. It has many textual examples that are well supported. However, this article was published in 1948, before the civil rights movement, and the second wave of feminism. It is important to note the time context in which the piece was written when using it.

Jewell, Emily. "Disability and Morality in The Canterbury Tales Open Access." ETD. Accessed November 20, 2019. <https://etd.library.emory.edu/concern/etds/q524jn838?locale=en>.

Summary:

In this article, Emily Jewell discusses disability related to the Wife of Bath. Her main focus is on how the Wife of Bath's partial deafness affects her. In the article, Jewell brings up the idea of a disability hierarchy, where the type of disability a person has impacts their social status and how the other pilgrims and society as a whole will treat them. Jewell discusses how the Wife of Bath uses this disability hierarchy to her advantage to raise herself above some of the other pilgrims. Jewell uses the example of the Pardoner and how the Wife of Bath interacts with him. The Wife of Bath reprimands the Pardoner for interrupting her and although she is a woman and would traditionally during this time period not speak to a man in such a way, with the Pardoner being a eunuch, something that is seen as far more socially damaging than the Wife of Bath's partial deafness, she uses the disability hierarchy to hold power over him. This falls in line with the Wife of Bath's character, who is known to be manipulative, especially of her past husbands. Jewell also discusses how the other pilgrims could potentially view the Wife of Bath's deafness, particularly in how she became deaf. The author theorizes that the other pilgrims could view her husband's assault as justified because it could be seen as a punishment for her lustful and sinful lifestyle.

Evaluation:

Emily Jewell has written multiple articles on disability within the *Canterbury Tales*. The article referenced here for this annotated bibliography is actually her undergraduate honors thesis. She graduated from Emory University with honors and conducted research within English and Medieval Literature. The discussion of the Wife of Bath's disability and the idea of a disability hierarchy that is presented in this article that the Wife of Bath is able to undermine in order to raise herself up or to support her argument connects very closely to what we have discussed about the Wife of Bath. The idea that the Wife of Bath is not a woman who accepts the place in the social hierarchy she has been given and tries to subvert it through gaining sovereignty over her husbands and trying to argue that experience is greater than authority, is shown again through how she uses the disability hierarchy to raise herself up higher than she should be. This article gives more prominence to her disability and how she lets it affect her, as well as how it might affect the perception of her by others.

Ladd, Roger A. "Selling Alys: Reading (with) the Wife of Bath." *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 34 (2012): 141-171.

Summary:

This is a journal article that hits at the surface of analyzing multiple aspects of the Wife of Bath: "We examine her and her textuality from a variety of overlapping perspectives, including her subjectivity as a wife or widow, her feminist and/ or antifeminist hermeneutics, her role as either a positive or negative pseudofeminine mouthpiece for a male author, her use or misuse of sources, her 'glosing,' and so on" (page

142). It begins by discussing her physical appearance in the *General Prologue* and how it reflects her socioeconomic status, concluding that her clothing behavior is reflective of the London region rather than Bath, and therefore the Wife of Bath may not actually be aware of what she is discussing, which reflects Chaucer's satire throughout her prologue and tale. The essay then moves to the topic of the identity the Wife of Bath is trying to achieve, and further explores this through her abuse of sources, the aristocracy present within her tale, and the duality of her audience (the pilgrims) and Chaucer's audience.

Evaluation:

Roger A. Ladd is the director of the graduate English program at the University of North Carolina — Pembroke. He also teaches English there. He has written many journal articles focused on medieval English literature and commerce. His dissertation “Antimercantilism in Late Medieval English Literature” (which he repurposed into a book) focused on rhetoric used in trade. Because he clearly demonstrates knowledge in commerce and rhetoric, he is one of the best people to discuss both the medieval language the Wife of Bath uses and her socioeconomic status and showcase how both aspects build her identity.

Longsworth, Robert. “The Wife of Bath and the Samaritan Woman.” *The Chaucer Review* 34, no. 4 (2000): 372-87.

Summary:

In this article from the *Chaucer Review*, the author Robert Longsworth discusses the Wife of Bath’s argument of experience versus authority. Longsworth talks about the Wife of Bath’s position, which is that she believes experience triumphs authority. The Wife of Bath is apt to believe this because she has much experience in life herself, having been married five times, with her first marriage at the age of twelve. Much of Longsworth’s article focuses on the *Wife of Bath’s Prologue*, as this is where she makes her argument for experience over authority. Longsworth establishes that in the competition between experience and authority, the Wife of Bath places herself as the delegate of experience, while authority is represented by the bible and those who interpret it. Longsworth discusses some of the arguments that the Wife of Bath makes where she disagrees with the interpretations that authority has made of certain bible passages, especially with the Samaritan woman. Longsworth writes that the Wife of Bath’s endeavor to justify experience’s reign over authority is “witty and nuanced” (page 379) and that she does well in showing how the bible is meant to be interpreted and it can be interpreted by her as well. Longsworth concludes his article by writing how the Wife of Bath is aware that she has to be accommodating of authority, but still values experience over it and knows how to manipulate authority to suit her.

Evaluation:

Dr. Robert Longsworth is a former Oberlin College professor who retired after teaching for thirty-seven years. He received his Ph.D. in English from Harvard and is a trained medievalist who has published multiple papers and books on Chaucer and Middle English romances and dramas. I believe that his educational background and knowledge and experience with Chaucer and Middle English makes him a credible source. His article on the Wife of Bath does well in showing that she is an effective advocate of experience over authority, but that she has an understanding that authority cannot be taken over all at once. Longsworth’s article is great at showing the Wife of Bath’s intellect and giving her character more depth.

Longsworth, Robert. “The Wife of Bath and the Samaritan Woman.” *The Chaucer Review* 34, no. 4 (2000): 372-87.

Summary:

In this article, the author Robert Longsworth explores the *Wife of Bath’s Prologue*, and her argument that experience is more important than authority. The Wife of Bath has been married five times and thus has a lot of experience when it comes to marriage. She is then compared by the Longsworth to the Samaritan Woman in the bible who has also been married five times. However, due to the way the story plays out in the biblical text, the Samaritan Woman ends up taking heed to Jesus’s authority, making her quite different from

the Wife of Bath. However, though Longsworth's analysis it becomes clear that the Wife of Bath has numerous examples for where experience trumps authority, and that this view will be a lens through which to view her tale.

Evaluation:

This article was written by Robert Longsworth and published by the *Chaucer Review*, a peer-reviewed journal by Penn State University Press. Longsworth demonstrated a clear understanding of the Wife of Bath's tale, and all of his arguments are well supported by textual evidence from the tale. He also makes notes when discussing the religious aspects that make the tale inclusive to all readers but keep Chaucer's meaning clear. This article was published in 2000, making it one of the newer sources available and thus more in line with what modern readers are experiencing.

Melville, Alexandra. "Female 'Soveraynetee' in Chaucer's 'The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale'." The British Library. The British Library, February 1, 2019.

Summary:

This source is an analytic essay that focuses on the Wife of Bath as a woman. The essay is divided into subsections, each one toying with a new notion of femininity as presented by the Wife of Bath. Melville's theme is that although the Wife of Bath has "outspoken views on marriage, power and religious doctrine remain ambiguous." This means that although the Wife of Bath appears like a powerful feminist challenging the male-driven status quo of the time, she actually undermines herself through her own admission of wrongdoing in her prologue and through the background of the witch in her tale. Melville's subsections select individual words from excerpts of the prologue and tale and uses them to create tone or discuss misuse of words to support her argument.

Evaluation:

Alexandra Melville is a British writer and educator who teaches English at sixth form and secondary education schools in London. Melville produced several books focusing on how to teach certain English novels to secondary students. She also produces literary works for Fuel Theatre, The British Library, and HarperCollins (a publishing company). Having been an English teacher for many years and producing many books about how to analyze and teach other famous historical books, she clearly possesses the knowledge and skill to produce a credible essay about the Wife of Bath. Her experience in literature and as a female reflect those of the Wife of Bath in her prologue.

Palomo, Dolores. "The Fate of the Wife of Bath's 'Bad Husbands'." *The Chaucer Review* 9, no. 4 (1975): 303-19.

Summary:

This article looks at the fate of the Wife of Bath's fourth and fifth husbands, who contrast from her first three. The first three were old and rich, the fourth was a reveller, and the fifth beat her until she was deaf in one ear. The author wants to look at the untimely fate of the fourth, who unlike the first three likely died from natural causes. However, the direct causes of their deaths are not addressed. Rather Palomo looks at how the Wife of Bath's actions have affected her marriages, and how her actions have made her a "victim of her own need for love."

Evaluation:

This article was written by Dolores Palomo and published in *The Chaucer Review*; a peer reviewed journal published by Penn State University Press. Palomo has other published works, including "The Halcyon Moment of Stillness in Royalist Poetry" published in *Huntington Library Quarterly*. In the article, Palomo uses many quotes and evidence from the *Wife of Bath's Tale* and *Prologue* to support her claims. However, the connections between the examples and what she claims to be exploring, and the conclusion that she draws, are hard to find.

Parker, David. "Can We Trust the Wife of Bath?" *The Chaucer Review* 4, no. 2 (1969): 90-98.

Summary:

This article looks at and the Wife of Bath and debates whether or not she is a reliable narrator. There have been many debates in the past about how Chaucer intended for his characters to be read and interpreted. The author argues that if we are to accept her as a character, we also have to accept her as a charter than cannot be trusted. Parker claims that if Chaucer shows her as a charter that delights in fantasy, and this impacted her ability to tell accurate stories about her own life. However, if we are to say that she is not valid as a character, then there are some problems in the inconsistent ways she tells her stories. Therefore, it is most likely that she was intended to be taken as an individual.

Evaluation:

This article was published in *The Chaucer Review*, a peer-reviewed journal published by Penn State University Press, and was written by David Parker, a medievalist often published in *Past and Present*. His arguments throughout out are well supported by the text, and both the idea that the Wife of Bath is a reliable narrator, and the idea that is not are looked at. This makes the conclusion much stronger. This makes the author seems more reliable and therefore makes the piece as a whole stronger.

Pugh, Tison. "Queering Genres, Battering Males: The Wife of Bath's Narrative Violence." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 33, no. 2 (2003): 115-42.

Summary:

In this article by Tison Pugh, the author explores the genre play that the Wife of Bath employs in her tale. Pugh starts off his article by discussing how, judging by her prologue, it seems that the Wife of Bath is getting ready to tell a fabliau but instead tells a tale of romance. The author notes that with all the previous pilgrims, you could guess the type of tale they would tell based on their prologue, but when trying to guess the Wife's tale, Chaucer subverts the reader's expectation. Pugh proposes that the reasoning for this switch is that by telling a romance, the Wife is gaining an upper hand over the men on the pilgrimage. Previously to the Wife's tale, only men have told tales, and as the first woman to speak, the Wife feels she must break the parameters that the men have set. The Wife uses this genre-switch as a weapon, reconfiguring the genre as a way to undercut patriarchal ideology and creating a tale where the woman is in control. With her tale, the Wife reconstructs the romance genre, adding in elements of fabliau as well, in a way that builds on her own beliefs, such as her love of sex and the limitations she finds in love.

Evaluation:

Tison Pugh is an English professor at the University of Central Florida. Among other classes, he teaches a minor in medieval and renaissance studies. He has written multiple books and articles about Chaucer and the Medieval ages, many of which he ties into LGBT ideas and queer theory. He also has a Ph.D. in medieval English literature. There has been much discussion regarding *The Wife of Bath's Tale* for many reasons. One reason is the fact that it is surprising for the Wife to tell a romance when she seems so suited to tell a fabliau. Through this article, the reader gains an understanding of why the Wife of Bath would tell a romance, why Chaucer would replace the fabliau he had originally intended for the Wife of Bath to tell with a romance that, at first, seems out of character.

Houser, Richard M. "Alisoun Takes Exception: Medieval Legal Pleading and the Wife of Bath." *The Chaucer Review* 48, no. 1 (2013): 66-90.

Summary:

This text is a journal article that focuses on the experience of a courtroom and law within the *Wife of Bath's Tale* and how it applies to the prologue. McCormick begins his article by piecing together a series of arguments on law proposed by other medieval analysts, then "proposes that the Wife of Bath employs the

courtroom pleading techniques of *exception* and *confession and avoidance* to challenge the misogynist teachings of clerical authority" (page 68). This means that her arguing techniques used in the prologue to address her own faults and the stereotype against her (because she is female) reflect the techniques used in law. McCormick suggests the Wife of Bath's knowledge of "male language" (meaning courtroom experience) gives her an authority that makes her worthy of being heard by the others on the pilgrimage.

Evaluation:

Richard McCormick Houser was a professor at Georgia Southern University and Louisiana State University, where he taught writing. He received his undergraduate and master's degree in English from Truman University, where he completed his thesis over "Autonomy versus Determinism in Anglo-Saxon literature." This appears to be one of the only published articles over Chaucer he has written, however his education in this area, his research into law and the uniqueness of this topic for this article still makes him a credible author.

Schlauch, Margaret. "The Marital Dilemma in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*." *PMLA* 61, no. 2 (1946): 416-30.

Summary:

This article explores what the author calls the "marital dilemma" in *The Wife of Bath's Tale*. This is in reference to the choice the Knight has at the end of the tale, to choose and ugly wife who is faithful, or a beautiful wife who is unfaithful. Similar dilemmas have been used by many authors throughout time, and the way this is presented is not completely unique to The Wife of Bath, though the way the Knight in her tale responds is a really good way for her to make her point. The author then analyzes the way this compares to other tales and texts.

Evaluation:

The author Margaret Schlauch is from New York University has been published several times regarding Chaucer and his works. This particular article and was published in the *PLMA* a peer reviewed journal published by the Modern Language Association. The piece itself is easy to understand and draws in lots of examples from other texts, which promotes the author's reliability. As well, the relevant examples included to support arguments, and the explanations that tie them in Schlauch's argument make the conclusion stronger.

Straus, Barrie Ruth. "The Subversive Discourse of the Wife of Bath: Phallocentric Discourse and the Imprisonment of Criticism." *ELH* 55, no. 3 (1988): 527-54.

Summary:

In this article, the author Barrie Straus argues that the reason for such hostility from readers and scholars of the Wife of Bath is because she takes a feminine role when discoursing and constantly steps out of her place to speak and argue. Barrie Straus begins with some examples of how various critics have described her, with some saying she is a character meant to laugh at, and others going as far as to compare her to Charles Manson. Straus argues that some of this hostility may be as a result of the Wife stepping out of what is traditionally seen as the woman's place. She notes that although the Wife seems to acknowledge her place as a woman by giving a disclaimer, she quickly steps out of a woman's place by speaking loudly, proclaiming herself as someone to be listened to, and talking back to the male pilgrims. When she is arguing and discoursing, the Wife rejects the typical masculine way of discoursing, which is seen as serious and composed of knowledge that comes from books, and discourses in a feminine way, which comes from experience and the knowledge that she gained from her experiences. Because the Wife argues in this way, Straus argues that her speaking challenges male authority.

Evaluation:

Barrie Straus was a professor of Medieval Literature and Women's Studies at the University of Windsor. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. She is well-known for her pioneering work in Chaucer and feminism. The Wife of Bath is known for her speeches and interpretations and readings of her

words have caused much controversy and critique. Straus introduces a reason for why some critics are especially heinous in their interpretation of the Wife of Bath and builds upon the character of the Wife of Bath by explaining her style of discourse. This view that the Wife of Bath is subverting male authority through her arguments ties in with our discussions of how that Wife of Bath manipulates and challenges the men around her.

Thomas, Susanne Sara. "The Problem of Defining "Sovereynetee" in the "Wife of Bath's Tale." *The Chaucer Review* 41, no. 1 (2006): 87-97.

Summary:

In this article from the *Chaucer Review*, the author Susanne Thomas discusses sovereignty in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*. Thomas aims to try and define the term sovereignty, as used in the *Tale* because she notes that the definition of it is unclear. By the end of her article, while she still states that the meaning is elusive, she does offer ideas of what sovereignty could mean in this tale, and in turn, to the Wife of Bath. In most of the article, Thomas frames sovereignty in the tale as an individual knowing what their desires are and defining them themselves. She explores this idea through the characters of the knight and the wife in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*. Thomas claims that the wife in the *Tale* has sovereignty not because she gains mastery over the knight at the end of the tale, but because she knows her own desires and has control over the desires of the knight. The knight on the other hand, does not have sovereignty, not because he gave it up to the wife, but because he allows the wife to define what his desires are. The section of the tale where the wife relents and tells the knight she will fulfill his worldly appetite, and *then* asks him to choose between two options, shows that there was never a choice to begin with, because she already had decided what she will give him. His agreement to let her choose shows that he is unable to define his own desires and thus cannot gain sovereignty.

Evaluation:

Susanne Thomas received her Ph.D. from Louisiana State University, where she specialized in 14th-Century British Literature and Language and completed her dissertation on law and language in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Her background in medieval British literature, especially with her work on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, makes her a credible source. Sovereignty is what the wife of bath wants most, especially over her husbands, and in trying to find exactly what she means by sovereignty, we can better understand the Wife of Bath, her motivations, and beliefs. While this article does not give a cut and dry answer, the ideas the author proposes are interesting and can lead to valuable discussions on what sovereignty means in the tale and the Wife of Bath.

Wurtele, Douglass. "The 'Double Sorwe' of the Wife of Bath: Chaucer and the Misogynist Tradition." *Florilegium*, Volume 11 (1992): 179-205.

Summary:

This text is a character analysis of the Wife of Bath, focused mostly on debunking her values. Wurtele claims that Chaucer created her to be seen as "an offender against incontrovertible moral and social codes" (page 179). Wurtele supports this theory by describing how she most likely came about her knowledge of negative stereotypes of remarried widows, claiming that her knowledge in that area was what she heard from others, and she exploits her biblical examples to further her claim. He further debunks the Wife of Bath's argument by using the works of Jerome to show that the church didn't always frown upon remarried women, as well as impure women. In terms of diversity, Wurtele exposes how the Wife of Bath uses her gender to exploit others in her favor.

Evaluation:

Douglass Wurtele was the founding co-editor of *Florilegium*, a literary journal adopted by the Canadian Society of Medievalists. He was also Carlton University's Department of English chair. Additionally, he was the sole medieval literature professor at Carleton for nearly 20 years. He was a founding member of Carlton and Ottawa's Medieval-Renaissance Society. As a medievalist, Wurtele did extensive research on Chaucer, and

more specifically Chaucer's view of Christianity. This text is one of his numerous articles and books on Chaucer. Wurtele passed away in April 2007.