

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒ Question 5 ☒
 Question 6 ☒ Question 7 ☒ Question 8 ☒
 Question 9 ☒ Question 10 ☒ Question 11 ☒
 Question 12 ☒ Question 13 ☒ Question 14 ☒
 Question 15 ☒ Question 16 ☒ Question 17 ☒
 Question 18 ☒ Question 19 ☒ Question 20 ☒
 Question 21 ☒ Question 22 ☒ Question 23 ☒
 Question 24 ☒ Question 25 ☒ Question 26 ☒

"Explain how marriage is presented by Chance
 in the 'epic of Bath's Tale' by referring to lines 35-58
 and ~~lines 282-302~~

Religion

→ MARRIAGE AS ~~DEMAND~~ - (LUIT)

- Bismie
 - solemn, lively
 - exclamation.

- ASIDES

→ MARRIAGE

↳ as necessity

neces...

desire

"good and rich and olde"

"This he lode, but he is"

"He wunt well"

"As help
 he god"

"he told ne
 deynete"

"I say...
 ne dush."

yes gap.

"I ad ne to
 god"

"welcome to
 syle, who that
 one he shall"

"with a clode"

"he lode a hit better"

"hooly in my hand /
 at his lode"

"Wys woman"

"my pofl a myn lode?"



P 4 8 6 7 3 R A 0 2 3 3 2

"Explore how marriage is presented by Chaucer
in lines 35-58 and 194-214"

Marriage is an integral theme to Chaucer's
'The Wife of Bath's Tale'. With ^{the rise of} 'Le querelle de
femmes' of his time, earlier named 'Le querelle
de la Rose', ^{as} marital arrangements and
dynamics were being questioned scrupulously
in his era of 14th. Chaucer seems particularly
interested in the power dynamics between the
sexes in marriage and explores the private
~~aspect~~ aspect of marriage comedically through
the unblinking, frank ~~voice~~ voice of The Wife
of Bath.

Firstly in both lines 35-58 and 194-216 Chaucer
presents marriage as being a socially accepted
means to control ~~lust~~. Indeed in Chaucer's
time marriage was deemed by the church a
respectable way to undergo sexual relations,
a doctrine the wife refers to explicitly in 35-58
when she echoes "to be wedded is no sinne /

But it to be wedded than to brynne" (or suffer
in hell), in order to justify her multiple marriages.
In both extracts the wife refers to her sexual
pleasure in her multiple marriages, in



lines 35-50 referring to her jealousy for Solomon who "hadde wines mo than don" and whom she wished she too could be "refresched half as ofte as he!". The Wife's Bawdy humor harks back to the Fabliau genre, that chance laces her tale with, using crude sexual euphemisms such as "refresched" in order to readily engage his audience through his coarse humor - it was said even Chaucer's aristocratic audiences enjoyed his bawdy humor as much as their more refined 'Courtly Romance' genres. The Wife continues her allusion to marriage being a sexual marathon in imagining the "many a mile fy" Solomon would have had with all his wives, even "yblotted he God", thanking God that she has "wedded fine!". The Wife's energetic outrageous exclamations that litter this section, highlight her apparently insatiable sexual energy and love of marriage. Such ~~stout~~ a lusty demeanor was incredibly a generic stereotype of women in Chaucer's time, with even the 3rd Century medical writer Galen discussing how women need to be 'warmed' by sperm in order to be fertile, with similar superstitions



being carried through to the 14th when it
was considered that women could only conceive
if they enjoyed sex. It is therefore interesting
that Chance seems to place this ^{very} anti-feminist
stereotype in the mouth of a supposed
self-avowed pro-feminist character, thus
leading many critics to suggest that through
the use of Bath Chance just extends his
audience's familiarity with allegorical figures
such as 'the old Bawd', with the use of Bath
being a mere extension of this caricature.
Indeed, the wife continues to admit 'For
some, I no / nat keep me chaste in al', the
honest aside "For some" again suggests the
wife is almost using a confessional tone / yes he ^{is} ~~is~~ ⁱⁿ ~~in~~
ethical self-awareness of her own moral lapses
are so ~~unavoidable~~ honestly from the wife seems
almost ludicrous in her ~~sex~~ 'unbounded
luxuries'. This is continued in lines 194-216,
with the wife immediately alluding to
the "Statue holde / In which [the husbands]
were bounden unto me", implicitly saying
that her husbands were sexually bound to
her as well as legally in their marriage. The
~~wife~~ ~~fact~~ the wife has immediately
progressed from the introduction of her husbands



to such a claim, just as she does in lines 35-58 with Salaman, too suggests her sexual luv infiltrates her character to be very aware. The fact however the wk has used religious ~~ex~~ exempla in lines 35-58 to support her very irreligious wishes of luv is ironic, and perhaps in line 35-58 Chaucer wishes to expose the hypocrisy of the church that was beginning to be exposed post 1378 (Great Schism) through the wk's use of anti-clerical satire - to use religious lexis to support a 'corrupt' desire. Furthermore in line 194-216 the wk, like ~~her~~ ^{she} also uses a sly aside of 'Ye moot wel what I meene of this, pardee', a similar entertaining remark as 'For sothe' in 35-58, and in doing so Chaucer invites her audience to join the wk in her sexually charged description of marriage, making her overall story highly engaging and entertaining to her audience. Just as the wk likewise ^{announces} 'blessed be God', she too in line 194-216 infiltrates her apologia of luvly behavior (ironically with no apology at all), with religious lexis of 'As help me God' and 'by God above', again perhaps highlighting how far ~~it~~ ^{she} disjoints the wk's luvly view of marriage from the religious one -



in a time where the church had total
dominance over public services and private
life perhaps Chaucer too marks how ironic it
is that such an outrageous, unabashed
character is partaking in a pilgrimage in the
name of 'God', further marking cultural shift of
his time where there was a shift from religion to
materialism. Furthermore to parallel with
Salome's "I'm in it" in lines 194-216 the
wife remembers "How piteously a-night [she]
made [her husband's] smirke!", this idea
of marriage as being an obligation to
"smirke" or to work sexually and as a
unit of broiling lust being further carried
forward by the wife. In this case it could
be seen that the wife is just as lusty. The
construct who embodies all the nightmarish
manipulative qualities, including lust behavior,
that was feared in Chaucer's century.

However, in lines 35-58 and lines 194-216
~~the~~ Chaucer also reveals the reality
and practical necessity of marriage, giving
the wife of Bath into a new light. In
lines 35-58 the wife comments "welcome the
sire, wha that ever he shall", here referring



humorously to the fact she shall welcome a
new husband with open arms. Although some
would argue this exemplifies only the wife's oblique
sexual nature, I would argue that in lines
194-216 the wife stresses on the fact her husbands
were "good, and rich and old"; the two 'past'
adjectives arguably holding more weight, indicates
that the wife's need for marriage extends beyond
sexual fulfillment and instead is founded
on a practical necessity for 'his land', 'his
treason', or \$ money and survival. In
chance? The women were legally seized by
their male relations, so although the
wife's eagerness to stress her marriage is for
"my profit and my use", I personally believe
the first benefit holds more weight for the
wife, who, being a woman of the 14th had
restricted opportunity to work and earn money.
Having learnt in the prologue that the wife had
been betrothed at 12 ~~was~~ and knows the 'no'
of marriage, perhaps her ^{'sexual'} eagerness to marry again
is instead a comedic mask for the more
practical necessity of marriage. This is
further compounded in lines 35-58 when
the wife states "~~that~~ to a parted ~~sister~~ sister
that I am free / to wed", and although spoken,

middle
wife



such a line break does give rise the question as to how far the wife's real freedom extends, and whether marriage is a practical necessity for her survival. ~~That~~ Furthermore in lines 194-216 The wife, although apparently very nonchalant in that she "he tolde no deynyte of her lone"; perhaps her double negative is a little too strained, as she later boasts that they "hadde me general hir lord"; indicating in the space between lines that perhaps the wife ~~is not as~~ does not take her husband's lone as much for granted as she first implies as she desperately needs 'his lord' and status. In Chaucer's time such a value placed on 'thow' and 'lord' is to be expected as marriages were often family arranged and non-personal affairs. Perhaps the wife adopts this pragmatic stance that marriage is a business transaction - no need for theory, cannot help but feel a twinge of sympathy for such a ~~for~~ a character who seems to hide behind a lily ~~char~~ caricature. Such a practical need for marriage could explain the wife's emphatic listing of biblical sententiae in lines 35-58, naming

'hameti; 'Abraham' and 'Submar' with
'~~Crite~~ goddess half' and 'Th'apotted' all
in a desperate attempt to load her argument
with apparent feasibility, and perhaps
just as the male ^{pilgrim} preachers around her
do, she is competing with the male sermonic
voice and replacing it with her own pragmatic
doctrine that reveals the necessity of marriage.
This is further compounded in lines 194-216
when the wife also speaks of her actions
as being those ~~those~~ of any "Wyl woman";
the universality of such an idea again
justifying her ~~big~~ polygamy in terms of
feminine necessity. While some may argue
such a statement (later also extended
as the father of "dames loone" and "Wyl m'hest")
~~adds~~ supports the ~~my~~ misogyny with
generic picture of all women being the figure,
I also think the wife has implied ~~pragmatic~~
practicality in her voice, in that any woman
in her position essentially has no choice but
to marry for her own survival. In this way
I do personally think Chaucer gives her wife of
But a voice behind her construction, perhaps
in her personal marriage with Philippa de
Roet, with whom he often lived separately,



he too had experienced the practical reality of marriage and even acknowledges that women of his time had voices, that would be as complex as the wife of Bath's if given an opportunity to be heard.

In conclusion, Chaucer explores marriage as being both a comedic unit of lusty behaviour and also being an unfortunate practical necessity of his own time. Chaucer clearly looks behind the voice of the wife of Bath, blending his academic interest and literary (highlighted in 35-58 lines) with everyday practical dogma. In doing so Chaucer, as with all his pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales* is able to absolve himself from blame by layering different and contradictory opinions on themes such as marriage to provoke thought among his audience, using the mouth of the wife of Bath as a vessel to do so.

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 60 MARKS

