

De Lee

Having so little information upon which to base an argument, one might find it difficult to reach any conclusion regarding insanity in Medieval England and, particularly, in Chaucer's remarkable works. But, actually, the problem is not so difficult as it seems because there is a contemporary group which corresponds closely to the type of person whom Chaucer knew. ~~There is a group of people in the south of England.~~

In the southeastern United States today live a people whose civilization remarkably resembles that of Chaucer. For the most part they are comparatively ignorant, ~~and their lives center about the most striking and significant features of their culture.~~ ~~They are~~ ^{mostly} ~~only~~ have an intense faith in the fire and brimstone ^{type of} religious abstractions which their lives center, and, with few exceptions, are pure Anglo-Saxons. ~~From the region~~ ^{social} Their agricultural system still hints of the middle ages, and class distinction is supremely prevalent.

The psychology of these people is an

45

institutions, some doctrine and
moral principles, but not the religious
character of the nation as a whole.
Anglican character. The people of England
have never been able to accept fully
any religion. Though they are generally



considered a staid people, the only types
of religion that appeal to them are any
considerable degree are the ~~evangelical~~ ^{and sincerely religious} sects which they regard as
most ~~human~~ ^{human}.

Now, it seems apparent that in the
Anglican character there are great
conflicts which are in the story of
Chaucer's indecision:

1. reputation for being a ~~staid~~ ^{staid} people
vs. basic inability to ~~accept~~ ^{accept} ~~any~~ ^{any} ~~kind~~ ^{kind} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~religion~~ ^{religion}

2. reputation for being ~~staid~~ ^{staid} vs. ~~being~~ ^{being} ~~emotional~~ ^{emotional} ~~make-up~~ ^{make-up} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~evangelical~~ ^{evangelical} religion

Under the Catholic rule of Chaucer's
era, it is ~~apparent~~ ^{apparent} that the religion was
main impression on the majority of people
was superficial. The Catholicism was
ritual and the dogma of the Church
never seemed to genuinely affect the
great mass of people, though they were ~~very~~ ^{very} ~~religious~~ ^{religious} ~~people~~ ^{people} ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~obviously~~ ^{obviously} ~~well~~ ^{well} ~~educated~~ ^{educated} ~~religiously~~ ^{religiously}.

In the light of this, the "indecent"
stories of Chaucer probably bear
strongly upon the life he saw about

him. Everyone seemed to believe in eternal damnation, but all ~~felt~~ felt that a confession before the Sacrament of Extreme Unction would be sufficient. And until that time arrived, there was a world to be enjoyed lustily and savidly with little thought of the future.

Chaucer's fabliaux probably mirror the philosophy of ~~these~~ ^{his} times quite accurately. If they do, ~~then~~ he was truly a great literary man who believed in truth and reality in his writing. Only today are a few such signs reappearing in our literature after the long Victorian-like rules which governed all literary output.

Although they lack the cleverness and wonderful humor of Chaucer's ~~was~~ Faulkner has in his own ^{placid} way attempted to reveal the truth about ~~the society~~ certain segments of the society in which he found himself, even though it turned out to be untrue in the general concept, and even in the concept of his particular society, ~~and~~ Tennessee Williams, in ~~the~~ preface to his Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, states that

his use of delicate themes and violent, vulgar language is only to depict the unpleasant truth about some members of our society and their manner of living.

Chaucer's indecency is well represented in the bold, thoroughly delightful monologue of the Wife of Bath. Here is a woman of his times slugged bare of all the graces usually attributed to members of her sex. It is surprising how close Big Daddy of Carson's Badlin Road comes to being a contemporary male Wife of Bath. Knowing that many people like Big Daddy exist today, as they always have, it seems that Chaucer's so-called indecency was not nearly that at all, but an attempt to conscientiously describe the actions of some of his own contemporaries.

The ~~other~~ fact that realism is often closely related to indecency and ~~that~~ that indecency in the theatre or in literature is almost always likely to be commercially successful does not apply ~~to~~ to the writings of Chaucer because he could never have hope to realize any material gain from his work in his lifetime.

This tends to work in Chaucer's

A large, complex, abstract drawing on lined paper. The drawing consists of a dense, tangled mass of black ink loops and swirls, resembling a chaotic scribble or a stylized, abstract figure. The lines are thick and black, creating a complex, interlocking pattern. The drawing is contained within a rectangular frame, with the lines extending to the edges of the page. The background is a light-colored, lined paper with horizontal blue lines. The overall impression is one of a spontaneous, expressive, and somewhat chaotic artistic creation.

