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Webpage Evaluation

Eng 3204

Basis for Evaluation-

Primary criteria used for website evaluation were: apparent administrative knowledge of subject matter by education and degrees, date and regularity of updates, ease of website navigation, aesthetic value and overall feel about the site.

General Information-

The Chaucer Webpage is hosted by Harvard University with the purposeful intent of furthering the studies of their own pupils and also aiding students at other institutions and various curious patrons. The site, located at <http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/>, is maintained by various Harvard faculty members, specifically Larry D. Benson, Professor of English, Emeritus, Jane Tolmie, Fellow of Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Kevin Psonak, who appears to be a technical assistant. The entire site was updated in March of 2003, but some of the pages have been updated as recently as August of 2004.

The content of the site is dictated by the above stated. Information within is partially original having been generated by the moderators, and some seems to be collected from various other resources of reputable nature and credit has been given as needed. The website explores various aspects of Chaucer's life, culture, and most importantly the Canterbury Tales. The moderators have compiled what is known of Chaucer's life and provided insight as well as several useful and working links to informative sites outside the Harvard domain in addition to being linked to the Chaucer

Metapage. Harvard also provides many other informative points of interest to aspects relating to Chaucer such as the Middle English language, literary subjects, courtly love, etc.

Perhaps the primary concern for the site however is the Canterbury Tales. All of the tales are summarized and most of them have translations from the Middle English to a more modern dialect. Below the summaries is a list of pertinent information about the tale itself, consisting of background, interesting anecdotes, links related to the subject matter, etc. A portrait of the character telling the tale from one of the manuscripts is also included as an aesthetic treat.

Overall the site is extremely navigable with links clearly marked and in proper working order. The page is also pleasing to the eye, with no bright colors, flashing images, or aggravating pop-up ads. For the discerning student looking for helpful research information on Chaucer, the Harvard site is a great place to start.