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Research Abstract

The Roles and Behaviors of a Medieval Housewife as Portrayed in Later Fourteenth Century
Verse and Prose in Relation to Historical Record

This research project is a close study of the life of a medieval housewife and utilizes poetical works and historical record to come to a more concise understanding of daily life in fourteenth century medieval London. Poetical works are both valuable and suggest many clues about daily medieval life for peasants and the rising middle class that are not found in any other historical records. Medieval scholars such as Barbara Hanawalt capitalize on the content of many literary works from the fourteenth century. Autobiographical works are instrumental and limited, but include necessary evidence about noted figures such as Margery Kemp and Christine de Pizan. Recent research and writing on the medieval housewife is also used as a guide to understanding not only social, political, and religious environments of fourteenth century medieval London, but offer insight into extracting valuable information from historical documents and works of art from this period. The objective of this project was to not only become more informed about an area of great interest, but to create a framework on which to continue performing research on a greater scale.