“Wife of Bath” Analysis Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Period\_\_\_\_

Please look over the following questions and answer them based on your reading of the “Wife of Bath’s Tale.” You MAY use your booklet. This is due tomorrow (9/18). You should fill up all of the space given to you for your responses, and your paragraph(s) should be well-constructed and organized. If you need more space, you may attach another sheet of paper.

1. It has been widely disputed by critics whether Chaucer intended to celebrate the Wife of Bath as a feminist, or condemn her for her dominant and “inappropriate” manner. In medieval literature, women are often described as being “the root of evil and sin, spurning back to Eve surrendering to the devil in Genesis” (Singer 2002). Medieval “science” even claimed that a woman’s body was “naturally cold, and constantly required the warmth of a man’s body [through] sex – this was the reason for them being dangerous sexual creatures and evil in the eyes of God as a result” (Singer 2002). Does Chaucer appear to agree with these statements, or does he instead admire Alison’s character, cleverness, and independence? Is he attempting to create a role model for women, or is he using her as a cautionary tale? Using textual evidence (quotations and/or paraphrased references), argue for ONE side of this argument. Remember – you’re considering CHAUCER’S perspective. Consider both her prologue and tale

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1. Based on your reading and interpretation, what do YOU think of Alison’s character? Do you think she is strong, or simply devious? What does she get out of her trickery? How does she use her sexual prowess? What is her identity dependent on (this can include more than one thing). This can be somewhat based more on your opinion, but you should at least use paraphrased textual evidence to back up your ideas. Consider both her prologue and tale.

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