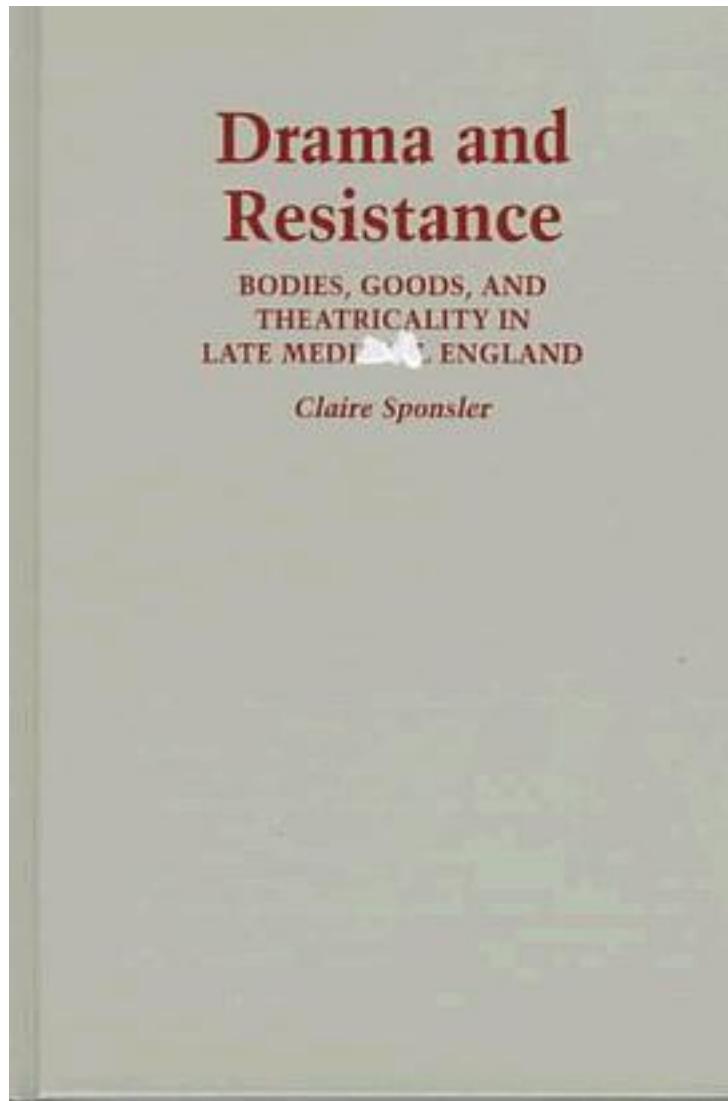


Drama and Resistance



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Provides a cultural and historical context for medieval popular drama. In *Drama and Resistance*, Claire Sponsler explores the intertwined histories of bodily subjectivity, commodity culture, and theatricality in late medieval England. In a fascinating consideration of popular drama in the period from 1350 to 1520, she argues that many types of performances during this time represented cultural evasions of the imposition of disciplinary power. The medieval theater was a social site where resistance, masked from the full scrutiny of authority by theatricality, was practiced, articulated, and enacted. Sponsler examines three key discourses of authoritarian bodily and commodity control -- clothing laws, conduct literature, and Books of Hours -- and pairs them with three kinds of theatrical performances that enact resistance to disciplining codes -- Robin Hood performances, morality plays, and Corpus Christi pageants. She considers the contradictions and inconsistencies in the repressive official discourses and analyzes the ways in which the staging of forbidden acts like cross-dressing, social and sexual misbehavior, and violence against the body challenged these discourses. Drawing on recent social theory, *Drama and Resistance* is an important contribution to medieval studies and the history of theater.

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