



## **Performance and Politics in Popular Drama: Aspects of Popular Entertainment in Theatre, Film and Television, 1800-1976**

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Since the beginning of the nineteenth-century, many forms of theatre have been called 'popular', but in the twentieth-century the term 'popular drama' has taken on definite political overtones, often indicating a repudiation of 'commercial theatre'. Does this mean that political theatre is or tries to be more attractive to more people than commercial theatre? Does it conversely mean that commercial theatre has no political effects? The articles in this book were submitted as papers for a conference on the theme of 'popular' theatre, film and television. Contributions came from people with very different types of experience: from an ex-animal trainer to a lecturer in film studies; from playwrights, directors and actors to professional critics and academics. Each author focused on a particular problem of defining drama in performance, drawing together the conditions of performance, the types of audience and the political effects of the plays or films in question. The result was a series of fruitful connections and juxtapositions that shows the remarkable continuity of the problems raised in attempts to create a popular political drama.

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