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9780-521-19932-2 - Ethics and Power in Medieval English Reformist Writing

Edwin D. Craun

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ENGLISH REFORMIST WRITING

The late medieval Church obliged all Christians to rebuke the sins of others, especially those who had power to discipline in Church and state: priests, confessors, bishops, judges, the Pope. This practice, in which the injured party had to confront the wrongdoer directly and privately, was known as fraternal correction. Edwin Craun examines how pastoral writing instructed Christians to make this corrective process effective by avoiding slander, insult, and hypocrisy. He explores how John Wyclif and his followers expanded this established practice to authorize their own polemics against mendicants and clerical wealth. Finally, he traces how major English reformist writing – *Piers Plowman*, *Mum and the Sothsegger*, and *The Book of Margery Kempe* – expanded the practice to justify their protests, to protect themselves from repressive elements in the late Ricardian and Lancastrian Church and state, and to urge their readers to mount effective protests against religious, social, and political abuses.

EDWIN D. CRAUN is Henry S. Fox, Jr. Professor of English at Washington and Lee University.

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For Marllys, Lad, and Harlan

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Oxford, Oxon., and Timber Ridge, Virginia

Editorial practices, translations, abbreviations

I modernize Middle English thorn, yogh, and *i-y-u-v* placements, whether in my transcriptions from manuscripts, in early printed books, or in modern editions. In Latin passages, I use *i* for the vowel, *j* for the consonant; *u* for the vowel, *v* for the consonant. I use modern punctuation and capitalization, and I expand contractions. I give all names in the person's vernacular, not Latin for some and English for others. I slightly modernize verses from the Douai translation of the Bible, using it throughout and occasionally modifying it to reflect how my sources read the Vulgate. Save for the Douai, all translations are mine. I use the following abbreviations:

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966–)
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Scriptorum Latinorum (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–)
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna/ Leipzig, Prague: Kommission zur Herausgabe des Corpus der lateinischen Kirchenväter, 1866–)
<i>DML</i>	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i> (London: Oxford University Press, 1975–)
EETS	Early English Text Society (o.s. for original series and e.s. for extra series)
<i>MED</i>	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i> (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956–2001)
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 2nd edn (Oxford University Press, 1989)
PL	Patrologia Latina (Paris: Jacques-Paul Migne, 1844–65)