# CONTENTS

_Acknowledgments_  

**Introduction** 1

1 The Cultural Action 8
   - Toward a Cultural Game Theory 8
   - The New Medieval Move 13
   - A Race of Four Cities: Troy, Jericho, Rome, and Jerusalem 16

2 The Medieval Self as Bankroll 34
   - _The City of God_: Otherness as a Global Parameter of Action 34
   - _The City of God_: Sameness as a Global Parameter of Action 39
   - Loss, Reiteration, Growth 46
   - The New Medieval Move Exemplified 50

3 Rules of the House 57
   - Courtly Representation as Aristocratic Competition 57
   - Investitures: A Diachronic View of the Political Action 72

4 The Poetic Action 79
   - Wars, Tournaments, Verses: The Place of Poetry at Court 79
   - Benchmarks of Performance 85
   - The Vernacular as Poetic Resource 89
   - Stars in Competition 95
CONTENTS

5 Adventure as a Cultural Wager
  Dynamics of Adventure 118
  Highlights from Chrétien de Troyes’s Erec et Énide 139
  Highlights from Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Parzival 149

6 Love as a Cultural Wager
  Dynamics of Love 161
  Highlights from Marie de France’s Lanval 176
  Highlights from Gottfried von Strassburg’s Tristan 188

7 The Modern Self in Play
  The Global as Individual 205
  Reformation Moves 208
  Enlightenment Moves 219
  A Gilded-Age Connecticut Yankee Adventures for High Stakes 230
  Emancipation, Totalitarianism, and the (Post)Modern Cultural Action 239

Bibliography 245
Index 255