

## SHAKESPEARE AND THE AMERICAN POPULAR STAGE

Shakespeare's effect on America's intellectual and artistic life has been much discussed, but what role does he play on the American popular stage? This study changes our understanding of Shakespeare's presence in American life. The book looks at how Shakespeare came to America just before the Revolutionary War. As Americans broke with Britain, they embraced Britain's playwright. Teague re-examines P. T. Barnum's attempt to buy Shakespeare's birthplace, the Astor Place Riot in which twenty-three people died, and the way both Abraham Lincoln and John Wilkes Booth regarded Shakespeare. In the history of Broadway, more musicals have drawn on Shakespeare than on any other author. Shakespearean musicals like *Kiss Me, Kate* and *West Side Story* can tell us much about America's culture, but sometimes failed musicals such as *Swingin' the Dream* can tell us more. With discussion of over twenty Shakespearean musicals, this study demonstrates that Shakespeare has always been present in popular shows.

FRANCES TEAGUE is a Meigs Professor at the University of Georgia, where she teaches in the English Department and is an affiliate member of the Women's Studies Program. Widely published, she has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Association of College and Research Libraries. She frequently directs plays in Athens, Georgia, and has a long-time involvement in the Georgia Shakespeare Festival.

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STAGE

FRANCES TEAGUE



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