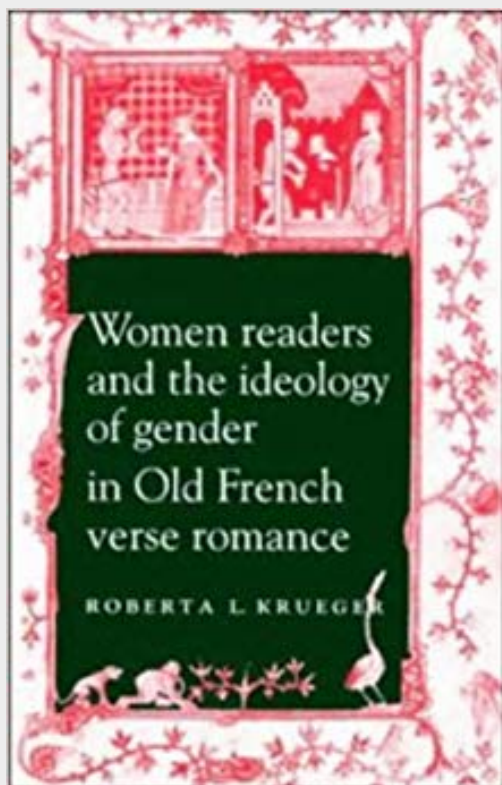


Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender in Old French Verse Romance (Cambridge Studies in French) by Roberta L. Krueger



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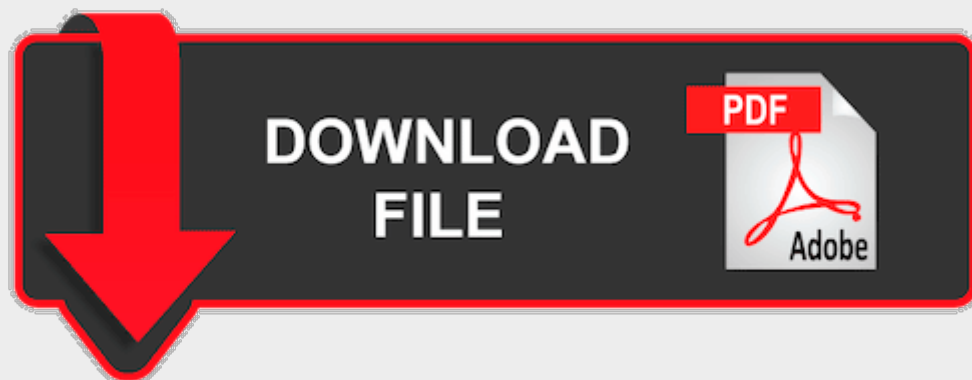
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This study focuses on the relationship between Old French verse romances and the women who formed a part of their audience, and challenges the commonly-held view that all courtly literature promoted the social welfare of the noblewomen to whom romances were dedicated or addressed. Using reader-response theory, feminist criticism and recent historical studies, Roberta Krueger provides close readings of a selection of texts, both well-known and less well-known, to show an intriguing variety of portrayals of women: misogynistic, idealizing and didactic. She suggests that romances not only taught their audiences idealized models of masculine and feminine behaviour (including a sophisticated underpinning of medieval women's loss of autonomy in the family, education and society during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries), but that many romances also invited their readers to criticise and to resist gender roles.



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