Piers Plowman and

the Poetics of Enigma

Riddles, Rhetoric, and Theology

CURTIS A. GRUENLER

University of Notre Dame Press Notre Dame, Indiana

CONTENTS

Preface and Ac	knowledgments	ix
	Introduction	1
CHAPTER 1	Language for a Theology of Participation, Theory for a Poetics of Enigma	31
	RIDDLES Enigma as Play	
CHAPTER 2	Riddling Traditions, Participatory Play, and Langland's First Vision	83
CHAPTER 3	Riddle Contests and Langland's Fourth Vision	130
	RHETORIC Enigma as Persuasion	
CHAPTER 4	Enigma in the Curriculum: Langland's Third Vision	173
CHAPTER 5	Enigmatic Authority: Langland's Second Vision	220

viii Contents

THEOLOGY Enigma as Participation

CHAPTER 6	Enigma and Participation in Langland's Fifth Vision and Julian's <i>Revelation</i>	271
CHAPTER 7	Games of Heaven, Games of Earth: Ending with Enigmas	329
	Epilogue	380
List of Abbreviations		387
Notes		388
Bibliography		
Index		555