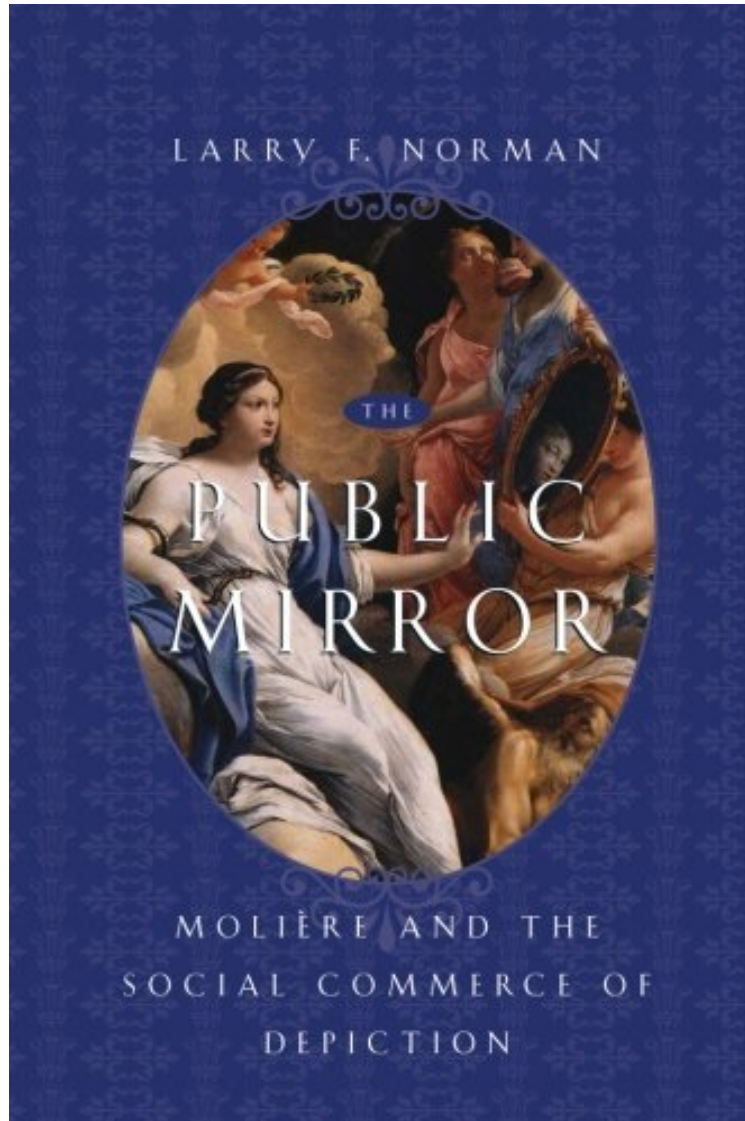


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The Public Mirror: Moliere and the Social Commerce of Depiction

Larry F. Norman

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Larry F. Norman : The Public Mirror: Moliere and the Social Commerce of Depiction before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Public Mirror: Moliere and the Social Commerce of Depiction:

Though much beloved and widely produced, Moliere's satirical comedies pose a problem for those reading or staging his works today: how can a genre associated with biting caricature and castigation deliver engaging theater? Instead of simply dismissing social satire as a foundation for Moliere's theater, as many have done, Larry F.

Norman takes seriously Moliere's claim that his satires are first and foremost effective theater. Pairing close readings of Moliere's comedies with insightful accounts of French social history and aesthetics, Norman shows how Moliere conceived of satire as a "public mirror" provoking dynamic exchange and conflict with audience members obsessed with their own images. Drawing on these tensions, Moliere portrays characters satirizing one another on stage, with their reactions providing dramatic conflict and propelling comic dialogue. By laying bare his society's system of imagining itself, Moliere's satires both enthralled and enraged his original audience and provide us with a crucial key to the classical culture of representation.

About the Author Larry F. Norman is the Frank L. Sulzberger Professor in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago.