



## The Seven Deadly Sins in the Work of Dorothy L. Sayers

By JANICE BROWN

Kent State University Press December 1998, 1998. Hardcover. Condition: New. Sayers defined the specifically Deadly Sins as 'the fundamental bad habits of mind recognized and defined by the church as the well-heads from which all sinful behavior ultimately springs.' Sin, she believed, is tied to all human experience; she was therefore deliberate about crafting stories in which sin and consequence figured prominently. All of her major characters struggle with sin: Peter and Harriet in the Wimsey novels, William of Sens in *The Zeal of Thy House*, Faustus in *The Devil to Pay*, Judas in *The Man Born to be King*. For Sayers, literature must relate holistically to the life of the reader, and therefore to his or her moral and spiritual self. She often criticized the mystery genre, for instance, because the central event, the murder, had become merely an occasion for the story, rather than a real moral evil with moral consequences. Sayers appealed as a writer in part because she perceived theology (and theology's explanation of sin) as the concrete basis of life, and made theology accessible to modern readers through real and imaginary worlds. In the words of Janice Brown, 'She especially understood the concept of Sin and...



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