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Sommario/riassunto

This book is a corpus-based study examining thou and you in three speech-related genres from 1560-1760, a crucial period in the history of second person singular pronouns, spanning the time from when you became dominant to when thou became all but obsolete. The study embraces the fields of corpus linguistics, historical pragmatics, and historical sociolinguistics. Using data drawn from the recently released A Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760 and manuscript material, the aim is to ascertain which extra-linguistic and linguistic factors highlighted by previous research appear particularly relevant in the selection and relative distribution of thou and you. Previous research on thou and you has tended to concentrate on Drama and/or been primarily qualitative in nature. Depositions in particular have hitherto received very little attention. This book is intended to help fill a gap in the literature by presenting an in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis of pronoun usage in Trials, Depositions, and, for comparative purposes, Drama Comedy.
