

John Websters The Duchess Of Malfi Blooms Modern Critical Interpretations

The plays of John Webster are read and seen more widely today than at any time since they were written - provoking much disagreement in the process. The continuing debate about his political, religious and philosophical attitudes, his formal skills and the importance of his plays for understanding the changing culture in which they were written, make Webster the most controversial of all Jacobean dramatists. This volume includes freshly collated, fully annotated and cross-referenced texts of his three best-known plays, together with introductions and a useful critical bibliography. "Webster's iconoclasm was not the lonely experience of an alienated intellectual, but part of his generation's struggle to create the future. As such, the critical energy we find in the plays was sustained, not by ideological certainty, but rather by interaction with the great complexity of thought and action—much of it negative—that constitutes a pre-revolutionary movement. If Webster was part of a dying culture, he was also—and it is this that Webster criticism has almost consistently ignored—a member of the generation that prepared the way for the revolution of 1640" (Introduction). Through detailed analysis of four plays, *The White Devil*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Devil's Law Case*, and *Appius and Virginia*, Goldberg explores the relations between Webster and aspects of Jacobean social and intellectual history. Webster's satire of princes and prelates, his iconoclastic view of traditional philosophy, his trenchant analysis of institutions are seen as part of an intellectual movement that was undermining faith in the old order. Special attention is given to Webster's theatrical representations of legal practice and legal philosophy as key manifestations of the realities of political power. Webster's dramatizations of the judgment situation are shown to embody specific commentary on the legal system of his time, commentary that ranges in orientation from anarchist to reformist to revolutionary. Webster's irreverence for traditional ideals and institutions combines with a humanist sense of man's—and woman's—potential to make an important contribution to the pre-revolutionary movement.

John Webster

**The Duchess of Malfi ; The Devil's Law-case ; A Cure for a Cuckold
The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays**

Murder Shrieks Out

A Play Written by John Webster

John Webster's play "The Duchess of Malfi" is a violent play that presents a dark, disturbing portrait of the human condition... The title character is a widow with two

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brothers: Ferdinand and the Cardinal. In the play's opening act, the brothers try to persuade their sister not to seek a new husband. Her resistance to their wishes sets in motion a chain of secrecy, plotting, and violence. The relationship between Ferdinand and the Duchess is probably one of the most unsettling brother-sister relationships in literature. The play is full of both onstage killings and great lines. The title character is one of stage history's intriguing female characters; she is a woman whose desires lead her to defy familial pressure. Another fascinating and complex character is Bosola, who early in the play is enlisted to act as a spy. Overall, a compelling and well-written tragedy. --Michael J. Mazza at Amazon.com.

Second volume of plays in this edition of the works of John Webster.

John Webster, Renaissance Dramatist

John Webster, The duchess of malfi

A Critical Analysis of John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi

Screenplay Adaptation of John Webster's the Duchess of Malfi

The Complete Works of John Webster

Of John Webster's life almost nothing is known. The dates 1580-1625 given for his birth and death are conjectural inferences, about which the best that can be said is that no known facts contradict them. The first notice of Webster so far discovered shows that he was collaborating in the production of plays for the theatrical manager, Henslowe, in 1602, and of such collaboration he seems to have done a considerable amount. Four plays exist which he wrote alone, "The White Devil," "The Duchess of Malfi," "The Devil's Law-Case," and "Appius and Virginia." "The Duchess of Malfi" was published in 1623, but the date of writing may have been as early as 1611. It is based on a story in Painter's "Palace of Pleasure," translated from the Italian novelist, Bandello; and it is entirely possible that it has a foundation in fact. In any case, it portrays with a terrible vividness one side of the court life of the Italian Renaissance; and its picture of the fierce quest of pleasure, the recklessness of crime, and the worldliness of the great princes of the Church finds only too ready corroboration in the annals of the time. Webster's tragedies come toward the close of the great series of tragedies of blood and revenge, in which "The Spanish Tragedy" and "Hamlet" are landmarks, but before decadence can fairly be said to have set in. He, indeed, loads his scene with horrors almost past the point which modern taste can bear; but the intensity of his dramatic situations, and his superb power of flashing in a single line a light into the recesses of the human heart at the crises of supreme emotion, redeems him from mere sensationalism, and places his best things in the first rank of dramatic writing.

This volume offers John Webster's two great Jacobean tragedies, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, together with his brilliant tragicomedy, *The Devil's Law-Case*, and the comedy written with William Rowley, *A Cure for a Cuckold*. Webster is a radically and creatively experimental dramatist. His tragedies deploy shifting dramatic perspectives which counteract and challenge conventional moral judgements, while the predominantly gentler tone of his comedies and tragicomedies responds inventively to contemporary changes in dramatic taste and fashion. All four plays display the provocative intelligence of a profoundly original playwright. Under the

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General Editorship of Michael Corder of the University of York, the texts of the plays have been newly edited and are presented with modernized spelling and punctuation. In addition, there is detailed annotation, a glossary, and a critical introduction which traces Webster's artistic development, defends him against charges of overindulgence in violence, and explores his sophisticated staging and scenic forms.

John Webster - The Duchess of Malfi

The Dramatic Works of John Webster: The white devil. The duchess of Malfi

"The Duchess of Malfi", John Webster

Acting the Title Role in John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi

The White Devil, The Duchess of Malfi, The Devil's Law Case

How is this book unique? Font adjustments & biography included Unabridged (100% Original content) Illustrated About The Duchess of Malfi by John Webster The Duchess of Malfi is a macabre, tragic play written by the English dramatist John Webster in 1612-13. It was first performed privately at the Blackfriars Theatre, then before a more general audience at The Globe, in 1613-14. Published in 1623, the play is loosely based on events that occurred between about 1508 and 1513. The Duchess was Giovanna d'Aragona, Duchess of Amalfi (d. 1511), whose father, Enrico d'Aragona, Marquis of Gerace, was an illegitimate son of Ferdinand I of Naples. As in the play, she secretly married Antonio Beccadelli di Bologna after the death of her first husband Alfonso I Piccolomini, Duke of Amalfi. The play begins as a love story, with a Duchess who marries beneath her class, and ends as a nightmarish tragedy as her two brothers exact their revenge, destroying themselves in the process. Jacobean drama continued the trend of stage violence and horror set by Elizabethan tragedy, under the influence of Seneca. The complexity of some of its characters, particularly Bosola and the Duchess, plus Webster's poetic language, ensure the play is often considered among the greatest tragedies of English renaissance drama.

Through The Duchess of Malfi Acts 1 and 2, this 12-hour free course explored marriage for love in the Malfi court and the consequent social conflicts.

The Duchess of Malfi, The White Devil, The Broken Heart and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore

The Failures of the Family in John Webster's the Duchess of Malfi and the White Devil

The Tragic Satire of John Webster

Imagery and Characterization in John Webster's The White Devil and the Duchess of Malfi

The Art of John Webster

Giovanna d'Aragona, Duchess of Amalfi, widowed in 1498, gave birth to a son five months later. She was twenty-one years old. Soon after, she secretly married her household steward, bore him three children, and-for twelve years-as regent of the Duchy of Amalfi, concealed both marriage and family from her powerful, corrupt brothers, who would eventually banish her and order her imprisonment. In 1510, in an effort to elude her brothers, the duchess, along with her maid and youngest children, went on a pilgrimage to Loreto in the hope of joining her husband and older son in nearby Ancona. The effort, however, failed. The duchess, her maid, her son, and infant daughter, presumably held captive in the fortress Torre dello Ziro, mysteriously disappeared. These events inspired John Webster's play The Duchess of Malfi.

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The Art of John Webster, first published in 1972, is a study of the three extant plays of Webster known to be solely his work. These plays are seen as attempts to achieve in literature the effects of the baroque, a term which related Webster to the larger developments of European art. Their content is analysed in terms of a consistent opposition between evil and the law. The book seeks to re-establish a base for the claims that must be made for Webster as a serious artist. This title will be of interest to students of literature and drama.

Heaven Fashioned Us of Nothing; And We Strive to Bring Ourselves to Nothing

The duchess of Malfi

Implicit Characterization in John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi and the White Devil

A Study of the Plays of John Webster

The Works of John Webster

Transgressive and darkly brilliant, the drama of John Webster has long been recognised as one of the crowning glories of the English Renaissance. But this apparently idiosyncratic individual, fascinated by insanity, corruption, and the macabre, was also a successful businessman, involved in trade networks beyond the theatre, and writing most of his plays in apparently amicable collaboration with a host of other dramatists. Such is the enigma of John Webster; caricatured as a pessimist obsessed with morbidity and death, Webster's true significance lies in his ability to perceive that the darkness at the heart of humanity must co-exist with the routine and the social interaction of everyday life. John Webster, Renaissance Dramatist locates Webster's remarkable plays within the context of the culture from which they sprang. Examining the uncertain political, religious, and economic climate of Jacobean London, this book offers a guide to one of the most distinctive, yet most elusive, voices of Renaissance England. Introducing readers to both the great tragedies, The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil, and the lesser-known works, this book explains why Webster has fascinated and horrified generations of critics and theatregoers, and argues that the relevance and resonance of Webster's drama continues to grow. This volume offers John Webster's two great Jacobean tragedies, The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi, together with his brilliant tragicomedy, The Devil's Law-Case, and the comedy written with William Rowley, A Cure for a Cuckold. All four plays display the provocative intelligence of a profoundly original playwright. A critical introduction defends Webster

against charges of over-indulgence in violence, and explores his sophisticated staging and scenic forms.

***John Webster's "The White Devil" and "The Duchess of Malfi".
The Duchess of Malfi (Norton Critical Editions)***

***A Study Guide for John Webster's "The Duchess of Malfi"
The Duchess of Malfi***

A Study Guide for John Webster's ""The Duchess of Malfi""

A major revision of this classic revenge tragedy. The comprehensive introduction covers recent developments in criticism and key theatre productions, as well as relating the play to other early modern tragedies. The edition gives students and teachers a reliable, annotated text and a stimulating overview of the play's context, critical perspectives and an exploration of its stage history. An invaluable resource for study and performance.

John Webster is known primarily for his two Jacobean tragedies, *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*. Much of the detail and chronology of his life that led to these two pivotal works is, however, unknown. His father, a carriage maker also named John Webster, married a blacksmith's daughter, Elizabeth Coates, on November 4th, 1577, and it is likely that Webster was born within a year or two in or near London. The family lived in St. Sepulchre's parish. Both his father and his uncle, Edward Webster, were Freemen of the Merchant Taylors' Company and Webster attended Merchant Taylors' School in Suffolk Lane, London. Some accounts say he began to study law but nothing is certain although there are some legal aspects to his later works to suggest this may have been so. By 1602, Webster was employed working as part of various teams of playwrights on history plays, though unfortunately most were never printed and therefore do not survive. These include a tragedy *Caesar's Fall* (written with Michael Drayton, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton and Anthony Munday), and a collaboration with Thomas Dekker; *Christmas Comes but Once a Year* (1602). This factory line assembly of plays may seem rather odd to us today but plays then ran for much shorter durations and consequently a steady supply had to be assured. Webster's relationship with Dekker seems to have been a good one. Together they wrote *Sir Thomas Wyatt*, printed in 1607, although it is thought first performed in 1602 and two city comedies, *Westward Ho!* in 1604 and *Northward Ho!* in 1605. It seems Webster also

adapted, in 1604, John Marston's *The Malcontent* for staging by the King's Men. On March 18th, 1606 Webster married the 17-year-old Sara Peniall at St Mary's Church, Islington. Sara was 7 months pregnant and marrying during Lent required the issuing of a special permit, hence the certainty of the date. Their first child, John, was baptised at the parish of St Dunstan-in-the-West on March 8th, 1606. Records show that on the death of a neighbour, who died in 1617, several bequests were made to the Webster family and it is therefore thought that other children were born to the couple. Despite his ability to write comedy, and to collaborate with others, Webster is remembered best for his sole authorship on two brooding English tragedies based on Italian sources. *The White Devil*, retells the intrigues involving Vittoria Accoramboni, an Italian woman assassinated at the age of 28. It was performed at the open-air Red Bull Theatre in 1612 but was unsuccessful, perhaps being too high brow for a working-class audience. In 1614 *The Duchess of Malfi* was first performed by the King's Men, most probably in the indoor Blackfriars Theatre and to a more high-brow audience. It proved to be more successful. The play *Guise*, based on French history, was also written but him but no text has survived. Webster wrote one more play on his own: *The Devil's Law Case* (c. 1617-1619), a tragicomedy. He continued to write thereafter but always in collaboration and usually city comedies; *Anything for a Quiet Life* (c. 1621), with Thomas Middleton, and *A Cure for a Cuckold* (c. 1624), with William Rowley. In 1624, he also co-wrote a topical play about a recent scandal, *Keep the Widow Waking* (with John Ford, Rowley and Dekker). The play itself is lost, although its plot is known from a court case. There is also some certainty that he contributed to the tragicomedy *The Fair Maid of the Inn* with John Fletcher, John Ford, and Phillip Massinger. His *Appius and Virginia*, was probably written with Thomas Heywood, and is of uncertain date. It is believed, mainly from Thomas Heywood's *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* (licensed 7 November 1634) that speaks of him in the past tense that John Webster had died at some point in that year of 1634. John Webster's *The White Devil* and the *Duchess of Malfi*

The White Devil

A Critical Edition of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*
Common Law Ideology in John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*

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A Play

A Study Guide for John Webster's "The Duchess of Malfi," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Drama For Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Drama For Students for all of your research needs.

Building on the formula of York Notes, this Advanced series introduces students to more sophisticated analysis and wider critical perspectives. The notes enable students to appreciate contrasting interpretations of the text and to develop their own critical thinking. Key features include: study methods; an introduction to the text; summaries with critical notes; themes and techniques; textual analysis of key passages; author biography; historical and literary background; modern and historical critical approaches; chronology; and glossary of literary terms.

Between Worlds

A Production of John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi

John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi

The Stage History of John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi

The Selected Plays of John Webster

A collection of essays on Webster's tragic drama "The Duchess of Malfi" arranged in chronological order of publication.

The great English Renaissance tragedy—violent, powerful, unforgettable—in a freshly edited and annotated student edition. "Neill's edit of the play is very well done. ... If there's a more knowledgeable or erudite unraveling of the play, I haven't seen it."
—Steve Sohmer, *Comitatus* This Norton Critical Edition of John Webster's 1612–13 tragedy offers a newly edited and annotated text together with a full introduction and illustrative materials intended for student readers. The Duchess of Malfi's themes of love, loyalty, and betrayal have resonated through the centuries, making this a perennially popular play with audiences and readers alike. This volume includes a generous selection of supporting materials, among them Webster's likely sources for the play (William Painter, George Whetstone, Simon Goulart, and Thomas Beard) as well as related works by Webster and George Wither on widows, funerals, and memorializing death. A generous selection from Mark H. Curtis's classic essay, "The Alienated Intellectuals of Early Stuart England," tells readers as much about the character of Bosola as it does about his creator. Henry Fitzgeffrey (1617) and Horatio Busino (1618) provide early responses to the play. "Criticism" is thematically organized to provide readers with a clear sense of The Duchess of Malfi's central themes of dramaturgy; the politics of family, court, and religion; and gender. Also included are essays on contemporary re-imaginings of the play and its critical reception over time. Contributors include Don D. Moore, Inga-Stina Ewbank, Christina Luckyj, Barbara Correll, D. C. Gunby, Lee Bliss, Rowland Wymer, Brian Chalk, Theodora Jankowski, and Pascale Aebischer. A selected bibliography is also included.

A Critical Study

Twin Structures in John Webster's The Duchess of Malfy

A new volume of the greatest revenge tragedies of the seventeenth-century stage These four plays, written during the reigns of James I and Charles I, took revenge tragedy in dark and ambiguous new directions. In The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil, John Webster explores power, sex, and corruption in the Italian court, creating two unforgettable anti-heroines. In The Broken Heart, John Ford questions the value of emotional repression as his characters attempt to subdue their desires and

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hatreds in ancient Greece. Finally, Ford's masterpiece 'Tis Pity She's a Whore explores the taboo themes of incest and forbidden love in a daring reworking of Romeo and Juliet. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.