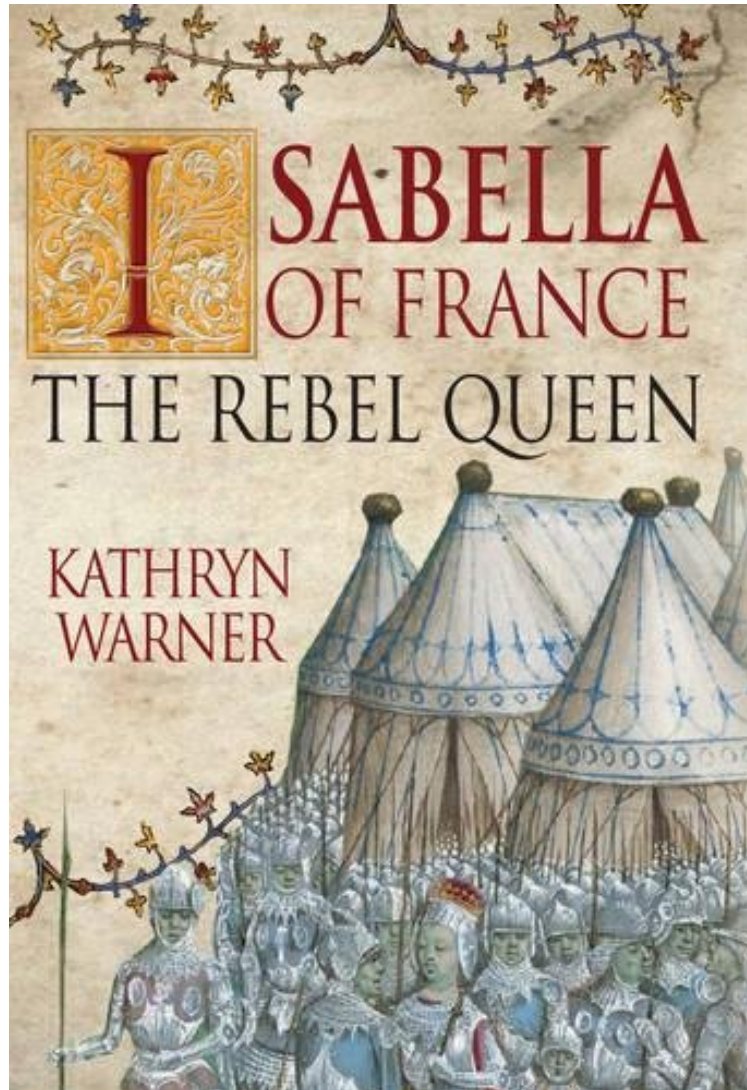


(Free read ebook) Isabella of France: The Rebel Queen

Isabella of France: The Rebel Queen

Kathryn Warner

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Kathryn Warner : Isabella of France: The Rebel Queen before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Isabella of France: The Rebel Queen:

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Another Brilliant Biography from Kathryn WarnerBy Ami JohnsonI discovered Kathryn Warner following my reading of a very thorough, yet decidedly one sided, biography of Queen Isabella. Looking to learn more about this poor, saintly Queen and her philandering homosexual husband, I stumbled upon Kathryn's blog of Edward II, and subsequently her biography of him. Here I found a very different perspective on the lives of both Edward II and his Queen, Isabella. More importantly, I also discovered a biographer who neither painted her subjects as near perfect individuals whose utter misfortune was the fault of anyone and

everyone but themselves, nor did she blacken the character of others to whitewash the flaws of her protagonists. She achieved this brilliantly in her biography, 'Edward II: The Unconventional King', and she's done it again with her exquisite and meticulously researched telling of the life of this most intriguing of queens in 'Isabella of France: The Rebel Queen'. As a lover of medieval European history, and especially that of the Plantagenet dynasty, this book had me hooked from the first page to the last. Being somewhat familiar with this period, I noticed that Ms. Warner made a special point to give names and familial connections regarding key players more than once. Anyone who's ever tried reading a book involving the names and titles of English nobility will be most appreciative of this. Many nobles were often referred to by multiple names, for example, in his lifetime Edward II was referred to as Edward of Caernarfon, Count of Ponthieu and Montreuil, Prince of Wales, Earl of Chester, Duke of Aquitaine, and Lord of Ireland. Couple that with the fact that family names were often used, resulting in two or more people with the same name holding the same title in a short period of time, and it's difficult to keep track of who's who. The author does an admirable job of reminding us exactly who she's talking about and their relationship to the principles, without overdoing it for those readers well versed in the subject. I'd also be remiss if I didn't point out that some readers not used to historical biographies may find some of the information tedious, especially concerning account books. This is usually to be expected with any educated biography, and I've been bored myself in similar books. However, perhaps because it's given in measured amounts, rather than page after page of account ledgers, or maybe because what IS pointed out tends to bring the personalities alive, it didn't bother me here. The first section of the book may feel to some to be more about Edward II than Isabella. While his presence is certainly there, I think it important to remember that much of what we know of Isabella's early life is inextricably tied to that of her husband. Historians are not even entirely certain of her year of birth, so unimportant was she, even as the daughter of the King of France, until her marriage made her Queen of England. More importantly, at least in my humble opinion, is that the actions and personality of her husband so shaped Isabella's own perspective that it's impossible to tell her story without also telling his. That being said, this is still very much Isabella's story. Ms. Warner paints a vivid picture, backed by years of research, never simply relying on information from previous historians without looking to back that up herself. This is what sets this biography apart from previous iterations of Isabella's life. With most figures from times long past, it's impossible to know them as we'd like to, for even if we have an abundance of correspondence, it's inevitable that we project our own emotions and modern behavioural ideals onto them. Edward II does not seem to have been an easy person to communicate with, even when things were going well, and I appreciate the loyalty and genuine affection Isabella displayed from about age 16 until her own position and honour were threatened to such an extent that she started down a path that led to the very destruction of that which she was trying to save. As to the question of his sexuality... I don't know that's even possible to define in modern terms. Certainly it was a grievous sin according to the church, but Edward's feelings, for Gaveston especially, went beyond even marital love to the point of obsession. This is a fact backed up by many sources. Whether or not their relationship was one of a sexual nature seems less important than the impact his infatuations had on his ability to rule. I believe Isabella recognised this for what it was when Hugh the Younger wormed his way into the king's affections, and to Hugh's credit, or rather discredit, he saw Isabella as a threat to his ambitions, and rightly so. This is where the book really starts to come alive for me. Without seeming to take sides, the author does, unfortunately of necessity, spend a fair bit of time dispelling rumours from centuries past, but is ultimately able to get as close as possible to the truth of events with the information currently available. It pleases me to no end to have found a reasoned, academic historian who seems to write with no agenda beyond telling the story of this fascinating Queen. I greatly enjoyed this book! Ms. Warner writes with genuine affection for her subjects without shying away from their imperfections. A truly excellent history on a subject about which much misinformation exists. I hope everyone interested in this period, or Isabella in particular, will read this book, and we can put to bed at last the 'question' of Edward III's paternity, or the infamous red hot poker. I hope this isn't the last we hear from Kathryn Warner. I know it's beyond her area of expertise, but I'd dearly love such a balanced and unbiased look at John of Gaunt! I'm dreaming, of course! In any case, kudos on another exceptional biography!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. wasn't bad at all By Peggy M. Baker Warner's first book, on Edward II, wasn't bad at all. It was thoroughly researched and presented aspects of Edward II that have, heretofore, been underplayed. Unfortunately, Warner was frustratingly hesitant to reach conclusions as to the why of Edward's behavior. In Isabella, she is far more confident and sure-footed and I enjoyed it so much more! Admittedly, Warner does come down rather hard on writers of fiction who do what writers of fiction should do by the very nature of their genre, namely use their imaginations. Her pointed critiques of nonfiction historians, however, are well deserved. Warner herself is careful to give sources and to point out unknowns, and ambiguities. Isabella does not, therefore, read as a smooth narrative. That is, however, due to the nature of the sources and Warner's refusal to slide through issues that call for closer examination. Isabella is a far more credible book for it!

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Edward II continuously sucks all the air out of her story with his ... By Craig D. Newhouse Isabella of France is a difficult subject to write on for a couple of reasons. First, many details of her life are uncertain. There is precious little original material to give us a sense of her personality, thoughts and intentions across the arc of her life and there is no portrait or a physical description available. Second, her hapless husband, Edward II continuously sucks all the air out of her story with his eccentric behavior and

misrule. To her credit, Kathryn Warner uses sound historic principles and reminds readers continuously that other histories and historic traditions concerning Isabella are largely fiction and supposition based on earlier biographical errors. However, a little more narrative storytelling would have made this history much more readable. That is my main complaint with the book. It is very well researched and on a very interesting subject, but it was a difficult read because of the choppiness of the author's writing style. Most maddening to me, she always stops the narrative to describe the mind-bending details of the ridiculously complex familial relations of French and English aristocracy. Everyone is related, it seems, in one degree or another and it bogs down the progression of the history more than all that begetting in the Bible.

Isabella of France married Edward II in January 1308, and afterwards became one of the most notorious women in English history. In 1325, she was sent to her homeland to negotiate a peace settlement between her husband and her brother Charles IV, king of France. She refused to return. Instead, she began a relationship with her husband's deadliest enemy, the English baron Roger Mortimer. With the king's son and heir, the future Edward III, under their control, the pair led an invasion of England which ultimately resulted in Edward II's forced abdication in January 1327. Isabella and Mortimer ruled England during Edward III's minority until he overthrew them in October 1330. A rebel against her own husband and king, and regent for her son, Isabella was a powerful, capable and intelligent woman. She forced the first ever abdication of a king in England, and thus changed the course of English history. Examining Isabella's life with particular focus on her revolutionary actions in the 1320s, this book corrects the many myths surrounding her and provides a vivid account of this most fascinating and influential of women.

A thorough biography which gets to the heart of the personality of Queen Isabella, much-maligned consort of King Edward II of England. The author clears her way through several centuries of gossip, innuendo and lurid embroidery of stark facts and offers us a painstakingly-presented portrait of a medieval life that will surely render many earlier biographies redundant. (The Bookbag) About the Author Kathryn Warner holds two degrees in medieval history from the University of Manchester. She is considered a foremost expert on Edward II and an article from her on the subject was published in the *English Historical*. She has run a website about him since 2005 and a Facebook page about him since 2010 and has carved out a strong online presence as an expert on Edward II and the fourteenth century in general. Kathryn teaches Business English as a foreign language and lives between Dusseldorf and Cumbria.