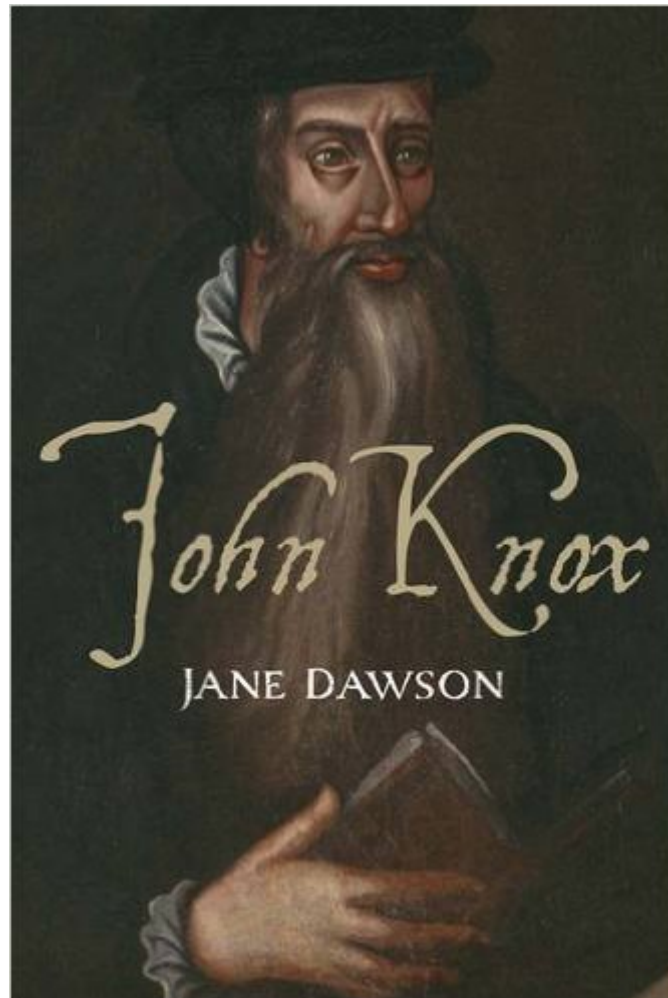


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John Knox



Synopsis

Jane Dawson has written the definitive life of John Knox, a leader of the Protestant Reformation in sixteenth-century Scotland. Based in large part on previously unavailable sources, including the recently discovered papers of Knox's close friend and colleague Christopher Goodman, Dawson's biography challenges the traditionally held stereotype of this founder of the Presbyterian denomination as a strident and misogynist religious reformer whose influence rarely extended beyond Scotland. She maintains instead that John Knox relied heavily on the support of his "ægodly sisters" and conferred as well as argued with Mary, Queen of Scots. He was a proud member of the European community of Reformed Churches and deeply involved in the religious Reformations within England, Ireland, France, Switzerland, and the Holy Roman Empire. Casting a surprising new light on the public and private personas of a highly complex, difficult, and hugely compelling individual, Dawson's fascinating study offers a vivid, fully rounded portrait of this renowned Scottish preacher and prophet who had a seismic impact on religion and society.

Book Information

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press; Reprint edition (July 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300219709

ISBN-13: 978-0300219708

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.1 x 7.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (6 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

In Scotland, John Knox is thought of as a misogynistic, hellfire-and-damnation preaching, old killjoy, who is responsible for the fairly joyless version of Protestantism that has blighted our country for hundreds of years. Well, that's how I think of him anyway! Father of the Scottish Reformation, he is notorious for being the author of 'The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women'. In this new biography, Jane Dawson sets out, not so much to overturn this impression of Knox, but to show that there was more to him than this. She tells us that new material has recently

been uncovered amongst the papers of Christopher Goodman, a fellow Reformed preacher and long-term friend of Knox. This material, she suggests, throws a different light on his personality, while changing some of the facts known about his life. Dawson writes very well, with no unnecessary academic jargon, making the book an enjoyable read. In structure, it's a straightforward biography following a linear timeline. Not having read any previous biographies of Knox, I'm not in a position to comment on whether the new material makes a significant difference to what was already known about him, but I certainly found that I learned a good deal, not just about Knox, but about the history of the Reformation in Scotland, England and Europe. Starting with his childhood, Dawson takes us through Knox's early career as a priest within the Catholic Church and, as she does at all points, sets his story well within the context of the period.

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