



0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A noble lady indeedBy CustomerAn immensely intellectual history of an interesting individual who defied common conceptions of the era of the role of ladies in society. She is no bastard. A noble lady indeed. "He" (or she) "who is honest is noble whatever his" (or her) "birth." (Alice Cary).

In the first major book in four decades on Caterina Sforza (1463-1509), Joyce de Vries investigates the famous noblewoman's cultural endeavors, and explores the ways in which gender, culture, and consumption practices were central to the invention of the self in early modern Italy. Sforza commissioned elaborate artistic and architectural works, participated in splendid civic and religious rituals, and collected a dazzling array of clothing, jewelry, and household goods. By engaging in these realms of cultural production, de Vries suggests, Sforza manipulated masculine and feminine norms of behavior and effectively promoted her social and political agendas. Drawing on visual evidence, inventories, letters, and contemporary texts, de Vries offers a penetrating new interpretation of women's contributions to early modern culture. She explains the correlations between prescriptive literature and women's actions and reveals the mutability of gender roles in the princely courts. De Vries's analysis of Sforza's posthumous legend suggests that what we see as "the Renaissance" was as much a historical invention as a coherent moment in historical time.

Winner, CAA Millard Meiss Publication Fund Grant 'Caterina Sforza remains a little understood character. This book provides a very rounded account of her life, dispelling or unravelling the many myths that have grown up around her without removing the fascination of her life. De Vries's book allows us to see Caterina in multiple contexts, analysing architecture, material culture as well as her spiritual and humanist patronage. This is a detailed, evocative study that is also a pleasure to read.' Evelyn Welch, Queen Mary University of London, UK '... this book is a well-written and useful contribution to the field of Renaissance studies, not only because it makes available an up-to-date account of Caterina Sforza for the English-speaking world, but also because it sheds much light on Renaissance production and consumption of serially manufactured goods, and therewith on the kind of material culture that, in the end, was much more widespread than the few paintings by famous artists that art history has focused on for such a long time.' Sehepunkte 'This is an interesting and persuasive book that throws light on the central importance of luxury goods in the construction of nobility and the pursuit of status in early modern Europe. De Vries's very welcome analysis of Caterina Sforza's cultural self-fashioning whets our appetite for a new assessment of her unusually autonomous political role in a very troubled period of Italian history.' ParergonAbout the AuthorJoyce de Vries is an Associate Professor of Art History at Auburn University, USA