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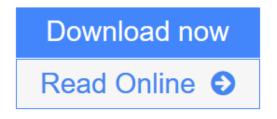
Stephen D. Kolsky

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Composed in the 1360s, Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris* (Famous Women) was the first attempt at female biography in the history of post-classical Western literature. However, its humanistic credentials coexist uneasily with the remnants of medieval misogyny. This book - the first full-length study of *De mulieribus claris* in English - argues that it is essential to take into account the ideological complexities of early humanism confronted with the «woman question». It seeks to unravel the difficulties of the text, looking at its genesis, sources, relations to other writings - including Boccaccio's vernacular works - its political dimensions, and its structure and methodology, to shed light on Boccaccio the humanist rewriting and rethinking his previous attitudes toward women.

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