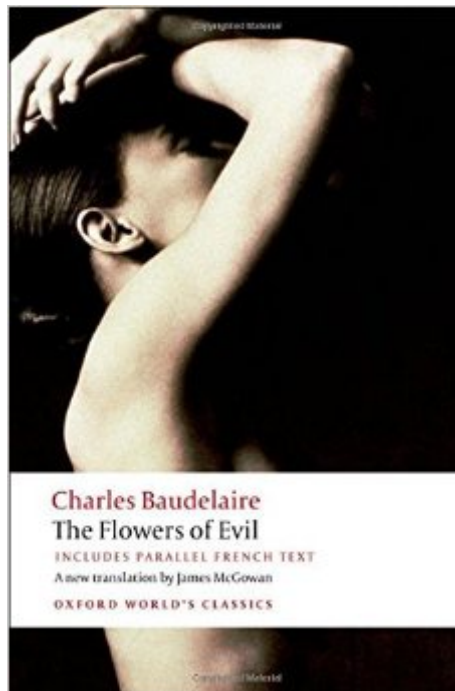


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The Flowers Of Evil (Oxford World's Classics) (English And French Edition)



Synopsis

The Flowers of Evil, which T.S. Eliot called the greatest example of modern poetry in any language, shocked the literary world of nineteenth century France with its outspoken portrayal of lesbian love, its linking of sexuality and death, its unremitting irony, and its unflinching celebration of the seamy side of urban life. Including the French texts and comprehensive explanatory notes to the poems, this extraordinary body of love poems restores the six poems originally banned in 1857, revealing the richness and variety of the collection. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

has really messed up these reviews of The Flowers of Evil, which refer to many different translations and editions. The Kindle edition (horrible, incomplete, badly, formatted) has nothing to do with any of the published translations. It should be avoided. The Oxford World Classics edition, which is supposedly under review, does not have a hardback edition; it exists in paperback only, and is translated by James McGowan in verse form, with French and English on facing pages and does not have formatting problems. There is an introduction by Jonathan Culler. One review supposedly of this edition in fact describes a prose translation of the Flowers of Evil by Keith Waldrop (published

by WEsleyan University Press), a very different book. The translation by McIntyre is another edition altogether. It would be helpful if reviewers would specify in their review which translation they are actually reviewing.

Every translation of poetry is a compromise - on the one hand, the translator wants to "carry over" (the literal meaning of "translation") the poet's words and meaning exactly, but on the other hand, the translator also wants to create a poem that is as beautiful as the original! It is not an easy task. McGowan's 1993 translation, into rhyming and metrical English verse, leans to the "literal" end of this spectrum. He renders Baudelaire's words, images, and verse closely enough that the reader can get a pretty reliable idea of the original. Although this is a faithful translation that stays away from "poetic license" and flights of fancy, it still reads well in English. As an example of its acceptance in the world of Baudelaire studies, McGowan's translation is the one that is used by "The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire" (ed. Rosemary Lloyd, 2005) for all quotations from *Les Fleurs du Mal*. If I could only have one English-language translation of Baudelaire in my library, this would be a good first choice.

This edition of "Flowers of Evil" contains all of the poems, not in their original order. However, ample introductory material and two tables of contents allows the reader to see what the work was when it was first published. The poems themselves cover many subjects in traditional symbolist style, from cats to gypsies to corpses to a whole section on wine. A must for any student of poetry. However, if you're looking for a translation that is true word for word and does not attempt to preserve the meter and rhyme, this is not the book for you. McIntyre does a fabulous job tweaking the English to preserve poetic structure, but for students of French, and those interested in doing their own translations, other editions are preferable.

Charles Baudelaire's poetry is some of the best poetry ever written. He explores a number of different themes, often focusing on his personal experiences and emotions. To those of us who have suffered in life, one can easily relate to a lot of the feelings he felt. There are many hidden messages in the poetry, and the language is very rich and educated. You can get a lot of different interpretations out of these poems, which make them all the more relevant to the reader. The best thing about this book is the fact that it features both the original French and an English translation, side by side. For those who are fluent or well versed in French, this is a dream come true. The translations are expertly done, and great care has been done to preserve the rhyme schemes

without losing the meaning of the poems.

This review is for the kindle version of the Oxford World's Classics edition. It's an unreadable mess. The French and English versions are all jumbled together. Do not buy.

I thought to myself, "Oh, I will shell out a few bucks for the Oxford World Classics edition. They will certainly have the best translation and formatting!" Well, I think the translation is pretty good, but the formatting is terrible. It's plainly obvious that they just took the print edition, converted it to Kindle, and called it good. There is a french version of the poem preceding the english version but it will be an arbitrary length. The formatting is such that you have to scan the french part carefully to catch where the start of the english is, often mid-poem it goes from french to english. Depending on the formatting of the poem this can happen without even a line break in between. I am getting skilled at detecting english words among french, but this is not increasing my enjoyment of the poetry. There is no reason it couldn't be presented with an entire poem in french followed by it's english translation, apart from laziness of the publisher. I think such a seminal work deserves better.

Fans of Edgar Allen Poe, Bukowski, The Story of the Eye, and Tom Waits will likely enjoy this morbid venture into debauchery and death. The poems are not beautiful or pleasant. I am still ambivalent as to whether or not I truly like them. For the curious, they are worth the read. There is not too much variation in the tone, subject matter, or style throughout the book. Although many of his poems are available online, it is worth it to me to enjoy poetry from an actual book.

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