

10-1-2017

The storm before the storm: the beginning of the end of the Roman Republic, Mike Duncan (book review)

Kathleen McCallister

William & Mary, krmccallister@wm.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/librariespubs>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McCallister, Kathleen, The storm before the storm: the beginning of the end of the Roman Republic, Mike Duncan (book review) (2017). *Library Journal*, 142(16), 84.
<https://scholarworks.wm.edu/librariespubs/16>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the William & Mary Libraries at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in W&M Libraries Publications by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@wm.edu.

folks who want to join start-ups and figure out the best entry point”). After a brief stint in consulting, the author of *Mastering the VC Game* worked his way up the start-up ladder, cofounded an early-stage venture capital firm, and teaches business administration at Harvard Business School. This new book provides a concise description of six of the seven major start-up job functions: product manager, business development manager, marketing, growth manager, sales, and finance (omitting the seventh—engineering—which is “expertly covered in many other books”). Each chapter contains a description of the job function, the attributes of successful employees, brief profiles of one or two professionals, and recommended resources. The author addresses the difference in roles at start-ups vs. more mature companies and concludes with a chapter on the job search process, which highlights the importance of networking. **VERDICT** A valuable resource for career counselors, business instructors, and both new and experienced professionals aspiring to become “joiners.”—**Alan Farber, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill**

Mautz, Scott. *Find the Fire: Ignite Your Inspiration—and Make Work Exciting Again*. AMACOM. Oct. 2017. 240p. illus. notes. index. ISBN 9780814438220.

\$24.95; ebk. ISBN 9780814438237. CAREERS
Mautz (CEO, Profound Performance; *Make It Matter*) presents a holistic approach to battling the soul-crushing feeling of being stuck in a bad job. When we fail to find meaning in our jobs or become bored, disconnected, or stuck, we tend to look for greener pastures only to begin the whole cycle again. What if we were able to identify exactly what happened between that day we quivered through our job interview to our most recent “case of the Mondays?” Mautz introduces nine forces, or “anti-muses,” that drain our inspiration (including fear, boredom, loss of control, and disconnectedness). Chapter by chapter, he presents actionable suggestions and alternatives rooted in a strong bibliography of research. Along with the advice are meaningful anecdotes that run the gamut from Silicon Valley titans to the Clash’s Joe Strummer. Folded in with the sound career advice is a good amount of humor and encouragement. No overly simple trademarked solutions are presented, but rather a perspective-changing series of advice and exercises. **VERDICT** Readers feeling stuck at work will find at least one technique here to rekindle their passion.—**Jennifer Clifton, Indiana State Lib., Indianapolis**

Vanity Fair’s Schools for Scandal: The Inside Dramas at 16 of America’s Most

Elite Campuses—Plus Oxford!

S. & S. Aug. 2017. 400p. ed. by Graydon Carter. ISBN 9781501173745. \$27; ebk. ISBN 9781501173752. ED

As *Vanity Fair* editor Carter explains in this book’s introduction: “every school is a compact world unto itself,” which makes them “natural targets of journalistic opportunity.” The past decade has seen voluminous reportage on elite schools in crisis. In this volume, the author brings together a variety of such articles by *Vanity Fair* writers. The work is helpfully organized to highlight different but equally embarrassing “spots on the school tie”: the shenanigans of secret clubs and fraternities (e.g., Yale University’s infamous Skull and Bones Club); financial mismanagement at institutions with enormous endowments; and hard-to-categorize incidents such as the public vendetta waged against Fox’s *Family Guy* by the Kent School headmaster. Although many readers will already be familiar with some of the scandals, there is much to be learned in these pages. For example, who knew that members of Oxford’s Dangerous Sports Club—which was later involved in a bizarre “human catapult”—related death in 2002—were the inventors of bungee jumping? **VERDICT** A compelling collection that shows how tragedy too often results from hubris, lack of oversight, and the tendency of school administrators to protect their institution’s reputation at all costs. Recommended for all types of libraries.—**Seth Kershner, Northwestern Connecticut Community Coll. Lib., Winsted**

HISTORY

Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin’s War on Ukraine*. Doubleday. Oct. 2017. 496p. illus. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780385538855. \$35; ebk. ISBN 9780385538862. HIST

For decades, the extreme famine in 1930s Ukraine was portrayed as no worse than what resulted in Russia from Joseph Stalin’s policy of agricultural collectivization. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Applebaum (*Gulag: A History*) places Ukraine in pre- and postrevolution historical context to show why Stalin was intent on destroying all vestiges of independent Ukrainian nationality. Government and closed police archives prove that Ukrainian peasants were especially targeted for starvation as requisitions of grain demanded by Moscow far outstripped supply. At the same time, educators, cultural, and religious leaders were murdered. The exact number of those who died as a result of famine and purges during this time will never be known, but a strong case is made that proportionally, Ukraine was devastated more than other areas of the Soviet Union. Oral histories and memoirs of victims suppressed under the Soviet regime

show the human impact of starvation. This insightful book illustrates an area of eastern Europe fraught to this day with religious, nationalist, and urban vs. rural conflict yet still coveted for its fertile farmland. **VERDICT** This book will appeal to readers interested in Ukrainian history, Soviet policies, and the current Ukrainian-Russian conflict. [See Prepub Alert, 4/24/17.]—**Laurie Unger Skinner, Coll. of Lake Cty., Waukegan, IL**

Duncan, Mike. *The Storm Before the Storm: The Beginning of the End of the Roman Republic*. PublicAffairs. Oct. 2017. 352p. maps. notes. index. ISBN 9781610397216. \$27; ebk. ISBN 9781610397223. HIST

Plenty of people, notes Duncan (creator of the History of Rome podcast), are familiar with the facts of the end of the Roman Republic, including Julius Caesar’s dictatorship and the rise of the emperor Augustus. But far fewer could tell you about the Gaius Marius’s consulships, Sulla’s march on Rome, or other events that weakened the Republic. Roughly covering the 130s to the 80s BCE, Duncan makes an excellent effort at familiarizing readers with those events. He lays out a narrative of how external conflicts, internal uprisings, political corruption, and even well-intentioned movements toward reform eroded the established rules and unwritten social codes that kept the straining Republican government together. While Duncan refrains from making explicit comparisons to modern events, threaded throughout the book is the reminder that the issues that provoked Roman unrest—economic and social inequality, questions of citizenship and legal rights, and the employment of intimidation and violence as political tools—parallel issues the United States is currently grappling with. **VERDICT** Award-winning podcaster Duncan proves to be just as effective at working in a written medium, presenting historical personalities and complex situations with clarity and verve.—**Kathleen McCallister, Tulane Univ., New Orleans**

Gordon, Linda. *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition*. Liveright: Norton. Oct. 2017. 288p. illus. notes. index. ISBN 9781631493690. \$27.95; ebk. ISBN 9781631493706. HIST

Between 1915 and 1926, the second Ku Klux Klan (KKK) attracted millions of members with many more sympathetic to their views and goals. Exploding from the Klan’s original stronghold of the American South, another group flourished in the North, where members were elected and held sway at all levels of government, including governors’ mansions, state representatives, and Congress. Historian Gordon

Copyright of Library Journal is the property of Media Source, Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.