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Ancient worlds: a global history of antiquity, Michael Scott (book review)

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yet needed one another, offer a window into a complex early chapter of East-West relations. **VERDICT** This microlevel history for nonhistorians is strong on realpolitik; not a quick read but a rewarding one.—*Lisa Peet, Library Journal*

Doran, Michael. *Ike's Gamble: America's Rise to Dominance in the Middle East.*

Free Pr. Oct. 2016. 304p. notes. index.

ISBN 9781451697759. \$28;

ebk. ISBN 9781451697858. HIST

In 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, fresh from the revolution that ousted King Farouk, took possession of the Suez Canal. Britain and France, heretofore operating the canal for their profit, objected and threatened to invade. U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower refused to agree to reasserting colonial control over Egypt, kicking off an unbearably complicated series of events that ultimately failed to halt Nasser's Pan-Arabism or prevent Soviet inroads but led to decades of American influence in the Middle East. In the years since, various interpretations for Eisenhower's actions and their consequences have been offered. Doran, (senior fellow, Hudson Inst., Washington, DC), offers a reappraisal of the diplomatic fencing among the major participants while largely eschewing historiography. He primarily references *Foreign Relations of the United States*, with limited citations of British and Arab documents, although there are numerous secondary sources. **VERDICT** A well-documented narrative of complex diplomacy, with supporting roles by Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden. Historians and specialists in Middle East foreign affairs will be interested in Doran's reinterpretation of the crisis.—*Edwin Burgess, Kansas City, KS*

Drury, Bob & Tom Clavin. *Lucky 666:*

***The Impossible Mission.* S. & S.**

Oct. 2016. 368p. illus. maps. notes.

bibliog. index. ISBN 9781476774855. \$30;

ebk. ISBN 9781476774879. HIST

Many readers will associate the B-17 Flying Fortress with the European theater of World War II. While most were employed with the 8th Air Force in Europe, some were stationed with bombing groups in the Pacific. The crew of "Old 666" is the subject of this story, particularly pilot Jay Zeamer Jr. Providing a mixture of Zeamer's story with background on World War II in the Pacific theater, Drury and Clavin (coauthors, *The Heart of Everything That Is*) offer more of a biography of Zeamer and a history of bombing from the areas of Papua and Northern Australia than an overview of this specific mission. Zeamer is painted as a persistent, rebellious soul who struggled to find his place despite his abilities. Other

crew members' accounts are also included, though generally to a lesser extent. Reliance on a relatively small number of sources, a sensationalist flair, and flaws in the citation style hinder the book's historical value.

VERDICT Despite minor concerns, this title is an entertaining popular history that will appeal to fans of adventure-style World War II stories.—*Matthew Wayman, Pennsylvania State Univ. Lib., Schuylkill Haven*

★**Egerton, Douglas R. *Thunder at the Gates: The Black Civil War Regiments that Redeemed America.* Basic. Nov. 2016. 448p.**

photos. notes. index. ISBN 9780465096640.

\$29.99; ebk. ISBN 9780465096657. HIST

Egerton (Merrill Family Visiting Professor in History, Cornell Univ.; *The Wars of Reconstruction*) presents a captivating narrative of 14 men who served with the 54th and 55th Massachusetts infantry and the 5th Massachusetts cavalry. Four white officers commanded the regiments, all wealthy and well-educated men, including Robert Gould Shaw and Charles Francis Adams Jr. At the center of this volume's biographical portrait are African Americans from a variety of backgrounds who sought to end slavery: escaped slave William Carney, former schoolteachers Nicolas Said and James Trotter, and seamen Henry Jarvis and James Gooding. Egerton details the regiments' training and their participation in battles at Fort Wagner, SC, and their participation in the occupation of Charleston, SC, at the conclusion of the Civil War. The men proved their worth as disciplined soldiers and helped focus the nation's attention on freedom and equal rights for African Americans. **VERDICT** Egerton's study of the individuals and attention to their lives after the war is extremely well researched and well documented. This is an important addition to the shelves of Civil War books.—*Patricia Ann Owens, formerly with Illinois Eastern Community Colls., Mt. Carmel*

★**Ferreiro, Larrie D. *Brothers at Arms: American Independence and the Men of France and Spain Who Saved It.* Knopf.**

Nov. 2016. 464p. illus. maps. notes. bibliog.

index. ISBN 9781101875247. \$30; ebk. ISBN

9781101875254. HIST

Ferreiro (history, George Mason Univ.; *Measure of the Earth*) presents the American Revolution in a global context, detailing the many Europeans who played critical roles in American Independence, delving into the histories of the players whose decisive actions gave George Washington the men, material, and ships necessary to wrestle the colonies from Britain. Readers will discover important figures such as French minister Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes, and admiral Charles Hector, Comte d'Estaing,

as well as Spanish commander Bernardo de Galvez. Ferreiro also discusses the intricate Atlantic supply chains that fed the U.S. army, as well as critical naval technology and tactics like copper plating. The text describes the motivations of numerous French and Spanish ministers, traders, sailors, and soldiers, unveiling many underappreciated actions, including the Spanish seizure of British Pensacola, the chess match in the Caribbean islands, and the cat-and-mouse game between the French and British fleets.

VERDICT This work is scholarly and heavily researched, a denser read than David McCullough's *1776*, providing much information from an often neglected perspective. Even seasoned American history readers will likely find new content on a pivotal era.—*Jeffrey Meyer, Mt. Pleasant P.L., IA*

Oneill, Therese. *Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners.* Little, Brown. Oct. 2016. 352p.

illus. bibliog. ISBN 9780316357913. \$25;

ebk. ISBN 9780316358040. HIST

Welcome to a highly irreverent tour of the darker sides of the Victorian age. Popular history writer and blogger Oneill points out that although films and fiction set in this period have great appeal today, they omit significant parts of the less-than-comfortable aspects of the time, including bad hygiene, poor medical knowledge resulting in hack treatments, and restrictions on social interactions. The author's wicked sense of humor saves the subject from devolving into a dry tome, instead providing laugh-out-loud moments on the most unthinkable and unmentionable subjects. The brilliance of this study is Oneill's ability to transport readers back in time and have them experience the day-to-day life of women battling the issues of the era. In doing so, this work both educates and amuses in its historical approach of the unseen and unseemly sides of the time. **VERDICT** This fun romp of a book will appeal to history aficionados and lovers of the Victorian age and its etiquette, as well as anyone who enjoys a good laugh at the oddly absurd. [See "Editors' Fall Picks," *LJ* 9/1/16, p. 27.]—*Stacy Shaw, Orange, CA*

Scott, Michael. *Ancient Worlds: A Global History of Antiquity.* Basic. Nov. 2016.

448p. illus. maps. notes. bibliog. index.

ISBN 9780465094721. \$29.99;

ebk. ISBN 9780465094738. HIST

Historical studies of the ancient world, posits Scott (*Delphi: A History of the Center of the Ancient World*), have the unfortunate habit of letting disciplinary and geographical boundaries limit their scope. The author seeks to provide a view of interconnected ancient worlds, exploring how civilizations



Future Career Moves

Davis Erin Anderson and **Raymond Pun** are coeditors of *Career Transitions for Librarians* (Rowman & Littlefield; LJ 9/1/16). Anderson, a 2012 Special Libraries Association (SLA) Rising Star and 2012 LJ Mover & Shaker (M&S), is the community engagement manager at Metropolitan New York Library Council. Pun is the First Year Student Success librarian at California State University, Fresno, as well as a 2012 LJ M&S, 2014 American Library Association (ALA) Emerging Leader, and a 2016 SLA Rising Star. [See the online version for the full Q&A.]

What inspired you to compile this book?

RP: The idea came from my own experience transitioning from a public library to an academic library in 2013. Many of my public library colleagues asked how I'd made the jump and if I could offer some tips or advice. I couldn't find any literature in this area so I decided to create a volume to capture the voices of librarians who have successfully made similar moves.

Is it difficult to move among libraries?

EA: We found that there is no universal opinion, that once you embark on a certain path, you are expected to stay there. But I do think there's a sense that when you enter a degree program of any type, you should choose courses that fit some sort of overarching

narrative, and many job ads request a certain amount of experience in a similar setting. It's easy to feel as though a life-defining decision needs to be made early on, although this isn't necessarily true.

Contributor Sarah Jewell shares qualities to cultivate a career: humility, confidence, etc. What would you add to that list?

RP: We should be honest with ourselves when assessing our strengths and weaknesses. All skills are transferable, but we have to ask if the organizational culture or institutional context fit within our own professional interests and needs. For example, do you really enjoy publishing, presenting, or serving on committees? When you've identified weaknesses, you have also identified opportunities.

Many of the book's contributors are accidental librarians. Why is librarianship often a second career?

RP: Those of us who enter the field as a second career may have realized that we enjoy supporting communities through information services. Librarians are passionate about finding ways to strengthen and engage with their communities. Libraries are not simply spaces with books but rather places [where people foster the] intellect, vibrant environments of creativity and engagement [available] to all types of users.

Librarian Jan Chindlund suggests not fixating

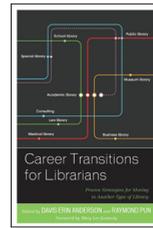
on professional titles. What are your thoughts?

EA: It comes down to clearly sharing the story of your career in a way that maps to what your next employer has in mind. It's important to be able to

demonstrate that you have the skills necessary for the job, if not the title itself.

What advice would you offer those interested in a career move?

RP: All of the book's contributors took on some level of risk when changing direction. Their risks paid off because they were willing to step out of their comfort zones, learn something new, and embrace change.—
Stephanie Sendaula



responded to similar pressures, and how they influenced one another once the borders of their worlds began to meet. Scott divides his work into three major sections focusing on government, warfare, and religion: the emergence of the political theories behind the Athenian democracy, the Roman republic, and Confucian thought; the struggles of several nascent empires to retain their security through military might; and the rise of Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Rome and China remain the mainstay subjects of each segment, while others—Greece, Macedonia, India, and so on—cycle in and out for observation as their borders expand and their actions become intertwined. **VERDICT** Much of the historical material has been well-trod in other accounts, but the presentation of events revealing unfamiliar connections and comparisons, as well as the inclusion of less-familiar topics such as the Seleucid Empire and Armenia, provides a fascinating perspective that many readers should find intriguing.—**Kathleen McCallister, Tulane Univ., New Orleans**

Snow, Richard. Iron Dawn: The Monitor, the Merrimack, and the Civil War Sea Battle That Changed History. Scribner. Nov. 2016. 416p. illus. maps. notes. bibliog. ISBN 9781476794181. \$30; ebk. ISBN 9781476794204. HIST

In this history of the 1862 confrontation of the ironclads USS *Monitor* and USS *Merrimack*, a pivotal naval battle of the Civil War, Snow (*I Invented the Modern Age*) attempts to present a synthesis without shorting details about the battle, ships, and crews. The result is a parallel examination of the two vessels, from their conception in the early 19th century to their demise after the fatal encounter. The author brings his paired narratives together in the famous Battle of Hampton Roads, VA. With sometimes florid and intricate narrative, Snow incorporates stories of heartbreak and humor, especially as the vessels are hurried toward combat. Snow devotes more than half of his book to the development and building of the ships, including engineering, business, and political interests as well as military exigencies. In the process, the account is occasionally bogged

down by mind-numbing details. **VERDICT** Not always easy to read, this overview of an important confrontation doesn't advance understanding of the battle beyond other recent contributions but offers an adequate introduction for general readers and may be useful for libraries adding works on the Battle of Hampton Roads to their collections. [See Prepub Alert, 5/2/16.]—**Charles K. Piehl, Minnesota State Univ., Mankato**

Wilson, Jon. The Chaos of Empire: The British Raj and the Conquest of India. PublicAffairs. Oct. 2016. 584p. illus. maps. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9781610392938. \$29.99; ebk. ISBN 9781610392945. HIST

Most histories of the Raj emphasize either Britain's ruthlessness in ruling India or its economic exploitation of the subcontinent. According to Wilson (history, King's Coll. London), Britain didn't realize much economic benefit out of India, its oppressive policies born out of the fear that they would lose power. Britain didn't rule India because the colony made Britain wealthy or was important for the maintenance of British

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