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Winter king: Henry VII and the dawn of Tudor England, Thomas Penn (book review)

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social sciences

BIOGRAPHY

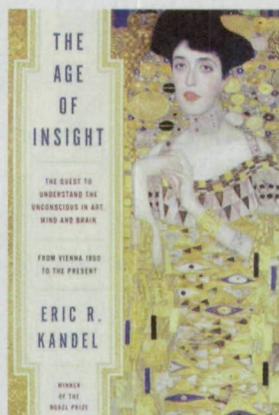
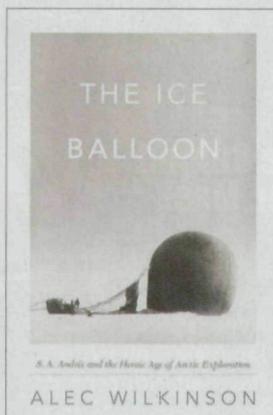
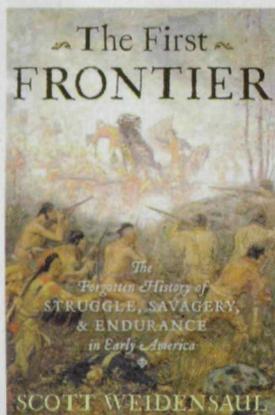
Cordery, Stacy A. Juliette Gordon Low: The Remarkable Founder of the Girl Scouts. Viking. Feb. 2012. c.400p. illus. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780670023301. \$27.95. **BIOG**

While all Girl Scouts are taught the name of the organization's founder, Juliette Gordon "Daisy" Low, few people know the details of her intriguing life. Cordery (history, Monmouth Coll.; *Alice: Alice Roosevelt Longworth, from White House Princess to Washington Power Broker*) paints a vivid portrait of the woman who, despite physical challenges, romantic disappointment, and having no children of her own, founded the largest educational organization in the world for girls. Born in Savannah, Daisy Low mixed Southern belle etiquette with an interest in the arts and outdoor activities that would later inspire her vision for the Girl Scouts. The book's best chapters detail

2012. c.480p. illus. bibliog. index. ISBN 9781439191569. \$28. **BIOG**

Though he ended the Wars of the Roses and became the first Tudor monarch, Henry VII often is overshadowed by his better-known descendants Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Penn (publisher, Verso Books) attempts to rectify this, skimming over the king's early years to explore the conflicts that pervaded his reign—in particular the issues raised by his tenuous claim to the throne. Complex, shrewd, and well aware of the instability of his position, Henry solidified his rule not only through carefully constructed propaganda celebrating a new dynasty—the Tudors—but also by use of an extensive network of informers and a ruthless system of taxes and fines to keep English subjects in check. Penn's focus on these darker aspects results in a somewhat slanted portrait of the king himself, but his thoroughly researched

of *Lady Randolph Churchill*) presents the complex woman behind that relationship, who was not merely a social climber/seductress. Sebba's research reveals that although Wallis was drawn to the life that Edward could provide, she also cared for her second husband, Ernest Simpson, and in fact hoped to maintain both relationships: she did not want to be queen and pleaded with the infatuated Edward not to abdicate. Thus this is a more balanced portrait of Wallis than readers may be used to, extending from birth to death and keeping the focus on her, rather than simply on her marriage to Edward and their long lives as Duke and Duchess of Windsor. **VERDICT** Sebba dispels the myths that surround the pair (such as that theirs was a love story for the ages). Charles Higham's *The Duchess of Windsor: The Secret Life* spends more time on their alleged Nazi sympathies. Greg King's *The Duchess of Windsor: The Uncommon Life of Wallis Simpson* supports the love story and defends Wallis Simpson. Sebba's more nuanced biography should be included in any collection covering this subject. Madonna's forthcoming movie on Wallis Simpson, *W.E.*, will increase interest.—*Maria Bagshaw, West Dundee, IL*



Through the centuries: frontier America in 1763, the Arctic in 1897, and Vienna in the 1900s

Low's involvement with Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the British war hero and Boy Scouts founder who inspired her to bring a similar organization to the girls of America and also to explore how her enthusiasm and dedication helped bring girl scouting to life. **VERDICT** An engaging biography that describes how Daisy Low created and shaped the Girl Scouts into an organization that continues to thrive—as evidenced by the upcoming celebration of its centennial in March 2012. Recommended for readers who enjoy biography and women's history. [See Prepub Alert, 8/26/11.]—*Amy Hoseth, Colorado State Univ. Libs., Fort Collins*

Penn, Thomas. Winter King: Henry VII and the Dawn of Tudor England. S. & S. Mar.

history quite successfully evokes the king's web of advisers, associates, and enemies, as well as the overall atmosphere of England during this period. **VERDICT** Recommended for anyone seriously interested in Tudor history; the denseness and amount of detail may be overwhelming for casual readers. [See Prepub Alert, 9/22/11.]—*Kathleen McCallister, Univ. of South Carolina Lib., Columbia*

Sebba, Anne. That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor. St. Martin's. Mar. 2012. c.352p. photogs. bibliog. index. ISBN 9781250002969. \$27.99. **BIOG**

While the allure of Wallis Simpson and Edward VIII's story has lasted over 70 years, Sebba (former foreign correspondent, Reuters; *American Jennie: The Remarkable Life*

ECONOMICS

Anderson, Maggie. Our Black Year: One Family's Quest To Buy Black in America's Racially Divided Economy. PublicAffairs: Perseus. Feb. 2012. c.320p. maps. index. ISBN 9781610390248. \$25.99. **ECON**

As the title indicates, this is the story of Anderson's quest to spend a year in which she and her family would patronize only black-owned businesses. The former McDonald's executive, now cofounder/CEO of a foundation for "promoting self-help economics," Anderson chronicles the rewarding moments, shocking revelations, and life-changing impact of what proved to be a surprisingly difficult commitment. Less radical than Mike Yankoski's experiment with homelessness (*Under the Overpass: A Journey of Faith on the Streets of America*) and more personal than Xavier de Souza Briggs and others' *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment To Fight Ghetto Poverty*, Anderson's book successfully illuminates the roadblocks faced by black business owners and the racial divide that continues to persist in the U.S. economy. **VERDICT** Part journal, part investigative paper, this book will ap-

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