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The lady in red: an eighteenth-century tale of sex, scandal and divorce, by Hallie Rubenhold (book review)

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index. ISBN 978-0-8050-8236-0. \$27.50. HIST Innovative automobile manufacturer Henry Ford had a unique vision that led to the large-scale application of assembly-line production processes, industry-leading wage rates, and sourcing of raw materials from the absolute base. Thus, once his production lines were churning out over a million cars per year, Ford sought to cut costs for tires by acquiring land in Brazil to grow rubber trees. In doing so, he set in motion a series of events chronicled in detail for the first time in this book. Though visionary, Ford did not really understand politics or diversity of human culture. This led to a series of missteps where time clocks, midday work hours, and other aspects of exported culture failed to resonate with the indigenous Brazilian workers. Instead of an efficient rubber farm, Fordlandia wreaked havoc in a space twice the size of Delaware; it was a spectacular failure. Workers eventually revolted, and the Brazilian army was brought in to restore order. Ford is iconic in American history and biography, the subject of over 100 biographies, but this particular misadventure has never been well documented until now. All readers of history and biography should consider.—Eric C. Shoaf, Univ. of Texas at San Antonio

Lemire, Elise. Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts. Univ. of Pennsylvania. May 2009. c.288p. ISBN 978-0-8122-4180-8. \$29.95. HIST Walden Pond in Concord, MA, is most famous as the place where Henry David Thoreau went to “live deliberately” and subsist on the land. Thoreau chose Walden in part because its shores, Walden Woods, were at one time home to freed Concord slaves and several generations of their children. Lemire (literature, SUNY at Purchase; *Miscegenation: Making Race in America*), a native of Concord, sets about to resurrect the memory of not only the freedmen and -women who dwelled there but also the history of slavery in Concord. The first half of the book focuses on the Concord slaveholders, in particular prominent slaveowner John Cuming. The second half focuses on their 32 slaves, particularly Brister Freeman, who was Cuming’s slave and was then freed. Lemire’s literature background helps her to bring alive these long-dead historical characters, and she deftly weaves excerpts from Thoreau’s *Walden* throughout the narrative. Ultimately, Lemire conveys the idea that before Walden Pond was a “green space,” it was, in fact, a “black space.” Recommended for students of early American history and slavery studies, as well as New England readers interested in local history.—Jason Martin, Univ. of Central Florida Lib., Orlando

Loades, David. The Tudor Queens of England. Continuum. 2009. c.272p. illus. index. ISBN 978-1-8472-5019-3. \$29.95. HIST Leading Tudor historian Loades (Honorary Research Professor, Univ. of Sheffield; *Mary Tudor: A Life*) examines the daily lives of Tudor queens, including both ruling queens and queen consorts, from the 15th through the early 17th centuries. Chapters are arranged thematically about a particular woman, e.g., “The Queen as Lover,” “The Queen as Foreign Ally,” and “the Unmarried Sovereign.” Loades also includes a section titled “The Queens Who Never Were,” which examines the lives of Jane Grey and Mary Stuart. Given that traditionally several of the queens examined would not be considered Tudor queens, including Catherine de Valois and Margaret of Anjou, the addition of family charts would have been useful. Although this is a thoroughly researched book, the emphasis on the queens’ sexual habits—which relies heavily on speculation—could have been omitted. For interested readers.—Carrie Benbow, Toronto P.L., Ont.

Marin, Pamela. Blood in the Forum: The Struggle for the Roman Republic. Continuum. 2009. c.224p. illus. maps. bibliog. index. ISBN 978-1-8472-5167-1. \$29.95. HIST This book presents both a popular account of the events leading to the fall of the Roman Republic and a reappraisal of the actions of Cato the Younger and his faction. The result is a somewhat uneven text, but Marin (previously lecturer in Classics, University Coll. Dublin) ably summarizes the last two decades of research on Cato, on whom she did her doctoral work. Her conclusion is that while the senate of the late Republic was indeed corrupt and ineffective at governing, this did not inevitably lead to the Republic’s fall. Rather, Marin sees the clash between Cato and Caesar as illustrative of Caesar’s disregard for the Republic and its ideals, embodied by Cato. The first section introduces the culture and religion of the late Republic, as well as the contemporary sources, and then traces the events leading up to the fall. Overall, the book requires background knowledge of the ancient world and maintains a serious tone, which makes it best for students or those already familiar with Roman history.—Margaret Heller, Dominican Univ. Lib., River Forest, IL

★ Rubenhold, Hallie. The Lady in Red: An Eighteenth-Century Tale of Sex, Scandal, and Divorce. St. Martin’s. Jul. 2009. c.320p. photogs. bibliog. index. ISBN 978-0-312-35994-2. \$25.95. HIST Rubenhold’s new history is just as linked

to passion and vice as was her previous work, *The Covent Garden Ladies*, though her gaze has now turned from the lower class to the aristocracy. When in 1782 Sir Richard Worsley brought a criminal conversation case against his wife’s adulterous lover and sued him for an exorbitant amount in damages to his “property,” Lady Worsley chose to ruin both her and her husband’s reputations by exposing the scandalous details of her married life and affairs, turning an already shocking trial into one of the first celebrity divorces. Rubenhold does an excellent job of leading readers through the lives and relationships of the main participants and the specifics of the case itself, with ample observations on marriage, divorce, sexual mores, and personal reputation in Georgian England. The delivery of the verdict doesn’t signal the end of the matter, however, as she also examines how gossip and journalistic rumor affected opinions after the trial and traces the paths of both husband and wife following their separation. As a historical examination, it is well researched and thoughtful; as a narrative, it is entertainingly told. Highly recommended for all readers.—Kathleen McCallister, Univ. of South Carolina Lib., Columbia

★ Talty, Stephan. The Illustrious Dead: The Terrifying Story of How Typhus Killed Napoleon’s Greatest Army. Crown. Jun. 2009. c.336p. maps. index. ISBN 978-0-307-39404-0. \$25.95. HIST As much a history of typhus as it is a history of Napoleon’s invasion of Russia, this book presents both subjects in graphic detail, leaving the reader with no illusions of the “glory” of 19th-century warfare. In the spring of 1812, Napoleon assembled the largest army seen in Europe up to that time for the invasion and conquest of Russia—690,000 men under arms, most of whom would actually cross into Russian territory, followed by approximately 50,000 civilians. That’s more people than lived then in Paris; this moving population would have ranked as the fifth-largest city in the world. Some 500,000 of them would never return, less than a quarter of them dying as a result of combat; the reason for most of the deaths is the subject of this book. Using contemporary sources, Talty (*Empire of Blue Water*) presents the whole horrifying experience as lived by the common soldier, the doctors, and officers up the ranks to the generals. He makes his case for the typhus being transmitted by the body louse. Strangely enough, the disease was no longer prevalent in Europe after 1814. Strongly recommended. [See Prepub Alert, *LJ* 2/15/09].—David Lee Poremba, Winderemere, FL

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