Abraham Lincoln and Treason in the Civil War: The Trials of John Merryman, by Jonathan A. White (191 pages, October 2011), reexamines the famous 1861 case of a pro-secession Maryland militia lieutenant held responsible for burning railroad bridges and cutting telegraph wires north of Baltimore to prevent Union troops from passing through the city. First Lieut. John Merryman was arrested for these treasonous activities and imprisoned at Fort McHenry. Military officials refused to honor Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Taney’s writ of habeas corpus, citing President Lincoln’s recent suspension of that constitutional right in order to prevent secessionists from taking Maryland out of the Union. White uses the Merryman case to explore the broader legal battles that the Lincoln administration faced in dealing with treason, habeas corpus, and civil liberties throughout the war. $49.95. Louisiana State University. 978-0-8071-4214-1.

Books: A Living History, by Martyn Lyons (224 pages, October 2011), provides a concise global history of textual communication from ancient cuneiform tablets and medieval codices to encyclopedias, chapbooks, dime novels, paperbacks, and e-books, all of it accompanied by a profusion of bibliophilic eye-candy. Though his focus is primarily on Europe and North America, Lyons includes a generous helping of non-Western materials, including ancient Buddhist texts, Japanese concertina books, Mesoamerican codices, Mumbai bookstalls, and manga. A useful overview for undergraduates and others unfamiliar with book art, science, and technology. $34.95. Getty Publications. 978-1-60606-083-4.

Cite Right: A Quick Guide to Citation Styles, by Charles Lipson (213 pages, 2d ed., May 2011), offers an overview and examples of citations from the current versions of the Chicago (or Turabian), Modern Language Association, and American Psychological Association style manuals, as well as six other style guides for the sciences. Examples for Web sites, blogs, video clips, and other digital media are included. $14.00. University of Chicago. 978-0-226-48464-8.

Clark Gable, in Pictures: Candid Images of the Actor’s Life, by Christopher J. Spicer (194 pages, October 2011), showcases 187 photos of the Hollywood actor, each with extensive commentary that offers a glimpse into the personality of the real man behind the movie-star mask. Most of the images are candid, casual shots (some of which have never been published before) rather than professional studio photographs, and Spicer arranges them into chapters that focus on Gable’s early life, acting career, World War II service, hunting and fishing activities, cars and motorcycles, social life, and married life. One intriguing photo shows Gable skiing with actress Loretta Young during the filming of The Call of the Wild in 1935, when they had a brief affair. Young became pregnant and decided to keep the child by pretending to adopt her; Judy Lewis, who died November 25, 2011, was kept in the dark about who her real parents were for more than 30 years. $45.00. McFarland. 978-0-7864-4964-4.

Confederate Outlaw: Champ Ferguson and the Civil War in Appalachia, by Brian D. McKnight (252 pages, April 2011), examines the activities of Champ Ferguson, a Confederate guerrilla who operated in southern Kentucky and eastern Tennessee and who was partially an inspiration for the fictional outlaw Josey Wales. Ferguson committed his first murder in 1858, but his trial was repeatedly delayed; and to avoid prosecution he joined as a partisan fighter when the war broke out, embarking on a career of cold-
blooded homicide that included the massacre of unarmed white and African-American soldiers captured at the Battle of Saltville. In 1865, he was tried and executed in October 1865 for the murder of 53 men. Although McKnight does not exonerate Ferguson, he does shed some light on his complex motivations and beliefs. $34.95. Louisiana State University. 978-0-8071-3769-7.

The Golden Empire: Spain, Charles V, and the Creation of America, by Hugh Thomas (646 pages, October 2011), chronicles the conquest of the New World by the Spanish King and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Beginning just after the conquest of Mexico by Hernán Cortés in 1521 and ending with Charles's abdication in 1556, Thomas packs his narrative with little-known details about Francisco Pizarro’s conquest of Peru, Nuño de Guzmán’s invasion of western Mexico, and the exploits of other conquistadores and governors. A sequel to his Rivers of Gold (2003), which focused on the years from Columbus to Magellan (1492–1521), The Golden Empire is accompanied by ample maps, genealogies, and a much-needed index to keep track of a multitude of names. $35.00. Random House. 978-1-4000-6125-9.

John Gielgud: Matinee Idol to Movie Star, by Jonathan Croall (720 pages, July 2011), is a comprehensive biography of British Shakespearean actor and theater director John Gielgud, one of the few actors to win Oscar, Emmy, Tony, and Grammy awards. Croall had finished the first draft of this book in May 2000 when Gielgud died before he could review it; subsequently he was invited to interview a few hundred more friends and family and was granted access to Gielgud's personal papers and voluminous correspondence, which revealed many observations about the actors he worked with, his sense of humor, and his intimate feelings about several partners. The letters allowed Croall to reconstruct for the first time Gielgud's 1953 arrest for solicitation in a public restroom and its aftermath, an event that nearly cost him his career. The back of the book features an epilogue of tributes from friends and actors, and a chronology of Gielgud’s theater, film, and TV productions. $45.00. Bloomsbury Academic. 978-1-408-13106-0.

Pox: An American History, by Michael Willrich (422 pages, April 2011), reexamines the multiple outbreaks of smallpox—both the severe and less virulent types—in various parts of the United States from 1898 to 1902 that led some states to call for mandatory vaccinations for schoolchildren and even adults in some infected communities. The era saw the first concerted efforts to reduce disease incidence through enlightened health policies, but these often energized an organized and vigorous opposition to vaccinations, which were seen by some as both risky and an abuse of constitutional rights and religious freedom. Although the states’ right to enforce public health policy for the common good was upheld in the Supreme Court case of Jacobson v. Massachusetts in 1905, Willrich considers the antivaccination movement as a precursor to the free-speech battles that followed World War I. An important historical contribution to medical history and public policy. $27.95. Penguin. 978-1-59420-286-5.

Public Spaces, Private Gardens: A History of Designed Landscapes in New Orleans, by Lake Douglas (282 pages, May 2011), investigates the development of public squares (Congo Square, Jackson Square), urban parks, levees, the “neutral ground” (median) within wide streets, commercial pleasure gardens, and private gardens in New Orleans throughout the 19th century. Douglas makes extensive use of the watercolor drawings of residences attached to property descriptions in the New Orleans Notarial Archives, as well as photographs, drawings, and maps to piece together the history of landscape architecture and horticulture in the Crescent City. An appendix offers a comprehensive inventory of agricultural and ornamental plant species that were cultivated in city gardens. $55.00. Louisiana State University. 978-0-8071-3837-3.