

Welcome to our March expert live chat. A big thank you to Tracy Borman for her excellent talk and for joining us here to answer our questions. Thank you also to all of you for coming. We can forget the stresses of the outside world for an hour and delve into Tudor history!

The topic is Henry VIII and the men around him.

By the way, feel free to stay on afterwards to chat. I realise that some of you may not have had much chance to chat recently!

Claire Ridgway21:52

Hi Natalia!

Owen Emmerson21:52

Pretty sure the Mass Observation Archive are asking for Coronavirus diaries! Amazing resource.

ADMIN Tim21:53

Lovely to hear Clare (and all) Feel free to ask what you want and let's see what we can learn!

Claire Ridgway21:53

A warm welcome Clare!

Lorna Wanstall21:53

Clare we have a lot of fun in our chatroom so hope you enjoy being here as well

Tracy Borman21:53

Hello everyone! Lovely to see some familiar faces (or names) too 🤗

Clare Shepherd21:53

Thank you, Claire.

Natalia Wiczorek21:53

Hi Claire, greetings from Derbyshire

Claire Ridgway21:54

Tracy, your talk was so good. It's a very different picture we get of Henry when we set his wives to one side.

Clare Shepherd21:54

Hello, Natalia.

Tracy Borman21:54

Natalia, my husband is teasing me that he knows you (he's from Derbyshire too)

ADMIN Tim21:54

Tracy, I loved your talk and found the view of Henry's life through that of his men was a brilliant perspective. What inspired you to look at Henry like that?

Natalia Wiczorek21:54

Really? What part is he from, Tracy?

Claire Ridgway21:54

Hi Kine!

Lorna Wanstall21:54

It's very chilly tonight here in Kent

Tracy Borman21:54

Thanks, Claire. I really did feel like I hadn't really understood Henry properly before looking at him through the eyes of his men.

Laurie Duerr21:55

Hi Claire and everyone!

Claire Ridgway21:55

Hi Roland!

Claire Ridgway21:55

Hi Laurie!

Clare Shepherd21:55

I listened to the talk and immediately ordered the book.

Stephanie Currier21:55

Michelle that's great! I used to live in Barrie, just north of Toronto

Ceri Creffield21:55

Hello all.

Roland Hui21:55

Hello Tracy, I love your tv presentations. What do you think Henry VII's influence on Henry VIII was exactly?

Lorna Wanstall21:55

Tracy, the biggest influence on Henry was Wolsey in my opinion

Tracy Borman21:56

In terms of my inspiration, I'd always wanted to write about Henry but also wanted to be sure I had something new to add. Setting aside the six wives and looking at the male point of view was the opportunity I'd been looking for.

Claire Ridgway21:56

Hi Ceri!

Francesca Romana Castellani21:56

Hi Tracy, can I ask what do you mean by "his men"? who do you refer to in particular?

Kine21:56

Hi everyone!

Claire Ridgway21:56

Tracy, yes, a very fresh perspective.

Michelle Nasello21:56

So let's chat about his favourite friend, Charles Brandon. How did he come to be the king's best friend?

Lorna Wanstall21:56

Roland I think H7 taught H8 how to manipulate people to get what he wanted

Claire Ridgway21:57

Here's a link to Tracy's talk for anyone who missed it - <https://www.tudorsociety.com/henry-viii-and-his-men-tracy-borman-expert-talk/>

Tracy Borman21:57

Thanks, Roland. I think Henry VII was the biggest single influence on Henry VIII. The latter never escaped his shadow, and at times of crisis would always try to justify himself to him.

Stephanie Currier21:57

Tracy, thank you for your video. It was a great watch and kept me entranced the whole video!

Claire Ridgway21:57

Hi Alaina!

Tracy Borman21:57

Francesca, I mean all of the key men in his life - from family members and friends, to advisers, courtiers and rivals. Hundreds in total, so I had to cherry pick the best for the book!

Ceri Creffield21:58

Would you say H8 spent his life trying to live up to and outdo his father.

James21:58

It's a great book with a very fresh perspective. Just goes to prove that there are always new angles to look at these people

Natalia Wieczorek21:58

I'm intrigued as to how Cromwell is seen in a much better light than he was years ago. Is it because new information, material has come to light?

Lorna Wanstall21:58

Michelle I believe Charles Brandon's father was a standard bearer at Bosworth and was killed H7 took the young Charles under his wing

Francesca Romana Castellani21:58

Ok! Thank you

Alaina Hurley21:58

Hi Claire!

Tracy Borman21:58

Michelle, Charles Brandon joined Henry's household when the latter was very young. Charles was a few years older and Henry hero-worshipped him. They were very similar in character and tastes, and that's what bonded them throughout their lives. He was definitely Henry's best friend.

Tracy Borman21:59

You could have a point there, Lorna!

Tracy Borman21:59

Thanks, Stephanie! That's lovely to hear.

Natalia Wieczorek21:59

I gather they looked like brothers

James Stewart21:59

Tracy, in your talk you mentioned that there is going to be an exhibit about the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Given current events are there plans to make any of the exhibition content available online?

Tracy Borman21:59

Natalia: he's from Swadlincote

Michelle Nasello21:59

Wonderful thank you

Rozsa21:59

Hullo from NY.

lisa sanderson21:59

Has the chat just started? I am at the Gold Coast in Australia - the times are a bit difficult!

Tracy Borman21:59

Ceri: yes for sure. But arguably (and don't tell Henry) his father was the better king

Claire Ridgway22:00

Hi Rozsa! Hi Lisa!

Clare Shepherd22:00

Me too, it was excellent.

Lorna Wanstall22:00

Hi Rozsa how you coping with lockdown

Claire Ridgway22:00

Lisa, yes, but only 5 minutes ago.

Natalia Wieczorek22:00

Ah, I go shopping there sometimes. Do please give him my best wishes.

Tracy Borman22:00

Natalia, I think it has a lot to do with Wolf Hall. Hilary Mantel's work might be fiction, but it's impeccably well-researched and made us question the traditional view of Cromwell.

Laurie Duerr22:00

So Tracy, the big question: do you think that it was H8 or Cromwell who was the ultimate mastermind behind bringing down AnneB?

lisa sanderson22:00

Hello Clare. hello everyone

Ceri Creffield22:00

I would agree with that Tracey!

Tracy Borman22:01

James: we're hoping to do something on line - and, all being well, open the exhibition itself later this year. I'll keep you posted!

Claire Ridgway22:01

Hi Gail!

Tracy Borman22:01

Natalia: he sends his too!

Tracy Borman22:02

Laurie: your question is so well-timed as I've just written a feature about this very question for BBC History. I personally believe that H8 instructed Cromwell to get him out of the marriage, but that Cromwell did so rather more permanently than H8 intended. He had his own reasons to get rid of Anne - it was his neck or hers.

Constance22:02

This is a lovely break from lockdown monotony

Rozsa22:02

We're 6 miles north of NYC in Westchester County in a quiet, green English-style village. We walked by the river last night, took a drive to a few animal rescue shelters today (looking for a new dog), and are doing fine. Soooooo lucky we're not cooped up in NYC just down the road

Claire Ridgway22:02

Hi Constance!

Constance22:03

Hello from Los Angeles

Laurie Duerr22:03

Thanks Tracy, that theory certainly makes alot of sense!

Tracy Borman22:03

Really pleased to hear it, Constance - it is for me too!

Claire Ridgway22:03

Tracy, do you think Henry was always easily manipulated, or did he become so as his reign went on?

Rozsa22:03

Was it Cromwell who lost his neck over the Anna of Cleves fiasco?

Alaina Hurley22:03

Hi Tracy! Thank you so much for answering our questions. My question is: do you think Henry regretted executing More and Cromwell?

lisa sanderson22:03

I don't understand why Cromwell is seen in a better light now?

Tracy Borman22:03

Wow, amazing to see guests from all over the world!

lisa sanderson22:04

I don't understand why Cromwell is seen in a better light now.

Lorna Wanstall22:04

What was it about Charles that he managed to survive Henry's chopping block?

Rozsa22:04

Two words, Lisa Sanderson: Hilary Mantel.

Tracy Borman22:04

Rozsa, Cromwell certainly fell from favour after the Anne of Cleves fiasco BUT Henry did actually forgive him for it. His downfall was due to a plot by Cromwell's archenemies the Duke of Norfolk and Stephen Gardiner.

Christine Colburn22:04

Tudor fandom is worldwide!

Natalia Wiczorek22:04

Thank you! As to Cromwell, yes, I agree, just immaculate research, and he would have been a complex man. But bullied as a boy I wonder how that formed his personality as a man?

Claire Ridgway22:04

Lisa, I think Hilary Mantel's books and the TV adaptation have made people more sympathetic to Cromwell.

Claire Ridgway22:05

Hi Tamise! Hi anyone I've missed!

Tracy Borman22:05

Lisa: I completely agree with Claire. And her portrayal has inspired historians to re-examine the sources (myself included)

Stephanie Currier22:05

Tudor History is so interesting! I wish I learned it in school growing up. Is it taught in English schools?

Clare Shepherd22:05

I've reread Wolf Hall & Bring up the Dead recently in preparation for reading Hilary Mantel's latest book. Do you think maybe she has gone to far in rehabilitating Cromwell, and maybe the truth about him is somewhere in between the two views?

Tamise Hills22:05

Hi

Tracy Borman22:06

Clare: I think Hilary Mantel's portrayal is closer to the real Cromwell, but he's definitely a bit too sympathetic. He was undoubtedly ruthless, just as he has been portrayed in non-fiction books. But he wasn't the arch-villain of history: he was operating in ruthless times.

Owen Emerson22:07

Hi Tracy! I'm going to ask a very unscholarly question here: do you like Henry? Or rather, do you think you'd like him if you could jump in a time machine and meet him?

Tracy Borman22:07

Have I missed anyone?? The questions came thick and fast then, which is lovely!

Natalia Wiczorek22:07

Yes I agree, Tracy, and we cannot judge him by today's standards or morals.

Rozsa22:08

I cannot bear to even mention H8's name. I refer to him as the king of England or Katherine of Aragon's husband.

Constance22:08

Has anyone read the new Cromwell biography by Diarmaid MacCulloch?

ADMIN Tim22:08

Tracy, can you tell us a little about your work at Hampton Court Palace?

Clare Shepherd22:09

I agree Tracy, and he was in the power of Henry who also was manipulative. Cromwell was in need of Henry as he was surrounded by enemies, who eventually got him killed, as you said.

Lorna Wanstall22:09

Tracy I've seen your programme "Private lives of monarchs" And I believe the incurable ulcer may well have been something very different. In short it wasn't an ulcer at all. I believe it might have been unheard of then and still a very rare condition called HS

Claire Ridgway22:09

Constance, it's excellent.

Natalia Wiczorek22:09

Yes, Constance, it's very good

Gail Thomas22:09

Hi everyone! Hi Owen, hope you are doing well. As a related question to yours for Tracy, do you like Cromwell? In spite of everything and how he treated Anne, I have respect for him.

Tracy Borman22:09

Owen: that's a great question! I have to say that after researching my book, I felt a great deal more sympathy towards him than I did before. He appears a lot more complex, vulnerable and, in short, human when viewed through the eyes of his men. Not sure I'd quite leap into a time machine to meet him, though...!

Rozsa22:10

What is HS, Lorna?

Natalia Wieczorek22:10

No, he'd terrify me, Tracy!

Claire Ridgway22:10

I'd like to see the young, dashing Henry, just for a few minutes.

Owen Emmerson22:10

Great answer!

Clare Shepherd22:10

You'd need to watch hour back meeting Cromwell.

Lorna Wanstall22:10

Tracy I'd like to leap into a time machine with a cast iron pan and belt the heck out of H8.

Natalia Wieczorek22:10

I bet he was gorgeous

lisa sanderson22:10

Thank you very much, Tracy. I liked some of Hilary Mantel's other books but I didn't like the first one, for some reason. She isn't very sympathetic to Anne Boleyn.

Georgia Cosenza22:10

Hello all

Ceri Creffield22:10

Yes the young Henry was very different to the old.

Michelle Nasello22:11

LOL Lorna

Claire Ridgway22:11

Lorna, 

Tracy Borman22:11

Gail: I came to really like Cromwell when researching my biography of him. Yes, he was ruthless, but so were his contemporaries. And he was also loyal, intelligent, irreverent and funny - he even made his enemies laugh!

Claire Ridgway22:11

Hi Georgia!

Tracy Borman22:11

Thanks, Owen - and lovely to meet you again, virtually-speaking!

Claire Ridgway22:11

Hi Leigha!

Lorna Wanstall22:12

Rozsa HS stands for:

Hidradenitis suppurativa

Gail Thomas22:12

OK must read your bio of him. I have read your book Elizabeth's Women and loved it. So, Cromwell next on the list.

Rozsa22:12

Why did H8 let his daughter Mary rot on the vine? Weren't there political alliances he might have made by marrying her off?

Owen Emmerson22:12

And you! It's odd not "seeing" you at Hever!

James22:12

Hello Tracy, lovely to see you 😊 here as you have done rather a lot of research on Henry VIII over the years, do you feel he has misrepresented in some ways? Was there anything in particular you found out about his personal side that showed him in a different light?

Tracy Borman22:12

Lisa: you're right, and I do disagree with her on that. I've always admired Anne, but even more so in recent months as I've been filming a new series about her. We finished filming only a few days before lockdown so fingers crossed it will be broadcast on 19 May as planned!

lisa sanderson22:12

What turns me off Cromwell is his corruption concerning the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Anne certainly criticized him a lot for this.

Tracy Borman22:12

Thanks, Gail!

Claire Ridgway22:13

Hi HistoryGirl!

Margaret Ward22:13

Running a tad late, but finally made a chat! Lockdown in TX, sounds like a seedy woman's prison movie, but

Claire Ridgway22:13

Hi Margaret!

Lorna Wanstall22:13

Rozsa I think H8 didn't want to have a grandson of his on the throne he wanted to have a son of his own

Margaret Ward22:13

I'm usually out and about

lisa sanderson22:13

I am very interested in seeing your series about Anne, Tracy. Unfortunately, they take a while to get to SBS.

Christine Colburn22:13

A friend of mine suffers with HS now and modern medicine. I can't imagine what it would have been like for Henry

Clare Shepherd22:14

But wasn't the Dissolution at Henry's insistence, as he needed money?

Owen Emmerson22:14

Omg! A new Anne series?

Tracy Borman22:14

Rozsa: good phrase! Various different suitors were mooted in her childhood/youth but thanks largely to the rapidly-changing political and diplomatic climate, they all came to nothing.

Georgia Cosenza22:14

I am currently reading Tracy's book on Cromwell and absolutely loving it!

James22:14

Clare yes it was, they disagreed about where the money should go however.

Gail Thomas22:14

What??? A new series on Anne? Wish we could see it in the U.S. Speaking of Anne, Henry Norris comes to mind...he and Henry VIII were lifelong friends! Shouldn't Cromwell have taken a hint there as to what his fate could be?

Tracy Borman22:14

Owen: it's one of the first places I'll visit as soon as we're able to venture out again. Love Hever so much.

Alaina Hurley22:14

Hi Tracy! Do you think Henry regretted executing More and Cromwell?

Lorna Wanstall22:15

Christine HS is not good but there are 2 types of it, 1 is treatable the other isn't and I think that is what H8 had

Margaret Ward22:15

Poor Mary. A horrible thing she and Katherine went through.

Rozsa22:15

Thank you Tracy and Lorna. What a waste of a princess's life ...

lisa sanderson22:15

Henry and Cromwell were both corrupt, I think?

James22:15

This new series on Anne sounds very exciting and will be a must watch

Clare Shepherd22:15

Thanks James. Cromwell, like many Tudor officials was partial to his cut.

Ceri Creffield22:15

Look forward to yhstvseries, Tracy.

Margaret Ward22:15

I think Henry greatly regretted More and Cromwell.

Natalia Wiczorek22:16

Maybe More?

James22:16

In fairness though Cromwell was very charitable as well. His work on the poor law must be commended.

Tracy Borman22:16

Lovely to see you too, James! Yes, I've researched Henry for many years, but until this book I had become a bit fixated with the wives (for obvious reasons!). Seeing how he interacted with the men in his life made him much less of the caricatured tyrant. I was particularly surprised by his vulnerability. One visitor to his privy chamber remarked that he was 'the most timid man...you could hope to meet'

Georgia Cosenza22:16

HS is very horrible, painful. I am familiar with it as a friend has it though generally more mild unless it flares up.

Clare Shepherd22:16

And possibly Wolsey too?

Lorna Wanstall22:16

Gail I think Cromwell used Anne's downfall as a chance of getting rid of a few of his enemies too

lisa sanderson22:17

What is HS? Maybe, I missed the answer?

leigha modlin22:17

Hi Claire! It's been a while since I logged on. I'd just like to thank everyone in this chat as I read through! Some Tudor escapism is exactly what I needed right now!

Margaret Ward22:17

A NEW ANNE SERIES?? Will It be available in the US?

Tracy Borman22:17

Lisa: you're right, but at the same time Cromwell paid out of his own pocket for the Bible to be translated into the English so that ordinary people everywhere had access to the word of God. His reformist beliefs were genuine, I think.

HistoryGirl22:17

Hi Claire!

Claire Ridgway22:17

Leigha, it's lovely to talk Tudor, isn't it?

Claire Ridgway22:18

Tracy, do you think that Henry would have legitimised Fitzroy had he survived?

lisa sanderson22:18

I must read your book, Tracy. I think that Diarmud's might be too admiring.

Lorna Wanstall22:18

Georgia I know my poor old dinosaur had a really bad flare up just before we all got lockdown if we couldn't have got gluelash tablets he would have had to go into hospital

Ceri Creffield22:18

Funny how people squared religion with being on the take- but it was a time when corruption was the norm!

Tracy Borman22:18

Clare: Henry certainly sanctioned the dissolution, but it was more the instigation of his reformist ministers - Cromwell in particular.

Tracy Borman22:19

Delighted to hear it, Georgia!

Margaret Ward22:19

I think I've watched everything available on Netflix and Amazon.

James22:19

That's fascinating Tracy, certainly shows another to Henry. Sounds silly but it makes him sound human as well, which is something people can often forget when looking at those magnificent portraits.

Constance22:19

Tracy, would be interested on your thoughts on Thomas Boleyn.

Tracy Borman22:19

Gail: hopefully it will be broadcast on your side of the Atlantic too! Yes, Cromwell should definitely have learned from previous examples. The stakes were so high in Henry's court, but I guess his men thought the rewards were worth the gamble.

lisa sanderson22:20

He seems to have been much more human when he was young, James!

Clare Shepherd22:20

Yes, I think Henry was led, carefully, by Cromwell. He certainly had a reformist agenda.

Owen Emmerson22:20

Yes, James! I thought the same. Perhaps it helps explain why that Holbein imagery was necessary?

Francesca Romana Castellani22:20

I would like to know more about the young Henry. Can you suggest any books? thanks

Constance22:20

Didn't Henry follow the mass format until his death? Not a big reformer.

Tracy Borman22:21

Hi Alaina! He definitely regretted executing Cromwell, lamenting a few months later that he had put to death 'the most faithful servant he ever had'. His reaction to More's death is not recorded but he did everything he could to avoid having him executed so yes, I think regret would have been there too.

lisa sanderson22:21

I would like to, as well, Francesca.

Claire Ridgway22:21

Francesca, I loved Starkey's Virtuous Prince.

Lorna Wanstall22:21

Is there any evidence to suggest that mum and dad Boleyn saw Elizabeth after Anne's downfall and murder (executiomn)

Francesca Romana Castellani22:21

Thank you Claire

Natalia Wieczorek22:21

There is one called the making of Henry V111 but I don't have the authors name to hand

Tracy Borman22:21

James: thank you - I hope you'll enjoy it. It will be on Channel 5 (Uk) btw

Christine Colburn22:22

What is the name of the series on Anne? Apologies if you already said and I missed it.

Rozsa22:22

The Life and times of Henry VII by Neville Williams has bits on young Henry in it. Not a close relationship with his father...

Tracy Borman22:22

Clare: absolutely, he regretted Wolsey. Wolsey's servant George Cavendish found Henry weeping bitter tears in private after hearing of his death...although he could not show his grief in public.

Tracy Borman22:22

Margaret: I really hope so!

Roland Hui22:22

Natalia - 'Making of H8' is by Marie Louise Bruce (she wrote on Anne Boleyn too)

Francesca Romana Castellani22:22

Thanks to all of you for your suggestions

Margaret Ward22:22

Channel 5. The US will have to wait to see it. I so wish I could get that channel.

Michelle Nasello22:23

Great suggestions, thank you

Natalia Wieczorek22:23

Thats the one, I have it upstairs

Lorna Wanstall22:23

I think Thomas More was Henry's voice of reason.

Tracy Borman22:23

Claire: I think Henry was seriously considering legitimising Fitzroy. In every respect apart from his illegitimacy, he was ideal in Henry's eyes - a real chip off the old block (pardon the pun!)

lisa sanderson22:23

I haven't heard of Marie Louise Bruce. She sounds interesting.

Tracy Borman22:23

Lisa: do let me know what you think if you do read it!

Ceri Creffield22:23

Do you think, Tracy, that H8 was essentially self-destructive? He killed so many of those he loved.

Claire Ridgway22:23

Tracy, thank you!

lisa sanderson22:24

Thank you, Tracy. I will!

Gail Thomas22:24

Tracy what was Cromwell's biggest mistake, in your opinion, in the whole Anne of Cleves fiasco?

Tracy Borman22:24

Constance: Thomas Boleyn was the ultimate social climber and political operator. He sacrificed everything (his own children included) to further his own career. Of all Henry's men, I found him one of the hardest to like.

Alaina Hurley22:25

Thank you Tracy!

Lorna Wanstall22:25

Ceri I think that Henry was his own worst enemy and to be honest Mary was very like him on that score too as she too was her own worst enemy

Constance22:25

Thanks, Tracy

lisa sanderson22:25

Do you think that Anne was in love with Henry, Tracy?

Rozsa22:25

H8 regretting killing Cromwell reminds me of H2 regretting getting Thomas Becket killed. What is it with these English Henrys and Thomas's close and tangled relationships?

Tracy Borman22:26

Francesca: David Starkey's is a good one. Love anything by Alison Weir

Natalia Wiczorek22:26

Tracy, was Thomas Boleyn a climber? I read he said that if he could be made treasurer he'd ask for nothing ever again.

Tracy Borman22:26

Lorna: that's a really interesting question. To my knowledge, no...

Francesca Romana Castellani22:26

thank you

Ceri Creffield22:26

Thanks Tracy. That's an interesting point about Mart

Roland Hui22:27

Lisa - Marie Louise Bruce wrote an excellent biography on Anne Boleyn. It's from the 1970s - so it's a bit dated, but still a great read.

Ceri Creffield22:27

Mary

Lorna Wanstall22:27

Tracy you say T Boleyn was a social climber so do you think he was like his character portrayed in the Tudors is a close to what the real Thomas would have been

Tracy Borman22:27

Christine: the working title is The Fall of Anne Boleyn. Each of the three episodes will take a forensic look at the days leading up to her execution. Living her story day by day, hour by hour, gave me a whole new understanding of what happened.

lisa sanderson22:27

I will look for it, Roland. Thank you.

Christine Colburn22:27

Thank you, Tracy!

lisa sanderson22:28

I look forward to watching the series, Tracy.

Ceri Creffield22:28

The Marie Louise Bruce biography of Anne was the first I ever read so it has a special place in my heart

Tracy Borman22:28

Ceri: I think he definitely had a self-destructive streak. A great deal of his behaviour was also driven by frustration, which intensified as his reign progressed and more things started to go wrong.

Clare Shepherd22:28

Sounds good.

Francesca Romana Castellani22:28

will it arrive in Italy?

Francesca Romana Castellani22:28

The series on Anne B I mean

Roland Hui22:29

Tracy, as a curator at Historical Royal Palaces - which is your favorite site, and why?

Lorna Wanstall22:29

Do you think Henry regretted killing Anne?

Tracy Borman22:29

Gail: I think the Anne of Cleves marriage was certainly an error of judgement on Cromwell's part - above all because he miscalculated in thinking that Henry would settle for a purely political alliance. What he failed to appreciate was that Henry still wanted to be in love with his wife (even temporarily!).

Tracy Borman22:30

Lisa: I don't think Anne was in love with Henry. Neither do I think she was the arch-schemer she's often been depicted as - the men in her family really pushed her in the king's path. I also doubt whether Henry truly loved her. I think it was more about the thrill of the chase

Constance22:30

Tracy, I saw that you work at Hampton Court in a room used by Edward VI. Tell us what that feels like when you are alone in there.

Tracy Borman22:30

Rozsa: quite!

Tracy Borman22:31

Natalia: Thomas Boleyn may have said that, but his actions imply otherwise, I think

Margaret Ward22:31

Tracy I agree with you on Thomas Boleyn. I don't like him. I understand times were different, but he paraded both daughters under Henry's nose to get ahead.

Lorna Wanstall22:31

Tracy I think if Anne of Cleves perhaps had had a little more time to prepare for her marriage to Henry and got to know more about him before coming to England things may have been different. I also feel that if Henry had given his marriage a chance as well things may have worked out

Rozsa22:31

Tracy - Interesting about the thrill of the chase. Entice then deny...

lisa sanderson22:31

That's a pity, Tracy. I liked the romance in The Tudors!

Natalia Wieczorek22:31

That's a fair point, Tracy

Tracy Borman22:32

Lorna: yes, I think that was a pretty good portrayal. Is it treason to admit I really enjoyed that series??

Tracy Borman22:32

Francesca: I really hope so. I'll keep you posted 😊

Alaina Hurley22:32

Lorna, I read somewhere that Henry regretted it on his deathbed. But I don't know if that is a reliable source.

Lorna Wanstall22:32

Rozsa Henry was definitely a hunter he hunted heads
Natalia Wieczorek22:32
I did, and there was some good research in there

lisa sanderson22:33

I like to think that, Alaina.

Tracy Borman22:33

Roland: now, we're not supposed to have favourites, but strictly between ourselves I think it has to be Hampton Court. To me, it has such a unique atmosphere. It really does feel like stepping back into the Tudor court. That said, the Tower is pretty special too!

Rozsa22:33

Tracey - One's taste frequently departs from one's reason. Go ahead and admit you enjoyed the series.

Lorna Wanstall22:33

Tracy I loved the Tudors and I must have watched it dozens of times..

James22:33

Definitely got to agree with you on Hampton Court Palace there Tracy 🤔

Tracy Borman22:34

Lorna: I think he was traumatised by it, but his desire for a male heir helped lessen his guilt. He was also very good at compartmentalising and quickly moved on to the next wife.

Claire Ridgway22:34

James, ha!

lisa sanderson22:34

My husband won't watch it because the star looks nothing like Henry! He played him well, though.

Tracy Borman22:35

Constance: I do indeed. The curators' offices are in what used to be Edward's nursery. Even though the rooms have completely changed since then, it still gives me shivers down the spine to be there, especially when nobody else is around. And no, I haven't yet seen one of the palace's many ghosts!

Alaina Hurley22:35

Tracy, I absolutely loved The Tudors. Despite all the inaccuracies lol! It's my favorite show of all time. I adored Natalie Dormer's portrayal of Anne.

Claire Ridgway22:35

Who do you think was the biggest influence on the older Henry?

Tracy Borman22:35

Margaret: exactly!

Gail Thomas22:35

Tracy I am there with you on The Tudors! So...do you happen to have a favorite Thomas Cromwell portrayal, in film, TV, or stage?

Owen Emmerson22:35

Tracy, another questions: why do you think Henry went to the lengths to order a swordsman for Anne's execution when the axe was good enough for Catherine Howard?

Ceri Creffield22:36

How long have you worked at the Royal Palaces Tracy?

Tracy Borman22:36

Lorna: I agree. It's not true that it was Anne's appearance alone that put Henry off. It was more the fact that she didn't understand the game of courtly love and rejected his initial advances (when he was in disguise and she didn't recognise him, but slapped him around the face!)

Clare Shepherd22:36

It is a wonderful place, I used to visit frequently when I worked in London. I even went when I went to a concert in London from Devon. We went around on the following day. It really is like you might go around a corner and bump into a Tudor courtier. It's so atmospheric.

Lorna Wanstall22:36

I still feel that Anne of Cleves sailed right past my little island on the way down the Medway to Rochester castle..... That flotilla must have been amazing to have seen back then

lisa sanderson22:37

I think that it indicates that he was being strangely considerate, Owen? Some vestige of love?

Margaret Ward22:37

I enjoyed The Tudors as well! I had a hard time with the whole Mary/Margaret thing, but I just let it go and enjoyed it for what it was.

Tracy Borman22:38

Lisa: your husband has a point! My favourite Henry is Damian Lewis's (Wolf Hall)

Rozsa22:38

Owen - I think Henry recognized Anne's finesse, and was aware of her formation at the French court (Claude of France). He paid her his due by having her dispatched in style. Whereas with Katherine Howard, he was furious with her for cuckolding him with various partners. No finesse at all, no brains, either.

Tracy Borman22:38

Alaina: I'm glad I'm not alone! 😊

Georgia Cosenza22:38

Oh, I love the Tudors series too, as well as Wolf Hall

Natalia Wieczorek22:38

Yes, Damian Lewis was fantastic, so menacing and spoilt

Alaina Hurley22:39

Margaret, the Mary/Margaret thing still drives me crazy!

Claire Ridgway22:39

I loved the fact that "The Tudors" gave us a young Henry, a man you could understand people falling in love with and people wanting to serve.

Tracy Borman22:39

Claire: hmm, the biggest influence was probably his privy chamber servants. His failing health meant that he spent more time with them than anyone else. One of the most influential was his personal physician, William Butts - a stout reformer as well as a skilled physician

Michelle Nasello22:39

Wolf Hall was excellent to watch.

Lorna Wanstall22:39

Keith Michell was the only actor to play a believable H8

lisa sanderson22:39

I can't help being angry with Hilary Mantell for not being sympathetic with Anne!

Tracy Borman22:40

Gail: it's a tough choice between Mark Rylance (TV) and Ben Miles (stage). Can I cheat and say a combination of the two??

Claire Ridgway22:40

I love William Butts, fascinating man. Thank you.

James22:40

Tracy if you had to pick three figures from the Tudor period who are favourites which ones would they be and why?

Tracy Borman22:40

Ceri: since 2008. It has flown by!

Tracy Borman22:40

Clare: so pleased you agree!

lisa sanderson22:40

I like Keith Michell too, Lorna.

Gail Thomas22:40

Oh Tracy I am glad you said Ben Miles! I saw the play and thought he was fantastic!

Lorna Wanstall22:40

Tracy it's all down to getting older the years seem to fly by a lot quicker

Constance22:40

Team Keith

Ceri Creffield22:40

Dream job, Tracy!

Tracy Borman22:41

Lorna: it really must have. She arrived in great state. Love the fact that this, Henry's shortest marriage, was also the one that started with by far the most ostentatious wedding.

lisa sanderson22:41

Yes, Constance!

Tracy Borman22:41

Margaret: me too!

Natalia Wiczorek22:41

Was Ben at the Globe?

Lorna Wanstall22:41

I like JRM (Tudors) portrayal I think he captures Henry temper and desepitive side very well

Alaina Hurley22:41

Lisa I agree!

Tracy Borman22:41

Lisa: agreed re: Mantel/Anne!

Laurie Duerr22:41

Tracy, I find it very interesting that you site Will Sommers in your talk too, as being quite influential on H8 at the time. Was that openly acknowledged around court then? Or was he looked upon as just a comic relief?

Owen Emmerson22:42

Ben Miles was phenomenal. So pleased he did the audio book for The Mirror and the Light.

Rozsa22:42

Tracy - After spending 8 yrs. with Anne Boleyn and her sophisticated French-honed games of courtly love, Henry was most likely appalled by Anna of Cleve's dull approach to attraction. I am too from what I've read about her. She sounds a good woman, but Henry had been schooled by Anne Boleyn - a master at her game.

Alaina Hurley22:42

I read Wolf Hall years ago and I didn't like it. Perhaps it was the writing style?

Claire Ridgway22:43

Alaina, I was the same.

lisa sanderson22:43

I didn't like the style either, Alaina.

Georgia Cosenza22:43

Tracy, do Wolsey's marble baths still exist at Hampton Court?

Lorna Wanstall22:43

Laurie You have seen the Picture of Henry on the throne with Jane and Edward. Will sommers I believe is that picture too. I think he is in the arch behind elizabeth

Gail Thomas22:43

Mark was excellent too. I also liked James Frain's portrayal in The Tudors. Just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your time here and answering our many questions.

Alaina Hurley22:43

Glad to know I'm not the only one!

Tracy Borman22:43

James: what a tough question! Off the top of my head (and I'll think of a million more after posting this): Elizabeth I (incredibly strong, pragmatic and self-disciplined), Thomas Cromwell (humorous, loyal, streetwise and irreverent) and Anne Boleyn (intelligent, resourceful and - in the end - 'braver than a lion' 🤔)

Laurie Duerr22:44

Yes Lorna, I always found that interesting that Will was in that picture too!

Tracy Borman22:44

Gail: he gave such a different portrayal of Cromwell than Mark Rylance's, but both are absolutely believable

Michelle Nasello22:44

I agree Gail

Lorna Wanstall22:44

Gail I felt Mark was holding back as Cromwell in that. He didn't seem to give it all he had

Tracy Borman22:45

Ceri: it really is. I'm glad I didn't listen to my careers adviser at school who told me to forget a career in history!

Rozsa22:45

Alaina, Claire - It's ok not to like Hilary Mantel. She's a master at her craft, but her approach is too dense for me to fully absorb. To each his own, a chacun son gout.

lisa sanderson22:45

I do think that Catherine of Aragon is never really given her due, although Anne is more fascinating.

James22:45

Great choices Tracy, particularly in agreement on Anne and Elizabeth 🤔

Ceri Creffield22:45

Very interested to know more about Will Somers. Isn't he also in that picture from Henry's psalter of him playing the harp as King David?

Lorna Wanstall22:45

James frain is good in the tudors, I felt a great deal of sympathy for him. He had done all that Henry asked of him and it still wasn't enough.

lisa sanderson22:46

Thank you, Rozsa.

Tracy Borman22:46

Laurie: Will Somer was revered at Henry's court. Everyone knew that the king respected and trusted him almost more than any other man. I think it's fascinating that he may have been a 'natural fool' - ie that he had a learning disability of some kind. Far from being laughed at, such fools were believed to be closer to God and were deeply respected.

Claire Ridgway22:46

Rozsa, I just didn't like the style - the tense and point of view, plus I found all of her characters unlikeable. I have to have someone to like.

Tracy Borman22:47

Rozsa: very good point. The contrast between the two Annes must have been great

Constance22:47

Tracy, since you've just worked on the Anne Boleyn project, any new observations on George Boleyn?

lisa sanderson22:47

It was strange, because I liked Mantell's early books.

Rozsa22:47

Agreed, Claire. There has got to be someone in a story that you can hang your hat on. Otherwise, why read about them at all?

Tracy Borman22:47

Alaina: I found the first book of the trilogy really hard to get into, but it was worth persevering. The second and third flowed much better, I think.

Alaina Hurley22:47

I love anything Tudors related. So when it came to the Wolf Hall miniseries, with such talented actors, I say down to watch it. But I could not make it past the first or second episode. Is this just me?

Tracy Borman22:47

Georgia: I wish!

Lorna Wanstall22:47

Tracy if memory serves Will sommers got kicked out of court at one point for being to lewd

Margaret Ward22:47

Lorna, Henry was so susceptible to the whispering in court. Cromwell was hated. When he failed at Anna of Cleves, that's all it took for the wolves to pounce.

Laurie Duerr22:47

Thanks Tracy, very fascinating!

lisa sanderson22:48

I couldn't watch it, Alaina.

Lorna Wanstall22:48

Henry was quite prudish I believe he didn't like dirty jokes and lewd behaviour

Tracy Borman22:48

Gail: I really liked James Frain's portrayal too...and thank you! I've had such a fantastic time

chatting to everyone 😊

Constance22:48

I'm probably an outlier, but I didn't care for Claire Foy as Anne.

lisa sanderson22:49

Claire Foy was wonderful as the Queen!

Ceri Creffield22:49

Constance, me neither.

Tracy Borman22:49

Lisa: there is a huge amount to admire in Catherine. And, for the record, of all the wives I think she's the one Henry loved most

Rozsa22:49

Lisa Sanderson. I wish Katherine of Aragon had been more of an operator, as Anne of Boleyn was. The woman was too good. She should have insisted on her due from H8 or gone back to Spain where she would have been treated reverentially as a daughter of one of my all time favorite queens - ISABELLA OF SPAIN.

James22:49

Without wanting to give away any spoilers, the last paragraph of 'Henry VIII and the men who made him', is brilliant. Was it always your intention to finish the book in that way Tracy?

Michelle Nasello22:49

I have not read the books yet but I loved the Wolf Hall series.

Lorna Wanstall22:49

Constance, no you aren't on your own Claire Foy didn't gel at all with me either.

Constance22:49

Fastest hour of lockdown so far. Thanks so very much

Tracy Borman22:49

Ceri: yes, that's right. He's definitely worth reading about

Margaret Ward22:49

I had a hard time getting past the pale blue eyes

Georgia Cosenza22:49

Tracy, sad that they are gone, as well as other things. They must've be magnificent.

leigha modlin22:50

Tracy, I'd like to ask an opinion question. After all the time, sacrifice, strife and separation from Rome, what would have happened had Cromwell not interceded and played a crucial role in Anne's downfall. Had the adultery incest plot not come about, what may have been history's course? I think her fall had to be incredibly dramatic due to the nature of her rise. We're all so acquainted with the story that it's hard to imagine anything other than what actually happened. Surely Henry would not have just let Anne's existence as it was carry on without the production of a son. I've always wondered but never came up with an acceptable guess.

Lorna Wanstall22:50

Rozsa have you watched the Spanish series Isabel?

lisa sanderson22:50

I agree, Rozsa.

Gail Thomas22:50

Constance I agree. Great as Elizabeth II, Anne not so much.

Michelle Nasello22:50

So true Constance

Tracy Borman22:50

Constance: George didn't come across to me in a much better light than his father. When he first heard the charges of incest, he raced across London to see Henry and plead his case, desperate to save his own skin rather than his sister's

Francesca Romana Castellani22:51

Lorna I watched it in these days of lockdown and i had great difficulty in imagining CofH being like that

Tracy Borman22:51

Margaret: you're absolutely right. Henry was so paranoid by then that it took so little to bring Cromwell down.

Rozsa22:51

Indeed, Isabella and Elizabeth II. And may I add Anne of Brittany, marvelously refined, unjustly overlooked. Lorna, I will look for the Spanish series, Isabel. Thks for the tip!

Francesca Romana Castellani22:51

in real life I mean

lisa sanderson22:51

I thought of the sweating fever in relation to this virus, Tracy. Henry was very careful about avoiding it!

Tracy Borman22:52

Lorna: you're right - and I love that fact! There's a particular rhyme quoted in Alison Weir's Henry VIII: King and Court. Absolutely hilarious!

Constance22:52

Me too, Lisa

Christine Colburn22:52

Rosza, Isabel might be on Hulu. I started watching it years ago but didn't get far

lisa sanderson22:52

Thank you, Tracy. I would love to see a series on Catherine.

Rozsa22:52

Henry became king due to older bro Arthur succumbing to sweating disease, no? No wonder he was worried.

lisa sanderson22:53

Katherine!

Tracy Borman22:53

James: thanks so much! 😊 You're always so kind about my books and I hugely appreciate it. I did have that in mind from the beginning....but then, Elizabeth is never far from my thoughts!

Claire Ridgway22:53

Here my church bells are ringing out the hour. Thank you so much to all of you for coming to the chat and a big thank you to Tracy for answering all of our questions. Thank you!

Clare Shepherd is the winner of Tracy's book on Henry. I'll email you, Clare. Congratulations!

Feel free to continue chatting as I realise that a chat like this can be such a help during isolation.

And I just want to say that I'm thinking of you all. Keep well and keep safe x

Alaina Hurley22:53

Just wanted to say that I did love Claire Foy as QEII

Tracy Borman22:53

Constance: and for me too! You're welcome 😊

Michelle Nasello22:53

Congratulations Clare

Laurie Duerr22:53

Thank you Tracy and Claire!

Lorna Wanstall22:53

It's very good Rozsa, and so is the sequel Charles King and Emperor. Isabel is so sad, as Ferdinand and Isael wanted to create one big happy Catholic empire only for it to crash down about their ears.. I cried my eyes out at the end when Isael dies.

James22:54

Congratulations Clare, you will love it 😊

Claire Ridgway22:54

I know Tracy will need to go, but please, the rest of you, carry on if you want to.

Alaina Hurley22:54

Thank you for your time Tracy!

Lorna Wanstall22:54

Nice one Clare happy reading Xx

Christine Colburn22:54

Thank you, everyone! Stay safe!

Michelle Nasello22:54

Thank you Claire, Tim and Tracy for all your time

Natalia Wiczorek22:54

Thank you Tracy and it was nice reading all the comments. Take care all

Rozsa22:54

Keep safe all, keep your immune systems strong, avoid ibuprofen. Quel plaisir, Clare and thank you, Tracy.

Ceri Creffield22:54

Congratulations Clare. Thanks Tracy and goodnight everyone. Stay safe all.

Tracy Borman22:54

Leigha: such an interesting thing to ponder. I'm inclined to think Henry would have found a way to have the marriage annulled, and Anne would have lived out her days in a nunnery or similar, leaving her estranged husband to marry again.

Constance22:54

Take care all. And thanks, Claire! This hit the spot

Lorna Wanstall22:55

Thank you Tracy I hope you enjoyed your time here and can return soon.. Feel free to make a comment in our forum on any post that tickles your fancy
James22:55

Thank you so much for answering questions Tracy 😊 And thank you Claire and Tim for organising this 😊

lisa sanderson22:55

Thank you so much, Tracy.