



Anne Boleyn: A New Life of England's Tragic Queen

By Joanna Denny

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This powerful new biography presents a portrait of Anne Boleyn different from the unsavory and unflattering accounts of her that have come down through history. Instead, we learn about the real Anne—a woman who was highly literate, accomplished, an intellectual, and a devout defender of her Protestant faith. Anne's tragedy began when her looks and vivacious charm attracted the notice of England's violent and paranoid king whose love for her trapped her in the vicious politics of the Tudor court. This compelling account of Anne Boleyn plunges the reader into the intrigue, romance, and danger of King Henry VIII's court and the turbulent times that would change England forever. It will forever change our perception of this much-maligned queen.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Denny seeks to redeem Anne Boleyn from the slanders of Catholic propagandists hired to paint her as a monster. Anne and her diplomat father, Thomas, were advocates of the "New Religion"—the Protestantism spreading through England in the early 16th century. The Boleyn family's meteoric rise in status and influence threatened Cardinal Wolsey and his Catholic power base even before Henry VIII divorced the Catholic Catherine of Aragon in order to marry her lady-in-waiting, Anne, thus initiating England's Protestant Reformation. While effectively setting this scene of high-stakes intrigue, Denny focuses on Anne; in her interpretation, Anne's integrity and moral courage lay at the center of the period's vortex of personal and political strife. Brilliantly evoking Henry's bullish intensity, Denny mines the 17 existing love letters that reveal the king's impatient infatuation with Anne. By contrast, she portrays Anne as reticent, acquiescing to the king out of commitment to the Protestant Reformation rather than personal desire. Denny lucidly catalogues the technicalities of Henry's seven-year legal struggle to make Anne his wife and how Anne fell from favor when she failed to produce a male heir. Finally, Denny (the author of a fictional trilogy on the Tudors) records Anne's stoicism as she was charged with incest and adultery, tried and, in 1536, executed. Although she sometimes idealizes her subject, Denny's defense of Anne is coherent and thoroughly readable. (Apr.)

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From [Booklist](#)

The second wife of England's Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn continues to fascinate readers and inspire authors. Denny's biography is but the latest after *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (2005), by Eric Ives. Anne was a daughter of one of the king's diplomats; her arrival at court in the 1520s contributed to the English schism with Roman Catholicism by intensifying Henry's machinations to annul his first marriage. Queen Anne eventually outlasted her dynastic usefulness, bearing but one girl (the future Elizabeth I) and not the boy on whom Henry hoped to stabilize the legally dubious Tudor claim on the crown. This context, while present in Denny's narrative, is less prominent than Anne's alluring personality and her posthumous reputation. Was Anne vamp or victim? Historical opinion favors the latter, a viewpoint Denny develops as she contests the adultery and treason charges by which Henry rid himself of her. For fans of the Six Wives, Denny delivers a fast-reading and dramatic portrayal. *Gilbert Taylor*

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Review

"A good book, entertaining...One can't ask much more of a biography...Fascinating facts." -- *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 6/4/06

"An excellent history...[Denny] presents us with a much-researched, well-documented book." -- *The Roanoke Times*, 04/09/2006

"Any[one] studying Anne Boleyn must have this new biography." -- *Midwest Book Review*, 6/06

"Challenges [Anne Boleyn's] image as a temptress and describes the doomed queen as an intellectual, devout Protestant and dutiful monarch." -- *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 03/31/06

"Denny's writing is clear and to the point. This is a definite purchase." -- *Library Journal*, 03/15/06

Denny draws a very different sketch of this complicated woman...The style is engaging and readable. -- *Bust Magazine* , June/July 2006

Denny gives us chapter and verseto refute the charges against Anne...Denny has given Anne Boleyn a new life. -- *Providence Journal*, 05/07/06

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