

Music, Women, and Pianos in Antebellum Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: The Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary. By JEWEL A. SMITH. (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2008. 215 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$55.)

As any scholar of Moravian history can attest, along with their Christian faith, Moravians have also historically placed high value on education and music. Passionately dedicated to the study and performance of music as a form of religious devotion, and to education as a means of enabling women and men to most fully develop their talents in the service of the greater good, Moravians have long emphasized the centrality of scholarship and music within both their lives and their faith. In her insightful monograph about the Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary, its students, and its teachers during the antebellum era, Jewel A. Smith provides a useful new perspective on what education and music have meant to American Moravians by focusing on the lives and experiences of young women in this one specific community.

Smith's volume begins by offering readers a concise overview of philosophies concerning female education in the nineteenth-century United States. Moravians at once shared profound similarities with their non-Moravian counterparts and possessed radically different ideas about the significance and nature of female education. Like many Americans in the antebellum era, Moravians assumed that the primary purpose of educating young women was to prepare them for their future roles as wives and mothers. Moravians, however, were much more profoundly committed to providing rigorous educations for their daughters (of a quality comparable to that received by their sons) than many Americans. Assuming that most Moravian girls would grow up to marry and have children, Moravian parents also wanted to prepare their daughters for useful, independent spinsterhood should they choose not to (or not have the opportunity to) marry.

As Smith details, regardless of young women's future paths in life, parents, teachers, and students alike felt that music would constitute a vital part of it. Drawing on a rich collection of teachers' records, parents' letters, and students' diaries, Smith demonstrates that the achievement of musical proficiency was extremely important for students, teachers, and parents alike. The seminary's managers prided themselves on hiring music teachers of great talent and renown, and these teachers themselves upheld a very rigorous, exacting standard of musicianship for their female students. In their diaries, students castigated themselves for their musical missteps and failures, and parents wrote to both their daughters and their daughters' teachers expressing anxieties about their progress and the amount of time which they were (or, more troublingly, were not) devoting to their musical study.

One of the most significant aspects of Smith's book is her discussion of the musical educations of young Moravian women and young Moravian men.

Comparing curricula of the seminary and Nazareth Hall (a local school for Moravian boys), Smith locates both intriguing differences and similarities. Both expected to study music diligently and to display their musical skills publicly, but Smith demonstrates that the musical curriculum that young women followed was actually far more technically demanding and difficult. Young men, after all, were preparing for professional careers and did not have the same time to devote to musical study that young women (who were not studying to be lawyers, doctors, or ministers) did. Young women thus often mastered more challenging musical works than young men did and attained greater levels of technical proficiency.

Music, Women, and Pianos is a thoughtful, thoroughly researched study of the Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary and its status as a site for the musical education of young women in the early and mid-nineteenth century. Smith provides interesting analyses of the types of music that young women performed, the kinds of instruments that they had at their disposal, and the motivations, ideals, hopes, and anxieties of the schools' founders, managers, teachers, and students. Although some of Smith's discussions about the more technical aspects of music and performance, and her most thorough discussions of the types and qualities of the musical instruments available to students at the academy, will likely be most appreciated by music historians, her monograph nonetheless constitutes an important study of the nature, meaning, and significance of a musical education for young women in the antebellum United States.

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Army at Home: Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front. By JUDITH GIESBERG. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 248 pp. Illustrations, figures, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.)

In *Army at Home*, Judith Giesberg provides a fascinating and moving account of the experiences of working-class, immigrant, and African American women who lived and labored in the North during the Civil War. Responding to a tendency to marginalize these women in Civil War scholarship, Giesberg puts them back in the picture, telling of their struggles to hold onto farms, to secure work in wartime industries, to protest racial injustice, and to gain relief for the unimagined difficulties the war inflicted on them.

Giesberg has an eye for compelling stories, and she tells those stories well. Among the tales she relates is that of Lydia Bixby, famous for receiving one of history's most celebrated condolence letters from Abraham Lincoln. But, as Giesberg explains, she apparently destroyed the letter, as it could not provide the real support—emotional or financial—that Bixby needed. Giesberg, too, tells the story of Charlotte Brown, whose suit against the segregation policies of a San