

the revolution and the sometimes surprising ways in which they intersected with one another. Jacob Green may not have been as radical as others, but he was an important revolutionary and reformer, one we now know much more about thanks to Scott Rohrer's book.

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Founding Friendships: Friendships between Men and Women in the Early American Republic. By CASSANDRA A. GOOD. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. 289 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

With *Founding Friendships*, Cassandra Good joins the ranks of such scholars as Fredrika Teute, Catherine Allgor, Richard Godbeer, and Lorri Glover, who have analyzed the private worlds of the founding generation in order to recapture and reconfigure the connections between their experiences as wives, salonnières, fathers, sons, brothers, or friends, and the political realms within which they moved. Through a series of thematic chapters analyzing private letters, novels, advice books, and friendship albums, along with social ideals and gift-giving practices, Good considers the phenomenon of nonsexual, cross-sex friendships between educated elite white women and men in the early years of the republic. Acknowledging that most advice writers cautioned strongly against mixed-sex friendships—there was the ever-present danger of the “seduction of women by men who pretended to be their friends”—Good asks readers to look beyond published literary representations to examine how individuals shaped their feelings in diaries and letters, and to enter the spaces where they created platonic relationships: churches, literary and other circles, and the homes of married friends and fictive kin (46). This extensively researched, thoughtful book will rest comfortably on the shelf with its compatriots.

Although conceding that men's fraternal bonds remained the model type of republican friendship throughout the era, Good makes two claims for the importance of mixed-sex friendships. First, she argues that, under the right circumstances, mixed-sex friendships had the potential to empower elite women, who might experience “a form of gender relations closer to equality than any other relationship between men and women in American society” (187). Through connections to their male friends, she suggests, women could “pass along political intelligence,” acquire “political power,” and use “persuasion and influence” to facilitate patronage appointments (164, 171). They might even become “female politicians,” to use Rosemarie Zagarri's term, joining the “civic body more directly and equally than they ever could have done through marriage” (189). In the context of the early republic's gender system, however, terms such as “equal” or “political power” may not capture both the opportunities and the constraints that elite women

encountered. After all, the salience of male-female friendships was vastly greater for women than for men, because they had the most to gain or lose. Women, not men, bore the burden of embodying the platonic quality of the pair's tie.

Beyond possible benefits to individuals, Good envisions a broader political significance for platonic friendships. They "could, with careful work, become part of the social glue that held the new republic together" (106). Over the fifty-year period of her study, Good finds, rather surprisingly, that the pattern of such ties "did not change significantly" (10). Only in the 1820s, with the arrival of a "more democratic political system," did their established uses lose traction (189). By the 1820s, however, women of all social and racial groups had already begun to weave new forms of social cohesion through their voluntary associations and to use political petitioning to rework both individual and collective forms of social networking. Even if readers share my skepticism about the book's broad claims, they can and will enjoy the author's ease at conveying the texture and charm of early-republic heterosociality.

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The Adams Papers. Series II: Adams Family Correspondence. Volume 12: March 1797–April 1798. Edited by SARA MARTIN et al. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015. 630 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendix, chronology, index. \$95.)

Each time a member of the Adams family sat down and wrote a letter to another member of the family, they made a precious contribution to their national descendants. The correspondence among members of the family constitute a gift to the American people and to the historians and other scholars who study their lives and times. The editors and the Massachusetts Historical Society are to be warmly congratulated for the good work they have done in carrying forward the *Adams Papers* project.

Volume twelve of the *Adams Family Correspondence* provides scholars with a front-row perspective on the late eighteenth-century Atlantic world. The tumultuous times that characterized the first year of the John Adams administration are discussed and analyzed by interested and informed family members on both sides of the Atlantic.

Eighteenth-century American life is well-documented in this volume, and for that reason alone, this volume is a must in every academic library. That we get a view of the period from a family so integral to the formation of the revolutionary American republic and its early national development is to revel in a vicarious experience that will bring great pleasure to the historian.