

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.

In 1918, the great-grandson of John and Abigail Adams, Henry Adams, wrote in his *Education of Henry Adams* that the “study of history is useful to the historian by teaching him his ignorance of women and the mass of this ignorance crushes one who is familiar enough with what are called historical sources to realize how few women have ever been known” (353). The volume under review constitutes a corrective to the problem Henry observed. In volume twelve, there are 276 letters; nearly three-quarters of those letters (74 percent) are written by Abigail Adams. A significant portion of Abigail’s writing is directed to family members beyond her husband. In her informative and beautifully written introduction to the volume, editor Sara Martin explains to readers that the “correspondence allowed Abigail to maintain her connections to family and community, while at the same time it afforded a reliable means of transmitting information from the seat of national government” (xx).

For those interested in the political culture of the United States during the 1790s, Abigail’s trenchant descriptions are invaluable. Consider her depiction of the pro-French Republicans in Congress in a letter to her sister dated April 4, 1798, the day after the XYZ Affair became public: “The Jacobins in senate & House were struck dumb, and opened not their mouths, not having their cue, not having received their lessons from those emissaries which Talleyrand made no secret of telling our Envoys are Spread all over our Country; and from whence they drew their information” (485). This sentence, which vividly conveys the distrust that permeated the polarized politics of the 1790s, is representative of the descriptive chronicle of a family and a nation that is richly captured in the pages of this worthwhile volume.

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Pennsylvania Hall: A “Legal Lynching” in the Shadow of the Liberty Bell. By BEVERLY C. TOMEK. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. 206 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$14.95.)

On May 17, 1838, the Liberty Bell rang out, summoning help as anti-abolitionist mobs attacked and destroyed the newly constructed Pennsylvania Hall. Christened a “Temple of Liberty,” the hall had come into existence in a rare moment of cooperation between groups of abolitionists with divergent interests. The abolitionists who supported the construction of the hall wanted to awaken American citizens to the cause of slavery, while their opponents wanted to stop abolitionists from discussing the issue. *Liberator* editor William Lloyd Garrison, who barely escaped the melee, described the destruction of the hall as a “legal lynching.”

In her study of Pennsylvania Hall, Beverly C. Tomek uses the story of the hall to examine the larger narrative of the American antislavery movement. Indeed, as