ness now but also posed that same challenge in their own historical moment. Their value was in social, rather than literary, exchange. Cohen provides scholars with an alternative to lyric reading—balladic reading—which was not a way to approach a set genre, but a way to solidify a constellation of relations between people to create a shared social history. His book will become necessary material for scholars who seek to read poems historically rather than lyrically.

Wendy Raphael Roberts
University at Albany
State University of New York
Albany, New York

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We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota. By Sabine N. Meyer. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xvi, 269 pp. $55.00.)

In her interesting and well-documented book Sabine N. Meyer describes the nineteenth-century civic environment of St. Paul, Minnesota, focusing on the temperance movement and the citizens who debated it. St. Paul warrants such special scrutiny because the city had a long history of economic entanglement with alcohol production and of enthusiastic alcohol consumption; by virtue of remaining consistent over time, St. Paul became an outlier.

Two options were open to St. Paulites looking to position themselves as influential citizens. On the one hand, hitching identity-group agendas to the flourishing temperance cause could connect St. Paulites to valuable political allies among the state's and the nation's white, middle-class reformers. This strategy was pursued by women and sometimes by Irish Americans. On the other hand, resistance to the temperance movement could demarcate and stabilize ethnic identities—sometimes even advocating these identities' superiority, as was the case for German Americans. Meyer argues that responding to temperance ultimately encouraged St. Paul's citizens to draw and redraw lines within and between various identity groups, assembling and disassembling coalitions. Shifting alliances, in turn, had implications for how temperance and then prohibition worked in St. Paul, influencing the trajectory of restrictive laws and law enforcement. Ultimately, temperance underwrote identity formation, and identity formation shaped temperance.

Meyer advances this argument through chronologically arranged chapters, beginning in the 1820s and continuing until wartime prohibition in 1919. Each chapter (except the last) is divided into five parts, covering state-wide temperance, St. Paul's civic culture, and Irish American, German American, and women's identity formation. The benefit of this structure is the thoroughness with which each stakeholder is described. Meyer's exploration of German-language newspapers is a particularly useful contribution, and she supports her various claims with evidence drawn from religious and ethnic association minutes, legislative records, and unpublished writings. Meyer also advances a constellation of subarguments related to each group: local concerns motivated St. Paulites more than national or abstract issues; St. Paul's temperance advocates were often New England migrants who routinely misunderstood the meaning and scale of local law resistance; shared religion and religious authorities mediated German and Irish American responses to temperance; and the Women's Christian Temperance Union used temperance to negotiate a greater public role.

Yet historians might be troubled by how the constraint of giving equal emphasis to each of five registers in each of the five chapters threatens to distort the broader story of St. Paul's and Minnesota's temperance battles. Consider for example the awkward placement of Scandinavian immigrants, a group that arrived midnarrative (1860s–1890s); in Ramsey County, which includes St. Paul, the Scandinavian population would surpass the Irish and approach German numbers (p. 180). Scandinavians' relative elision in the text is important because the history of temperance has often recognized Scandinavians—especially Swedes—for high-profile temperance activism. A determined focus on Irish Americans and German Americans therefore suggests that the book's representation of the historical

environment is subordinate to a theoretical argument about identity creation.

Lisa M. F. Andersen
Juilliard School
New York, New York

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Remember Me to Miss Louisa: *Hidden Black-White Intimacies in Antebellum America*. By Sharony Green. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2015. xx, 199 pp. Cloth, $36.00. Paper, $24.95.)

Sharony Green is several paragraphs into describing a remarkable document—an 1847 letter from an enslaved woman, Lucile Tucker, to her master, Rice Ballard—when she hits upon something. "Though Ballard could be ruthless," she writes, "Tucker saw something unorthodox in him and asked for her freedom" (p. 40). This bears repeating: she "saw something unorthodox in him." To consider that insight—from a self-supporting woman who remained enslaved, hoping from within the awful circumstances of her life that her request might not go unheeded—is to remember in a profoundly empathetic way that slavery's diversity of forms allowed its victims to probe its facade for cracks.

Green's new book, *Remember Me to Miss Louisa,* delves deep into one particular crevice. Despite its expansive title, the book only glances at most forms of interracial intimacy, focusing primarily on African American women in Cincinnati and New Orleans whose masters freed and subsequently supported them, presumably on the basis of their relationships with each other. Green hopes to show how intimacy, the kind of "emotional and physical closeness" that allows both parties "to reap some benefit," complicated race relations in both slavery and freedom (p. 8).

This is an enticing subject, and Green's fine archival research has uncovered evidence that Ballard, despite much inattention, "cared" enough for a woman he freed to inquire after her and send her money (p. 52). And Green shows that African American women "maneuvered strategically" to get what they could out of slavery (p. 64).

But intimacy is hard to demonstrate and so are intimacy's consequences. Because the men Green examines did not say why they supported their former slaves, much of the book's argument comes down to whether or not black women spoke "confidently, even assertively" to white men (p. 84). If they did, then this might indicate intimate discourse. In Tucker's letter, was her description of emancipation as "a matter I desire to have arranged as soon as possible" an assertion of right, as Green argues (p. 39)? Does reading the line, as Green does, as "I *deserve* to have arranged" (p. 38, emphasis added), elevate the letter to evidence of "intimacy" or does it remain merely a polite request to someone with power? (Green helpfully reproduced several letters here so that readers can decide for themselves.) Much depends on an indeterminate *desire;* other misreadings are scattered throughout the book. And how can one possibly evaluate Green's contention that nineteenth-century America's "restlessness . . . was due in part to Southern white men who quietly invested themselves in black women and children" (p. 34)?

The book's evidence will not stretch so far. The fascinating final chapter tracks the mixed-race children of two white brothers; the other chapters consider two men and one woman (along with the people who participated in relationships with them)—an insufficient source base to demonstrate that cross-racial, and, crucially, cross-*class,* networks of support were, as Green argues, "prevalen[t]" (p. 11). What if these relationships were as unorthodox as Tucker perceived them to be?

Patrick W. O'Neil
Methodist University
Fayetteville, North Carolina

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Measuring Manhood: *Race and the Science of Masculinity, 1830–1934*. By Melissa N. Stein. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. 354 pp. $94.50.)

This readable book traces the interplay of race and sex as co-constitutive categories over more than a century in the Unites States, demonstrating their intense and complex im-