never reached the operational phase, and thousands of weapons that were intended to arm disloyal citizens never arrived at their intended destinations. Counterintelligence forces in the region therefore deserve credit for helping the federal government maintain its authority throughout the war.

Clearly, Towne has validated the assertion that disloyal elements were active in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan during the American Civil War. This, of course, raises a question: Did similar subversive behavior take place elsewhere, or did unique conditions in that region make it a phenomenon confined to those particular states? Did Iowa, for example, have its own internal struggle? One may hope that some enterprising historian will one day grace us with as thorough an examination of fifth-column activities in the Hawkeye State and elsewhere as Towne has done for the Old Northwest.

A Peculiar Imbalance: The Fall and Rise of Racial Equality in Minnesota, 1837–1869, by William D. Green. A Fesler-Lampert Minnesota Heritage Book. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. xiii, 220 pp. Notes, index. $22.95 paperback.

Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865–1912, by William D. Green. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. xx, 367 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $32.95 hardcover.

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We are in the midst of a renaissance of scholarship on the history of race and African American life in the nineteenth-century Midwest. Over the past decade, a growing number of scholars have expanded and revised a handful of classic texts to reveal an increasingly complex narrative of racial formation and agency on behalf of the region's people of African descent.

William D. Green makes a useful, if complicated, contribution to this scholarly flowering in his two books on African Americans in Minnesota: *A Peculiar Imbalance* (*PI*) and *Degrees of Freedom* (*DoF*). Two aspects of the books deserve to be emphasized at the outset. First, like many state studies, the two books (and *DoF* in particular) focus less on the state as a whole than on a particular locale, in this case St. Paul, in Green's words, "the capital of black Minnesota as well as the center of white bigotry" (*DoF*, 155). Less conventional is the relationship between

the two books. While at first glance *DoF* might appear to be a sequel to *PI*, *DoF* is as much a reframing and retelling of the earlier book as an extension of it.

Peculiar Imbalance is, as its subtitle suggests, a narrative of antebellum, wartime, and early Reconstruction Minnesota, with race and African Americans at its center. It casts the story of early black Minnesota as a transition from a bifurcated frontier of slavery and relative freedom to one of a racialized "civilization" in which African Americans struggled to take advantage of emancipation's opportunities in the midst of a persistent culture of white supremacy.

Punctuating this transition narrative are chapters focused on related stories, especially those of Native peoples and the tension between Protestants and Catholics, particularly in regards to the racial nativism experienced by working-class Irish immigrants. For Green, the drama of the narrative comes from the "peculiar imbalance" of uncontested whiteness created by Protestant Anglo-American Minnesotans, who could accept despised working-class Irish Catholics and "civilized" Indians as voters while persistently denying such acceptance to black men.

Degrees of Freedom, despite the dates in the subtitles, does not pick up where the first book left off. Instead, Green devotes the first part of *DoF* to recasting the story of *PI* toward the goal of connecting it to the theme of the 2015 book: the rise and political evolution of Minnesota's first three generations of "race men." One hundred pages into *DoF*, a book ostensibly regarding the period from 1865 to 1912, we find ourselves having once again moved from the 1840s to the early 1870s. Here, though, the story has shifted from one of placing the history of race and early black Minnesotans in comparative context to detailing the interplay between early civil rights activists ("the Barbers") and the state's ascendant Republican Party.

In parts two and three of *DoF*, Green charts new ground, taking the story from the aftermath of enfranchisement to the founding of the state's first chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Taking a more pessimistic tack than he did in *PI*, he focuses particular attention on the ways putatively race-neutral laws (for which Minnesota would become well known after the Civil War) could still fail black people in the hands of hostile or unsympathetic whites. As he writes, "The problem that African Americans continued to face after emancipation, after enfranchisement, after school integration, came from the prejudice of white men acting in defiance of the law, not the law itself" (95).

In part two of *DoF*, Green details the rise of the state's first distinctly postwar black leadership class while also returning to a theme from *PI*—the relationship between perceived civilization and civil rights. Although most black Minnesotans were laborers, especially in various forms of domestic and service work, Green focuses on a group of leaders he terms "The Entrepreneurs," a handful of very active members of the black professional class (the figures who produced the many newspaper articles and court cases that make up his evidence base). These men, like newspaper editor John Quincy Adams, struggled to prove black people's credentials as "civilized" Americans in the face of racial violence and largely symbolic and ineffective civil rights laws that failed to protect black people from various forms of discrimination and daily humiliations at the hands of whites.

While figures like Adams defy easy generalizations regarding "accommodation" and "assertiveness" in black approaches to race politics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the growing tension between the two, represented at the national level by Booker T. Washington and (especially) W. E. B. Du Bois, nonetheless shaped (and was shaped by) the experience of black Minnesotans. Green explores this theme in the third and final part of *DoF*, "The Radicals," in which he details the complicated political and personal conflicts that led to splits within the state's civil rights movement. He focuses particular attention on the movement for political independence among members of the black professional class, who, like Du Bois at the national level, increasingly felt betrayed by a Republican Party that offered little more than symbolic measures and appeals for votes at election time.

On the whole, Green's two books provide a rich narrative of race and black popular politics in Minnesota during the long nineteenth century. At the same time, however, Green's reframing of the story in *DoF* around the rise of the state's black (male) political leadership class comes at the cost of some of the complex comparative relationships he develops in *PI*. Indeed, one wonders what insights Green might have found from writing a true sequel to *PI* in which he placed the rise of black political leaders more fully within the context of the racial, class, cultural, and gendered dynamics that shaped postwar Minnesota. Still, both books make a significant contribution to nineteenth-century Minnesota and midwestern history, with *PI* being particularly suitable for the undergraduate classroom.