

Dirck postulates that Lincoln and other antebellum lawyers performed a vital social and economic function, mediating conflicts by providing personal, emotional, and legal “distance” between contending interests. In this sense, Lincoln and the legal system represented a form of “grease” that allowed America’s moving parts to mesh more efficiently as the country developed and grew. Dirck agrees with Steiner that Lincoln the lawyer’s greatest achievement was to mediate minor disputes on a daily basis before they could become major ones, and Dirck argues that Lincoln’s legal instincts and his personal demeanor helped him fulfill that function.

Rarely are two books so complementary in rounding out a neglected subject to such good effect. Steiner’s *An Honest Calling* offers a legal historian’s soundest judgments about the foundations of Lincoln’s legal philosophy and law practice. Dirck’s *Lincoln the Lawyer* puts a more social, political, and personal face on Lincoln’s legal career and the antebellum legal fraternity writ large. Together, they set the stage for the further task of connecting Lincoln’s political and legal careers more seamlessly together within an overarching social, economic, and cultural portrait of antebellum America.

*The Rescue of Joshua Glover: A Fugitive Slave, the Constitution, and the Coming of the Civil War*, by H. Robert Baker. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006. xiv, 260 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$38.95 cloth.

*Finding Freedom: The Untold Story of Joshua Glover, Runaway Slave*, by Ruby West Jackson and Walter T. McDonald. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2007. xii, 158 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$18.95 cloth.

Reviewer Rebekah Mergenthal is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Chicago. She is working on a dissertation titled “The People of the Lower Missouri River Valley and the Expansion of the United States, 1803–1855.”

On the night of March 10, 1854, Joshua Glover was arrested in Racine, Wisconsin, for being a fugitive slave. Glover, who had run away from Missouri two years before, was taken to a Milwaukee jail. As Glover’s master sought to regain his property, a crowd in Milwaukee helped Glover escape from jail and flee to Canada.

This thrilling story is the common point of departure for two recent books, *The Rescue of Joshua Glover*, by H. Robert Baker, and *Finding Freedom*, by Ruby West Jackson and Walter T. McDonald. But the approaches to Glover’s story in the two books are vastly different. For Jackson and McDonald, Glover himself is the primary focus, and they

painstakingly recreate what can be known of his life both before and after the exciting events of March 1854. Baker, on the other hand, traces the important constitutional and legal ramifications of Glover's liberation that stemmed from the court cases brought against two of his rescuers. Whereas Jackson and McDonald provide a narrative of the life of this particular runaway slave, Baker analyzes antebellum conceptions of citizenship and the relationship between popular resistance and the rule of law. These two books operate on very different scales and likely were intended for different audiences. Yet together they expand our understanding of the antebellum Midwest and the role of slavery within it.

Jackson and McDonald are not unmindful of the larger context of the story they tell, but their goal is to recenter the story of Glover's capture and escape on Glover himself. Instead of leaving Glover when he escapes to Canada and focusing on "the political effects of 'the Glover affair' on Wisconsin as well as the country as a whole" (131), *Finding Freedom* traces Glover from slavery in St. Louis, Missouri, to his death in 1888 in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada. Jackson and McDonald have done an admirable job of piecing together Glover's life from glimpses in censuses, city directories, court cases, and account books. Their brief but engaging afterword tells about their painstaking work and the fortuitous breaks that allowed them to tell "the story of one illiterate man who had committed the illegal act of stealing himself from his owner" (131). This, as well as scattered references throughout the text, might prove of particular interest and inspiration to genealogists and others who are pursuing their own research on "average people" (111) in the nineteenth century.

What *Finding Freedom* leaves implicit, however, is analysis of the kind of freedom Glover found. The stories of the life he made in Racine before his capture and in Etobicoke (outside of Toronto) after his escape to Canada might have been fruitfully compared with those of other runaways to help us better understand how "the promised land" (90) was constituted. Readers might also wonder how Jackson and McDonald think their deeper perspective on Glover's life might change or complicate the usual stories of "the Glover affair."

*The Rescue of Joshua Glover* is part of a new approach to constitutional history that examines legal texts with sensitivity to the context in which they were created and debated. Baker emphasizes the Wisconsinites' "belief that the Constitution belonged in the last instance to the people" (xii). He shows how that belief is crucial to understanding how and why the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was declared unconstitutional in Wisconsin as a result of Glover's rescue. Throughout the book

Baker is attuned to the “dialogue between the people and the courts” (131) and finds the meaning of the Constitution there, not in the intent of those who composed it.

Baker’s complex and compelling book is about legal ramifications of the rescue of Joshua Glover more than it is about the man himself. Glover largely disappears from Baker’s text as he escapes into Canada, an approach that seemingly would not satisfy Jackson and McDonald. That absence mirrors Glover’s disappearance in the 1850s, however. While white Wisconsinites continued to talk of Glover’s rescuers, the man himself disappeared from their awareness once he was no longer in the state. In a fascinating chapter, Baker astutely analyzes this displacement and its implications. The third chapter focuses on the ways that minstrel shows and sentimental literature, such as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, helped shape white Wisconsinites’ racial understandings, enabling them to debate the implications of the rescue of a now-removed fugitive slave even as they continued to deny full citizenship to the free blacks who remained in Wisconsin. This discussion could be helpful in comprehending the limits of antislavery developments in other midwestern states during the same period. *The Rescue of Joshua Glover* will be of particular interest to constitutional and legal historians and historians of the antislavery movement, but the density of its argument may make it inaccessible to most undergraduates.

*The Border between Them: Violence and Reconciliation on the Kansas-Missouri Line*, by Jeremy Neely. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007. xvi, 305 pp. Maps, notes, tables, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Derek R. Everett received his Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas, where he currently teaches and researches the political and geographical history of the American West. His article on the border dispute between Missouri and Iowa will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Annals of Iowa*.

Historians often consider the “border war” between Missouri and Kansas in the 1850s as a prelude to the Civil War, a microcosm of the myriad problems facing the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. After secession and the fall of Fort Sumter, though, the perils of this boundary region all but disappear from scholarship. Refusing to allow the spotlight to move away, Jeremy Neely has produced a solid, compelling work that spans the 1800s, shedding light on the area’s complex long-term story.

Neely received his doctorate from the University of Missouri, and he lives on a farm in rural Vernon County, Missouri, one of six counties that form the core of his research area. Neely’s personal connection to