

Race and Rights: Fighting Slavery and Prejudice in the Old Northwest, 1830-1870

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Nor does Clemmons tell the story of conflict from the perspective of the Dakota. She is up front with the reader about this in her introduction. This is primarily a story of white Americans told from the perspective of white Americans.

Still, *Conflicted Mission* is an excellent resource for those interested in studying the challenges of mission work on the Minnesota frontier. It also offers an interesting take on mission work. As Clemmons writes in her introduction, "Antebellum missionaries were not supposed to change; indeed, the very nature of missionary work in the early nineteenth century was designed to be unidirectional, with superior missionaries ministering to and changing supposedly inferior heathens" (3). *Conflicted Mission* confronts that stereotype by showing a dynamic mission that was constantly in flux much to the surprise of the ABCFM, the government, and certainly the missionaries themselves.

Race and Rights: Fighting Slavery and Prejudice in the Old Northwest, 1830–1870, by Dana Elizabeth Weiner. Early American Places Series. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013. xii, 327 pp. Maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$38.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Kristen Anderson is assistant professor of history at Webster University in St. Louis. She is working on a book manuscript tentatively titled "Abolitionizing Missouri: German Immigrants and Racial Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America."

In *Race and Rights: Fighting Slavery and Prejudice in the Old Northwest, 1830–1870*, Dana Weiner examines the struggles of abolitionists and black rights advocates in the Old Northwest states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois. Her goal is to expand our understanding of the antislavery movement by examining it in this relatively understudied region. She maintains that, although historians of abolition have generally focused on abolitionist activities in cities in the Northeast, many antislavery activists considered the Old Northwest region vital to the struggle against slavery; they thought that the future of the country lay in the West and wanted to influence its development.

In particular, Weiner argues that understanding the debate over race and slavery in the Old Northwest is necessary if we are to build a complete understanding of the evolution of racial politics in the United States during the nineteenth century. She argues that black rights were even more restricted in the Old Northwest than in other parts of the North. Officially outlawing slavery in the Northwest Ordinance did not remove issues of slavery or race from the region; slavery continued to exist in modified forms, and racial distinctions were written directly

into the laws. As a result, the struggle against slavery in the region also became part of a larger struggle for black rights that attempted to overturn laws limiting the lives of blacks in the area or attempting to keep them from even moving there. Weiner argues that abolitionists incorporated this struggle for black rights into their larger struggle against slavery, as they argued that the black codes of the Old Northwest states were examples of how the power of the slaveholding states affected even what was done in supposedly free states. She further argues that these antislavery activists expressed ideas about civil liberties that helped shift the ways Americans thought about and talked about rights.

The book is organized both thematically and chronologically. Two opening chapters provide background on black rights in the Old Northwest and on the origins of antislavery activism there. The book continues with three thematic chapters, each devoted to one of the rights that activists struggled for and utilized in the course of their fight against slavery: freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech. Weiner details the ways antiabolition forces in the Old Northwest contested all three of these rights. Antiabolitionists denied that abolitionists had a right to write or speak publicly against slavery or in favor of black rights on the grounds that doing so challenged widely held community norms and threatened the peace of the region and nation. As a result, white and black abolitionists not only had to make a case against slavery, but even had to convince their communities that they had a right to do so. The book concludes with two chapters on the immediate pre-Civil War period and the persistence of racism in the region after emancipation.

Weiner's book represents a useful expansion of the literature on the abolitionist movement. Although much of the story will be familiar to those conversant with that literature, Weiner demonstrates how a focus on the Old Northwest adds depth. In addition to demonstrating the inseparable link between abolitionism and the struggle for black rights in the region, she also examines abolition in a rural setting of small communities rather than in the large cities of the Northeast. She argues that the experience she describes here might actually be the more typical one, given that most Americans lived in communities that looked more like the small towns and dispersed rural communities of Ohio than they did like Boston or Philadelphia.

The book will be of interest to those interested in the history of the Midwest more generally, as it is an excellent study of race relations and the struggle over slavery in that region. Weiner demonstrates clearly that the Midwest was not removed from the struggle over slavery but rather was very much involved in and divided by it. The book is a good

example of a regional study that is also very local in its focus. Weiner does talk about the region in general but often focuses on certain specific communities in some detail, providing a good example of how to link the local, regional, and national in a scholarly study.

Soldiering for Freedom: How the Union Army Recruited, Trained, and Deployed the U.S. Colored Troops, by Bob Luke and John David Smith. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. How Things Worked series. x, 131 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$39.95 hardcover, \$19.95 paperback.

Reviewer David Brodnax Sr. is professor of history at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois. He is the author of "'Will They Fight? Ask the Enemy': Iowa's African American Regiment in the Civil War" (*Annals of Iowa*, 2007).

Early in the Civil War, Iowa Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood rejected a proposal to place a company of black men into a white regiment, but by 1863 he supported the creation of a separate black regiment, declaring, "When this war is over & we have summed up the entire loss of life it has imposed on the country I shall not have any regrets if it is found that a part of the dead are *niggers* and that *all* are not white men" (quoted in Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War* [1998], 86). Such mixed and changing attitudes held by many government officials about whether and eventually how to use black troops is the subject of this short monograph by historians Bob Luke and John David Smith. Published as part of Johns Hopkins University Press's How Things Worked series, *Soldiering for Freedom* employs a wide array of secondary sources and some published military documents and other primary sources to summarize the process by which African Americans joined and served in the Union Army during the Civil War.

In the first two years of the war, Luke and Smith argue, Northern blacks who attempted to join the military were turned away, while a handful of officers in the South who tried to recruit blacks were thwarted by government resistance and by their own strong-arm tactics. After the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in 1863, the government massively expanded recruitment into the United States Colored Troops (USCT). Here Luke and Smith give special attention to the efforts of Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas, who played an important role in the formation of Iowa's 60th U.S. Colored Infantry. The authors next focus on the white officers who led USCT regiments, describing their varying motives for seeking such positions and how they were chosen and trained; there is also a brief description of the largely unsuccessful efforts