

sion of World War II, which re-examines the “good war” myth. Photographs from historical collections showing the war effort on the homefront provide visual counterpoints to Bushemi’s combat pictures.

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### *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. Pp. xiv, 259. Illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$38.95.)

Ostensibly a book on the capture and rescue of a fugitive slave in Wisconsin, *The Rescue of Joshua Glover* does much more than tell an interesting story. H. Robert Baker skillfully delineates the larger political, racial, and constitutional conflicts that made slavery a pressing political issue for northern whites in the 1850s. Above all else, the book focuses on antebellum Americans’ resort to popular constitutionalism: “the notion that, in the last instance, the final arbiter of the Constitution was the people themselves” (p. xii).

In March 1854, on the outskirts of Racine, Wisconsin, the fugitive slave Joshua Glover was seized under the terms of the hated Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. His captors quickly spirited him away to Milwaukee, where they expected to find legal sanction and protection from federal officials before carrying Glover back to slavery in Missouri. Instead, on the following day, thousands of Milwaukeeans assembled outdoors at

the federal courthouse where they would decide Glover’s fate. The orderly crowd spent the day deliberating their legal and extra-legal options. After exhausting a host of legal remedies, the meeting decided on a popular nullification of the Fugitive Slave Act on the grounds that it denied the fundamental constitutional rights of trial by jury and habeas corpus. At dusk, they broke Glover out of jail, then had abolitionists send him to Canada where his freedom would be secured.

While Joshua Glover disappeared, the legal issues surrounding his rescue did not. Federal authorities filed charges against the leaders of the Milwaukee assembly, leading to a six-year struggle over the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Law and the actions of those involved in Glover’s rescue. The legal wrangling—the cases involved a host of local, state, and federal judges, juries, and officials—would become a defining issue in Wisconsin politics in the late

1850s. Eventually, the Wisconsin Supreme Court would rule that the Fugitive Slave Act was unconstitutional, only to be overturned by the United States Supreme Court. In *Ableman vs. Booth* (1859), the Court ruled that the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was legal and that federal courts and statutes were superior. By then, the legal and constitutional issues surrounding Glover's rescue had become part of a larger set of political concerns centering on slaveholders' increased domination of the federal government. Wisconsinites—like many others in the North—were now eager to support a Republican Party that promised to protect them from a federal government that robbed free white northerners and the states of their freedoms in order to protect and promote the interests of slaveholders.

This short summary does no justice to Baker's rich, complex case study. Baker is well-read in the secondary literature on a great range of topics: nativism and immigration; local, urban, and regional history; the

history of mobs and crowd action; popular politics; constitutionalism; and the politics of race and slavery.

Historians will value Baker's deep contextualization of the Glover rescue in the historical literature. Students and general readers will appreciate the well-written, fast-paced narrative, along with the complexities of the past revealed in Baker's analysis. Professors will find the book useful for all of the above reasons, and a paperback edition would work well in classes on popular politics, antebellum history, Midwest history, historical methods, and constitutional history. In sum, H. Robert Baker has produced a fine work of historical scholarship that speaks to both historians and a wider audience.

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### *Conceiving a New Republic*

#### *The Republican Party and the Southern Question, 1869-1900*

By Charles W. Calhoun

(Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006. Pp. x, 347. Illustrations, notes, index. \$35.00.)

Involving some of the most momentous issues in American history, the Republicans' "Southern Policy" in the decades after the Civil War has long attracted scholarly attention. Charles

Calhoun's *Conceiving a New Republic*, impressively researched and thoughtfully argued, is a major and welcome contribution to this body of scholarship.