

tion drove consumer demand, then why did provincial consumers often purchase goods that looked strikingly different from those used by metropolitan elites? Jaffee is hampered in answering these questions by his loose and shifting definitions of the social groups that constituted the emerging middle class, and by his selection of illustrations. (There are no close-ups that allow readers to follow construction details or decorative elements.) Despite these drawbacks, readers will appreciate Jaffee's penetrating glimpse into the overlooked

gap between the consumer revolution and mass production and will come to appreciate the important role played by small New England towns in crafting a new nation of goods.

JENNIFER VAN HORN is Visiting Assistant Professor in Interdisciplinary Studies at Towson University. She specializes in early American art and material culture and is currently at work on a book manuscript, "Civility in a New World: Material Culture and the Making of America 1740-1780."



Hearts Beating for Liberty
Women Abolitionists in the Old Northwest
 By Stacey Robertson

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. Pp. xiv, 303. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95.)

In *Hearts Beating for Liberty*, Stacey Robertson argues that western women held a distinctive place in the antislavery movement. Distanced from the eastern split between the Garrisonian and anti-Garrisonian factions, western women forged a unique antislavery stance that Robertson characterizes as pragmatic, goal-oriented, and based on mixed-sex cooperation.

Radical Garrisonians in the West were far more isolated and marginalized than those in the East. Out of necessity, they built coalitions with Liberty Party advocates (political abolitionists), church-based antislavery colleagues, and those who helped

fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad. Robertson argues that western Garrisonians had no choice but to cooperate with the various antislavery factions while moderating their own radicalism. After all, she states, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois residents were generally more conservative, more hostile to women's rights, and more racist in terms of their Black Laws than those in the East. Since most westerners shunned controversial Garrisonian positions like disunionism, nonvoting, and women's rights, western antislavery activists developed a more flexible approach based on forging coalitions and making compromises.

Robertson argues that the rural nature of the Old Northwest also determined which types of abolitionism gained a foothold there. The free produce movement, for example, worked well in the West, where a boycott of slave-made goods was less of a sacrifice to rural farm families who did not rely on store-bought luxury goods to begin with. Quaker men and women worked together to create relatively successful free-produce publications and stores throughout the region. Robertson points out, however, that “advocacy of free produce often meant increasing women’s unpaid ‘morally pure’ labor in the home. So while boycotting slave-made produce might help immediate emancipation, it also reinforced the binary of women as moral domestics and men as paid players in the marketplace” (p. 68).

Some western abolitionist women also adopted the antislavery fair, which the Garrisonian Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society had turned into a lucrative fund-raiser. Western women were attracted to the fairs as respectable activities that seemed to fall safely within “a traditional feminine framework” of crafts, food, and charity (p. 97). Although most of their fairs did not raise much money, Robertson suggests that they did help the participants gain fellowship and support each other.

The Liberty Party accepted women as fund-raisers, supporters, and behind-the-scenes organizers, but not as independent members. Robert-

son concludes that Liberty Party women’s “partisan knowledge and participation did not necessarily lead them to advocate woman’s rights or woman’s suffrage, but it did challenge the prevalent association of politics with masculinity” (p. 65). Western abolitionist women focused less on suffrage and more on practical issues that could be linked to concrete improvements in their communities, such as equal education and dress reform. Although very few western women adopted the Bloomer costume since it was too controversial, they were open to general dress reform ideas that promoted more comfortable clothes and boots, thereby allowing women greater mobility and flexibility in their rural terrain.

When Garrisonian Abby Kelley lectured in Ohio in the mid-1840s, she inspired many women to become abolitionists. She found, however, that they focused on only certain priorities that meshed best with their region; one was the laudable goal of promoting education for free blacks. Several women abolitionists taught in black schools, braving hostility and violence from the dominant white society. Initially, Robertson’s claim that western women established a unique approach, “including a non-Garrisonian focus on challenging racial inequality in the law and social settings,” seems a bit jarring (p. 129). After all, the Garrisonians Sarah and Angelina Grimké developed close friendships with African Americans, invited a mixed-race group of friends

to Angelina's wedding to Theodore Weld, and fought against racial prejudice in the North. However, as Robertson rightly points out, eastern Garrisonians such as Maria Weston Chapman actually chided their western sisters for aiding fugitive slaves, describing this life-saving work as a distraction and a mere palliative that would not help achieve their true goal—an end to the evil system of slavery. Black and white western abolitionist women ignored these rigid strictures and gained hands-on experience in interracial cooperation as they fed and clothed the many fugitive slaves whom they met and cared for. They also worked in interracial coalitions to attack the region's Black

Laws that restricted the rights of free blacks.

Hearts Beating for Liberty is a useful addition to the antislavery literature, providing the first full-length study of abolitionist women in the West.

ALISON M. PARKER is chair of the history department at the College at Brockport, State University of New York. She is the author of *Articulating Rights: Nineteenth-Century American Women on Race, Reform, and the State* (2010) and co-editor of the "Gender and Race in American History" book series for the University of Rochester Press.



Army at Home

Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front

By Judith Giesberg

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. Pp. xi, 232. Charts, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00.)

This is an ambitious book. As Judith Giesberg correctly explains, while historians have extensively examined Southern women and middle-class Northern women during the Civil War, there has been relatively little work on working-class, rural, immigrant, or African American women in the North during the conflict. The author uses a series of case studies to explore how different types of Northern women, who often left little written record, experienced the Civil War. Giesberg seeks to blur the distinctions

between battlefield and home front while simultaneously demonstrating how these women and the war affected each other.

Giesberg's case studies are wide-ranging thematically, including women managing farms alone, seeking aid in relief shelters, working in munitions factories, struggling to integrate street cars, and journeying to reclaim soldiers' bodies. Their geographical range is more limited—the author's subjects live in rural Pennsylvania and the cities of Boston,