

the juvenile justice system raises questions about how this shaped their lives and the neighborhoods in which they lived. The voices and experiences of these young people are submerged in the record, and so the book is more concerned with how adults talked about these young people and determined their fates. The book is therefore limited in what it can tell us about how interactions with the juvenile courts and institutions changed the lives of young black men and women in Chicago after they left them.

Nonetheless, *The Criminalization of Black Children* offers a pressing case for how important it is to consider age, race, and gender together in understanding the history of the American justice system writ large.

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Hendrik Hartog, *The Trouble with Minna: A Case of Slavery and Emancipation in the Antebellum North*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Pp. 208. \$27.95 hardcover (ISBN 9781469640884); \$19.99 ebook (ISBN 9781469640891).  
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*The Trouble with Minna: A Case of Slavery and Emancipation in the Antebellum North* by Hendrik Hartog examines the regime of gradual emancipation in the legal system of early nineteenth century New Jersey. While focusing on the legal and moral circumstances of the process that gradually led to the disappearance of slavery in that particular state, this study also reflects on the political and social implications of gradual emancipation across the antebellum North in states that implemented similar programs, such as Pennsylvania and New York. New Jersey was “shaped by immense and easy mobility, indistinct jurisdictional boundaries, and a deep hostility to providing and paying for public welfare” (6), and, therefore, gives insight into broader developments across the North.

Hartog’s study is split into four thematic chapters. The first chapter examines the New Jersey Supreme Court case that inspired this book, *Force v. Haines* (1840), and analyzes the opinions of both the majority and dissenting justices. The dispute was between two white litigants, Henry Force, who rented out his slave, Minna, to Elizabeth Haines, and centered on which of them was legally required to care for Minna during her time of service: Force, her owner, or Haines, the temporary employer. Haines argued that Minna was disabled and unable to perform her duties and so she, Haines,

should not have to pay for Minna's care. In analyzing the case, Hartog shows how legal interpretations of gradual emancipation were interwoven with issues involving welfare, poor relief, and the responsibilities of communities to the poor—black or white—in a case “about slavery and the care of a slave,” which the justices considered a “subject worthy of their attention” (37).

The second chapter details the life of and places in which Minna and the litigants in the case lived, looking at both the community and legal contexts of the case in the early nineteenth century. The third chapter continues the investigation of gradual emancipation, examining aspects of its legal landscape such as the role of “performative argument in favor of freedom,” which was the ability of those who acted free to become free in law and by legal definition (96). The fourth and final chapter is a speculative investigation of the lives of Force and Haines, reconstructing what may have led them to begin their circuitous route to the New Jersey Supreme Court. This chapter allows for an imaginative understanding of the social aspects of this dispute and what happened to those involved. For example, although Minna seemed to disappear from all records, there was a Mina Clark registered in Philadelphia alongside a James Clark, her son and a seaman. (Minna's son was named Jesse. Because changing names was often a practice of former slaves, and nineteenth century names often appear with various spellings, Hartog asks, “Was Minna now Mina Clark? Was her son Jesse now James Clark?”) (148).

Hartog's study of New Jersey's gradual emancipation process is an important contribution to the ongoing historiographical discussion of gradual emancipation in the antebellum North. Of particular importance is his argument that the traditional oppositional divide between slavery and freedom must be complicated in light of continuing unfree labor in the North well into the nineteenth century, something that becomes clear when examining the legal treatment of that regime in *Force v. Haines* and other legal decisions in New Jersey during the first half of the nineteenth century. However, Hartog's argument that there was “a sense of the inevitable end to the regime,” which he refers to as the “half-full view” of gradual emancipation, seems to discount some recent historiography examining both the official and unofficial practices that maintained unfree labor in various forms, not just in New Jersey but across the North (59). As Hartog convincingly shows, legal opinion and the justices deciding this case believed the “half-full view,” but the uses and abuses of gradual emancipation laws (and the loopholes, intentional or not) allowed unfree labor to continue. These uses and abuses are a critical part of the history of gradual emancipation law regimes across the North, which Hartog argues in his introduction, helps break the binary between slavery and freedom (what he calls “our ‘neo-abolitionist’ commitment to the notion of an antonymic relationship between slavery and freedom—of a binary with an excluded middle” [6]). Hartog's point is that this binary misconstrues the reality of unfree laborers in antebellum Northern states. Legal, permanent

slaves such as Minna were increasingly becoming a rarity in the nineteenth century North, but their care was determined by New Jersey law, which forbade the manumission of disabled or elderly slaves without providing support for them. The unavailability of public support explains why Force did not manumit Minna and wanted to shift responsibility for her elsewhere.

*The Trouble with Minna* is an important contribution to the historiography of gradual emancipation in the North, joining studies such as James J. Gigantino's *The Ragged Road to Abolition: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015) and David N. Gellman's *Emancipating New York: The Politics of Slavery and Freedom, 1777-1827* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008). Furthermore, the examination of social policies regarding slaves, ex-slaves, and the poor is valuable to those examining poor relief and welfare in the early American republic, and the role of the individual, community, and state in that system.

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