

the Wisconsin Commission's importance for understanding reform within the US over the course of the twentieth century. He acknowledges that even more progressive states, such as New York, Illinois, and California, adopted only parts of the Wisconsin model, and that workers in the vast majority of states were provided with far less protection and support than that provided by Wisconsin. While he is undoubtedly correct that historians have erred in seeing Wisconsin and a few other states' institutions as "weak" or "spare," he does not present the evidence that would support the notion that the majority – or even a substantial minority – of the states had institutions or programs that came close to achieving what Wisconsin's did. Indeed, while the author provides a strong account of the forces that accounted for the success of the Wisconsin Industrial Commission, he does not present a strong analysis of the class and political forces that caused other states' programs to be inferior. For example, in an effort to show that occupational disease coverage in workers compensation legislation was more prevalent than other historians (including this reviewer) have acknowledged, the author overreaches and fails to acknowledge the critical role that labour and reformers played in securing such legislation.

Finally, Rogers, perhaps in his enthusiasm for the Wisconsin model, seems to regret the passing of states initiatives that resulted from the establishment of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 1970. While he acknowledges that none of the states sought to achieve OSHA's goal of insuring that employers provide workers with employment "free from recognized hazards" (180), he judges that federal regulation itself has largely not lived up to its "idealistic" and "laudable" goals. This, he posits, was not only because of the "conservative political environment" that almost immediately followed the establishment of OSHA, but also because of the "administrative complexity" of the agency itself (181). This is not an adequate analysis of the assault that OSHA was under virtually from its creation, and Rogers does not provide any evidence that state programs would have fared any better if they had been truly committed to protecting the workers in their jurisdictions.

Gerald Markowitz

John Jay College and Graduate Center, CUNY

Mark Reinhardt, *Who Speaks for Margaret Garner? The True Story that Inspired Toni Morrison's *Beloved (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).**

I became acquainted with Margaret Garner and her family during the mid-1980s while doing research for my dissertation. Since then, I have included snippets of her story in various publications. Given my familiarity with the Garner saga, this

new book excited me. *Who Speaks for Margaret Garner* delivers the first documentary account of a seminal event in American history. It tells the provocative story of how Margaret Garner came to kill one of her children. The collection ably illustrates that this single act simultaneously gave Garner notoriety and renown. Mark Reinhardt writes an introduction that covers one-sixth of the book, where he chronicles the escape, capture, and trial of Garner and her family. The remaining five-sixth of the book consists of documents, including newspaper reports, sermons, editorials, correspondence, and legislative debates. Scholars, students, and lay readers will be pleased to find the rich and varied collection of documents that make up this book.

Most readers will probably ask: who is Margaret Garner? Clearly, she is not a household name. Readers will discover that Garner had the same passion that Patrick Henry immortalized in his “Give me Liberty or Give me Death” speech. Moreover, the challenge that faced Garner and her family was far greater than that which faced Henry and the colonists. While the colonists could only claim that London officials had treated them as slaves, Garner and millions of African Americans were literally slaves. Not only did Kentucky approve the slave-status of Margaret Garner, the United States enforced it, and empowered federal marshals and commissioners to participate in the recapture and forcible return of runaway slaves to bondage. While most American-educated citizens know about Patrick Henry, therefore, Reinhardt illustrates that the abolitionist dream that generations would remember Margaret Garner remains illusive. Today, she is an obscure person in the pantheon of American history.

This book starts with a comprehensive overview of Margaret Garner’s response to her enslavement. Garner, along with her family—husband, four children, and in-laws—joined nine brave souls to escape. They picked an unlikely time to run away. A violent winter storm had virtually paralyzed Kentucky and Ohio. The party of seventeen used a horse-drawn sleigh for the children and supplies. Once they made it to the Ohio River they walked across the frozen water as if they were on dry land. The Garner family separated from the others in Cincinnati, and took up refuge with Joe Kite, Garner’s uncle. However, a federal marshal and posse were in hot pursuit, and followed the snow-laid footprints to Joe Kite’s home. As Garner sensed that they were losing the gunfight, she embarked upon a plan to end enslavement for herself and the children. As the *Cincinnati Columbian* reported on January 29, 1856, “The negress avowed herself the mother of the children, and said that she had killed one, and would like to kill the three others rather than see them again reduced to slavery” (55). This act set the stage for one of the most litigious fugitive slave cases in the history of the United States.

Following the overview of the event in the introduction, Reinhardt proceeds to the documents which he presents in twelve chapters. These sources cover such matters as the escape and capture of the Garner family, the initial

proceeding with the commissioner, and the conflict between federal and state law. Readers will discover that John Jolliffe, Garner's attorney, chose two areas of defense. First, he argued that some members of the Garner family had been allowed to come into Ohio with the knowledge and consent of the owners. Under the automatic emancipation decisions of state courts, the slave owners lost the ability to hold them as slaves the moment they had crossed the state line. Second, Jolliffe had Garner charged with murder in order for the state to shield her from removal as a slave. The documents clearly illustrate the conflict of law problem between Ohio and the United States, while state and federal judges debated various jurisdictional questions. The legal strategies delayed but did not prevent the removal of the Garner family. Federal district judge Humphrey Leavitt sympathized with Margaret Garner, and the sovereign rights of Ohio. Judge Leavitt, nonetheless, upheld the federal fugitive slave law. "In our compound system," he said, "the National and State governments have their appropriate functions and duties; and it is vital to the healthful action of the system, that each should move within its constitutional orbit..." (120) With that ruling Marshal Hiram Robinson and over two hundred deputies escorted Margaret Garner and her family "across to the Covington jail, where [they were] delivered to the Jailor, Andy Herod, who will retain them in custody until their owners shall make what disposition of them they may see proper." (125)

This book is about slavery and freedom, as well as identity, sexual exploitation, and law and politics. The documents illustrate that Garner contested her enslavement by choosing a new name, even though Archibald K. Gaines rejected it by calling her Peggy, the slave name he had chosen. Margaret Garner was biracial, as were each of her four children, which means that the slave owner or another white male had his way with the mother and daughter. This book is about the quest of a single black woman for personal freedom, and that of her family. Reinhardt does not stop there. He asserts that "Slavery is still with us in the most literal sense: millions of men, women, and children around the world are subject to some form of involuntary servitude." (267) He suggests that modern-day slavery may be undone if we contest it wherever it may be found. He is doing his part by donating the royalties from this book to the Free the Slaves Project.

Stephen Middleton
Mississippi State University