



very informative8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Moving and enlightening as a story and as history. By Shannon Griscom Through the prism of one slave woman's efforts to recover her kidnapped children during the Civil War, Adam Rothman weaves a masterful and gripping story of the cruelty and chicanery of slave owners and slave dealers alike in thwarting the potential freedom of young children. By swiftly transferring her three children to a ship bound for Cuba, the owners sought to hang on to their "property" in the form of three children under 10. Rose fights relentlessly to have her children returned from Cuba, using lawyers and politicians sympathetic and skilled. Rothman keeps the story's excitement keen, and yet also buttresses the events with the attending history of New Orleans from 1862 to 1865. I found this single story a way to learn about the tumult and uncertainty of life in the south during the Civil War: slave owners, wanting to keep their property were prepared to take any number of circuitous routes to capture and re-enslave freed African Americans. Both Confederate and Union sides were capable of taking advantage of the former slaves, and only a few men of principle were willing to try to help a woman reclaim her children. The vision of post Emancipation southern life, especially in places like New Orleans, informs our country even today. The book is a page-turner, fascinating in its unique story and skilled in its writing. I could not sleep until I finished it!

Born into slavery in rural Louisiana, Rose Herera was bought and sold several times before being purchased by the De Hart family of New Orleans. Still a slave, she married and had children, who also became the property of the De Harts. But after Union forces captured New Orleans in 1862 during the American Civil War, Herera's owners fled to Havana, taking three of her small children with them. *Beyond Freedom's Reach* is the true story of one woman's quest to rescue her children from bondage. In a gripping, meticulously researched account, Adam Rothman lays bare the mayhem of emancipation during and after the Civil War. Just how far the rights of freed slaves extended was unclear to black and white people alike, and so when Mary De Hart returned to New Orleans in 1865 to visit friends, she was surprised to find herself taken into custody as a kidnapper. The case of Rose Herera's abducted children made its way through New Orleans' courts, igniting a custody battle that revealed the prospects and limits of justice during Reconstruction. Rose Herera's perseverance brought her children's plight to the attention of members of the U.S. Senate and State Department, who turned a domestic conflict into an international scandal. *Beyond Freedom's Reach* is an unforgettable human drama and a poignant reflection on the tangled politics of slavery and the hazards faced by so many Americans on the hard road to freedom. *Beyond Freedom's Reach* received the Jefferson Davis Award from the American Civil War Museum and the 2016 Margaret T. Lane/Virginia F. Saunders Memorial Research Award from the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association. It was named a 2016 Book of the Year by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

"This is microhistory at its best." - *Journal of American History* About the Author Adam Rothman is a Professor of History at Georgetown University.