

concisely and usefully summarizes the state of Lewis and Clark scholarship to date, he also laments what he sees as the “prism of subjectivities,” the “tribalized ‘witness studies,’” the “emotive ideologies,” and the “moral posturing” (pp. 141–42) offered by recent modes of inquiry, ironically condemning entire fields of scholarship that would no doubt invigorate and leaven studies of the Corps of Discovery as they have histories of other places and journeys. This missed opportunity aside, *Lewis & Clark Reframed* is a good addition to the extant literature on the Corps of Discovery and its imperial contemporaries.

COLL THRUSH
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Unburied Lives: The Historical Archeology of Buffalo Soldiers at Fort Davis, Texas, 1869-1875. By Laurie A. Wilkie. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico press, 2021. xxi + 274 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$65.00.)

Laurie A. Wilkie, a distinguished professor of the social sciences at the University of California, Berkeley, offers historians an invaluable resource in her excellent study of Fort Davis, Texas, in the years between 1869 and 1875. The fort, situated north of present-day Big Bend National Park and southwest of modern Odessa, served to protect the inhabitants of West Texas from an array of threats. Fort Davis also differed from many of the typical army installations of the postbellum West because it was home to the soldiers from one of six segregated regiments of Black men who served in the Regular Army after the Civil War, sometimes known as “Buffalo Soldiers.”

As Wilkie uncovers, these men served at a fort named in the 1850s for the future president of the Confederacy while confronting

both an institution and a populace that ranged in its opinions of the Black troopers from open hostility to begrudging toleration. They were, she puts it, “banished to long period in undesirable places” (19). The fort was not only isolated but also decrepit. As Wilkie shows in her second chapter, Black troops got worse posts and with them worse food, worse doctors, and more diseases than their white counterparts. Wilkie’s methodology for bringing the lives and experiences of these men to light is archeology, and her chapters discuss a range of objects, from a pocketknife belonging to Private Joseph Stevenson, to a pair of eyeglasses worn by Sergeant John Sample.

Wilkie also makes use of textual sources that are still underutilized in the study of the American army after the Civil War, in particular the Courts Martial records of the fort. Examining the lives of individuals buried in obscure documents or under layers of debris, Wilkie describes her project as “recognizing racializing assemblages in the past” (28). Inspired the Black feminist work of Alexander Weheliye in *Habeus Viscous* (Duke University Press, 2014), Wilkie deftly updates the staid literature on Black regulars by incorporating modern scholarly conversations about violence, intimacy, and race into her discussion of the experiences of the men who lived, worked, and died at Fort Davis.

Wilkie’s work is notable not only for its historical and archeological recovery of a largely forgotten army post, but also as a reference work for any western historian interested in the postbellum army and its intersections with race in the nineteenth-century West. The volume, published by the University of New Mexico Press, stands out for its numerous tables and illustrations, which underscore Wilkie’s arguments for the importance of her chosen archive and for illuminating the stories of the men of Fort Davis.

Unburied Lives represents the most up-to-date and intersectional treatment of Buffalo Soldiers available to scholars today and will doubtless serve as a model for historians as they work to better understand a critical group of Black Americans who worked for the cause of settler-colonial expansion in the West.

CECILY ZANDER
Southern Methodist University

¡Viva George!: Celebrating Washington's Birthday at the US-Mexico Border. Jack and Doris Smothers Series in Texas History, Life, and Culture. By Elaine A. Peña. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020. xii + 199 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95, paper.)

¡Viva George!: Celebrating Washington's Birthday at the US-Mexico Border, written by Elaine A. Peña, demonstrates that cross-cultural events observed in borderland geographies provide opportunities to define—or redefine—performative expressions of identity, nationalism, and spatial control. Using the George Washington Birthday Celebrations (WBC) held annually in Laredo, Texas, Peña aims to show how analyses of border crossing microhistories can illuminate the basis and impact of debates around trade, security, and immigration. The WBC events demonstrate the unique aspects of “border crossing politics and privileges” to which Peña is attentive (pp. 1–2). *¡Viva George!* is not meant to provide a history of the WBC but uses that record to highlight longstanding cooperation across borders. The author divides the text into two parts. The first section includes two chapters and is devoted to the cultural rituals played out during the festivities. The second section includes three additional chapters that explore how weather, politics, and the

changing face of border crossing affect the ways that cross-border cooperation happens under challenging circumstances.

Two distinct research trajectories guide the text. Peña examines the deeper meaning behind a few of the celebration's enduring traditions—some of which are bizarre or unrelated to George Washington. Certain rituals expect participants to act out stereotypical representations of different cultural or class groups. No matter the actors involved, WBC events define and reinforce class distinctions through practices and events that are only open to individual organizations or groups. The author also analyzes the various purposes to which spectators, organizers, and participants put the celebrations. The festivities provide numerous chances to rework the original intent of WBC traditions to suit present circumstances.

One notable contribution of this text is Peña's development of new conceptual tools. The first concept, *border enactment*, is loosely based on Henri Lefebvre's approach to “representational spaces” (pp. 6–7). Enactments develop the parameters of acceptable behavior and rituals that are rooted in place. The WBC is a site where border enactments reaffirm national spatial boundaries and forge community across the border. Although the ceremony is a goodwill ritual between Mexico and the United States, it also represents a territorial claim of space that depends on both a national and international community. Secondly, the concept of *border scaffolding* uncovers how identity formation in conjunction with public events like WBC work with national borders in community building (pp. 7–8). Lastly, the *expectation of ritual* is a concept that aids in examining the ways that the festivities are anticipated by different sectors of the community (p. 8). Each chapter in this study incorporates the expectation of ritual concept within each theme explored.