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Dragoons in Apacheland: Conquest and Resistance in Southern New Mexico, 1846–1861. By William S. Kiser. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013. 369 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

When General Stephen Watts Kearny marched his army of occupation into New Mexico in August 1846, he promised the native Mexican population protection from hostile Indians, especially the Apaches. He vowed—inaccurately as it turned out—that the federal government would provide the support necessary to accomplish the task. Two years later the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo officially ended the Mexican War and expanded these guarantees to include, whenever possible, the return of Mexican citizens previously captured in Indian raids.

Thus began the American struggle for economic, political, and social hegemony in New Mexico, a struggle which historian William S. Kiser characterizes as not simply a cultural collision between American soldiers and Apache warriors, but an ideological battle between Anglos in the territory and in Washington. He argues that between 1846 and 1861 Americans failed to reach a consensus on how best to exploit the territory and its resources, nor could they finalize a unified plan to deal with Apaches. Competing imaginations over land use and Indian policy pitted military authorities against civilian leaders in New Mexico and aggravated the turf war between the Departments of War and the Interior in Washington. Congressional activity further compounded the problems. The result was an antebellum Indian policy in the Southwest that failed to protect citizens or create a lasting peace. Kiser maintains that this fifteen-year period between the Mexican and Civil wars served as a formative period in United States/Apache relations.

The book's title is a little misleading. *Dragoons in Apacheland* is not a military history of early cavalry efforts in New Mexico per se. At times, in fact, the dragoons fade into the background. The author's purpose is to narrate two distinct story lines: first, how the Apache fought to defend their homeland from aggressive Americans and the military response, and second, how conflicting ideologies across all levels of local, regional, and national government, as well as endemic corruption and clashing egos, prevented a united front and intensified Indian hostilities.

A quick overview of the existing scholarship illustrates the author's claim that his study fills a gap in the literature. Most historians have concentrated primarily on the years of Mexican occupation or the more familiar period following the Civil War. David J. Weber's *The Mexican Frontier, 1821–1846* (1982) is perhaps the best example of the former, while Dan L. Thrapp's seminal study, *The Conquest of Apacheria* (1967), takes the latter approach, allocating only a few pages to the period in question. Perhaps the greatest

number of histories appears in Ralph H. Ogle's *Federal Control of the Western Apaches, 1848–1886* (1970), which pulls the struggle into one continuous timeline. Kiser's *Dragoons*, therefore, offers a fresh interpretive framework.

The book is organized topically and chronologically. Chapter 1 provides a sometimes poignant overview of military life in New Mexico territory, where weather extremes and inadequate food, medical supplies, and ammunition made frontier life miserable at best. Having to wait months for a paycheck further crippled morale. Chapter 2 addresses Apache culture and provides a brief overview of Apache/Mexican relations. Unfortunately the discussion of culture deserves more in-depth attention if readers are to understand why Apaches fought so tenaciously. The historical narrative is similarly a bit sketchy. The author notes, for instance, that prior to the American takeover of New Mexico, locals compounded their "Apache troubles" by illegally trading liquor and buying stolen livestock; however, these vast networks were far more complex than is suggested here. In addition, scalp bounty laws passed by Sonora and Chihuahua in the 1830s had more far-reaching consequences than the brief mention indicates. Another historian of the Apache wars, Edwin R. Sweeney, has argued that these contracts of blood, as they were frequently called, encouraged influential Apache leaders such as Mangas Coloradas to advocate friendly relations with the American newcomers, a peace overture which Americans might well have used to their advantage. In addition, Ralph A. Smith explains in *Borderlander: The Life of James Kirker, 1893–1852* (1999) that Sonora and Chihuahua paid for Apache scalps until at least 1886, dramatically shaping Mexican/Apache relations—and after 1848, United States/Apache relations—for a very long time.

Chapter 3 begins the chronological narrative. Of particular value is the author's extended focus on the relationship between Colonel Edwin Vose Sumner, commanding officer of the Ninth Military District, and James S. Calhoun, New Mexico's first territorial governor and Indian agent. Before Calhoun took office, in February 1851 Congress had passed the Indian Appropriation Act stipulating that agents must ensure the well-being of Native peoples within their jurisdiction as well as the safety of non-Indians. In keeping with this mandate, Calhoun pursued a humanitarian agenda of treaty-making, or at least he tried. Conversely, the War Department had charged Sumner with removing soldiers from New Mexico communities and into forts located closer to Indian villages. Sumner's task conflicted with Calhoun's mission and Sumner's inflated ego frequently led him to refuse even the military escort that orders required him to provide. Civil officials applauded Sumner's 1853 departure, but future dealings between military and civilian leaders generally remained strained throughout the entire fifteen-year period. Kiser claims that this failure to unite in support of a uniform Indian policy toward the Apaches

“condemned countless Indians, American soldiers, and civilians to an early grave” (123).

Kiser devotes another chapter to the three-month long, 900-man expedition of Colonel Benjamin L. E. Bonneville in 1857, allegedly undertaken to punish a few Apaches for the November 1856 death of well-liked Navajo agent Henry L. Dodge. The author aptly characterizes Bonneville as a soldier long past his prime and heartily disliked by men and officers alike. He is far more critical than Edwin Sweeney, who in his biography of Mangas Coloradas maintains that the massive show of force served to stifle further Indian uprisings across southern New Mexico. Kiser conversely labels the expedition an utter failure, claiming that its legacy was to introduce total warfare to the Apache wars, in which the soldiers victimized women, children, and peaceful Apache bands, destroyed Indian resources, and deeply aggravated the growing animosity between Apaches and Americans.

Dragoons also offers a detailed and nuanced analysis of Dr. Michael Steck, a bright light in a long line of dismal agents. Certainly one of the most influential agents in this era, Steck respected Apaches and nurtured peaceful relations with them. He recognized and met with individual leaders when most agents and military men could not distinguish one band from the other. He repeatedly pressed the Indian Office in Washington to establish permanent reservations located near traditional Apache lands. Unfortunately Steck's efforts failed, and decades would pass before the federal government finally took action. According to Kiser, Steck also battled outright defiance from military authorities and contradictory demands from Congress and the Interior Department. Steck's story, however, lacks closure. When and under what circumstances did he depart? What were his successes and failures? Readers are left to wonder what happened to this fascinating man.

This failure to “complete the story,” so to speak, is seen throughout. In a later example, the author cites an important February 1861 event dubbed the “Bascom Affair,” which involved Cochise and his Chiricahua band. This incident, he states, was an “instigating factor in the widespread Apache hostilities” for years (280). Yet a reader unfamiliar with the event must turn to another source to find even the briefest description of it. As with the Steck narrative, one or two sentences would have finished the story and explained its importance.

Despite its few shortcomings, *Dragoons in Apacheland* is well worth reading. Meticulously researched, the bibliography contains an impressive assortment of primary sources. The narrative is clear and the author's writing style is pleasing. Moreover, Kiser makes a strong case for his argument that 1846–1861 was both a unique and a formative period in the history of American/Apache

relations in the Southwest. The book will interest both scholars of the Indian wars and general readers alike and will no doubt invite further scholarship.

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Indians, Alcohol, and the Roads to Taos and Santa Fe. By William E. Unrau. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2013. 208 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

The pleasure one derives from Unrau's meticulously researched book on the flow of alcohol into the American West must be juxtaposed with the completely devastating consequences of that seemingly intentional pathway to cultural genocide. Having spent decades working with contemporary Native American prisoners for whom alcohol has been a path to a ruinous journey, from my perspective Unrau spares no detail in documenting and reconstructing the deliberate decimation of Indian life on the road to Santa Fe and Taos. Both acts of intentional swindling and complete disregard for the impotent laws tragically failed to protect Native cultures from doom.

Tracing the origins of the overland routes from the central and southern plains to Taos and Santa Fe, Unrau takes us on the journey carved out by William Becknell of Franklin, Missouri, dubiously labeled the "father" of the roads to Santa Fe and Taos during the 1820s. Early trade with Spaniards as early as the 1750s set the stage for the exchanging furs, hides, and pelts for highly desired horses, tobacco, and guns. Trade fairs brought Comanche, Apache, Pueblo villagers, and others into frequent contact with traders and led to a pattern of goods exchange that provided the perfect infrastructure for infusing alcohol into the mix.

The author documents the establishment of government-run trading houses, such as the one frequented by Becknell on the western plains, and the eventual populating of what was considered "vacant" land by explorers, settlers, government employees, and aggressive traders. The erroneous impression of this territory as uninhabited provides a dramatic setting for the greed of land usurpation and the use of alcohol in fostering dependence and opportunity for swindle. As the period of Indian removal unfolds and the movement of more tribes westward creates population pressure on the western plains, we begin to see the devastating effects of contact—disease epidemics, overhunting of bison, and death to an indigenous way of life—change the landscape forever.

But the bringing of staples to Indian country brought whiskey production and erection of distilleries that would soon alter the cultural dynamics. The growth of forts with military personnel to ensure safety meant more access to