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*George Rogers Clark: "I Glory in War."* by William R. Nester  
(review)

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or what any of the participants thought of them” (p. 92). Daily interactions between colonists and free or enslaved Africans in the Southeast also present a problem because of their “invisibility” in the sources (p. 76). Despite these difficulties, the author accomplishes an admirable job of putting numerous sources together to ensure that the presence of Creeks and free and enslaved Africans remains visible throughout the book. At the beginning of the book, Paulett brilliantly juxtaposes contrasting images of the deerskin trade carried out by colonial traders and African peddlers on the Savannah River with James Oglethorpe’s distant “imperial gaze” (p. 2).

*An Empire of Small Places* is a welcome addition to the ever-growing interest in the Southeast among early Americanists. Paulett has provided important insights in understanding how contested and competing geographies shaped the relations between colonists, Indians, and enslaved and free Africans throughout the eighteenth century.

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*George Rogers Clark: “I Glory in War.”* By William R. Nester. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012. Pp. 386. \$39.95 cloth)

William R. Nester wrote *George Rogers Clark: “I Glory in War”* to offer, “a fresh reinterpretation of one of America’s most fascinating yet flawed heroes” (p. 6). However, Nester falls far short of reaching that goal. Although the book is ripe with traditional Clark source material, I failed to locate new source material in the book. Nester’s ultimate self-aggrandizement was to make extensive use of new Clark scholarship published in 2004, yet claim his book was necessary to offer a “fresh accounting” about Clark’s life because *all other significant* Clark source material was of too great an antiquity (p. 6). This

type of baffling contradiction occurs throughout the book, taking away from the reliability of Nester's thesis about offering a "fresh reinterpretation."

Normally, I would be ecstatic to see another biography about George Rogers Clark. I read Nester's book with high hopes and expectations of finding new enlightening information about Clark, or new interpretations based logically from older data. But, alas, I could not.

Errors within the book began with the front map (pp. x-xi) that illustrates an incorrect period name for one site location (Fort Masac for Fort Massiac), an incorrect map placement for several site locations (as in locating sites within the wrong state, e.g., the Ohio Fort Jefferson located in Indiana, or Ouiatenon which he illustrates adjacent to the Illinois-Indiana state line), and either the inclusion of site names on the "Clark" map that had nothing to do with George Rogers Clark history (the Ohio "Fort Jefferson," and not the Kentucky "Fort Jefferson"), or the exclusion of a site location that had much to do with Clark history (e.g., Cahokia). Even within the text, Nester illustrates a poor understanding about "Clark geography," noting that Saint Genevieve was *down river* of Kaskaskia, when in reality it lies upriver and to the north (p. 75). Within the first one hundred fifty pages, I noted on fifty pages, errors in fact, questionable citations, or questionable commentary. My marginal notes were not about Nester's use of previously published Clark materials (Bakeless 1957, Barnhart 1951, Bodley 1926, English 1896, James 1912, 1926, 1928, Seineke 1981, or Thwaites 1918), but rather Nester's "fresh [revisionist?] interpretations" within his connecting paragraphs following quotations from previously published sources.

Do not get me wrong: revisionist history is good when it is based on fact, but when new interpretations lack substance, the credibility and accuracy of the author's statements must be called into question. Further, Nester's style of praising Clark in one paragraph, then damning him in the next became exceedingly tiresome—especially in his concluding chapter about Clark. Did Clark, as Nester suggests, fail

to transcend the era in which he lived (pp. 5-6)? No, Clark did not. Indeed, Clark was far ahead of his time in science, natural history, psychological warfare, and invention. Nester clearly cites examples of all of these in his text, yet concludes that Clark was trapped in his own time and “failed to transcend his own tormented self” (pp. 5-6). If you are a student of history, especially Clark history, you will find more errors in Nester’s book than you will find positive revisionist contributions. Nester’s book, in my opinion, falls far short of making a constructive impact or contribution that would increase our understanding about Clark history. In short, and sadly, it is my opinion that Nester’s book falls far short of its intended goal.

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*The American National State and the Early West.* By William H. Bergmann. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. 288. \$90.00 cloth)

The western United States remains a place possessed by a striking contradiction. At one moment it is the West that is the greatest recipient of federal resources, including the creation of water and power systems, the economic spillover from the large military installations in the West, or management of large areas of land, including the national parks. And yet it is western residents who are among the most vocal critics of a powerful, intrusive federal government that threatens to interfere with individual opportunity. As William H. Bergmann shows, this relationship was there from the start, and it is a relationship that is more inevitable than coincidental.

In *The American National State and the Early West*, Bergmann argues that western policy, in particular the struggle to replace Indian sovereignty with federal power in the Transappalachian West, would