Readers will find much to admire in this work. Gillis provides impressively reasoned technical descriptions and wisely chosen visuals. He also offers rich discussions of a host of people who shaped the company's history through rapid technological change, war, and economic stress. By the 1890s, Aeromotor was exporting windmills to Argentina, England, and even as far afield as Australia. By the mid-twentieth century, however, the company was selling windmills that had been assembled in Argentina and exited domestic manufacturing of the device for a time (146).

A particularly important theme woven throughout the work involves how "self-governing water-pumping windmill" manufacturers faced competition from other water extraction methods (16). Aeromotor responded to such threats by entering many diverse and related fields such as gasoline-pumping engines and electric pumps (77, 138). Nevertheless, by the 1940s, the large-scale dissemination of electrical power into the countryside had become particularly disruptive for the windmill industry. Thus, Aeromotor intensified its efforts to become more than a "windmill company and to embrace the sales opportunities of electric water pumps" (132). Today, rural residents enjoy even more water extraction options with the advent of "solar-powered water pumps" for remote water-pumping needs (190). Nevertheless, the company endures, as evidenced by its present 40,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in San Angelo, Texas (186). Gillis has honored the rich legacy of the Aeromotor Company by telling the story of a company whose name graces windmills scattered across the nation and world.

How Iowa Conquered the World: The Story of a Small Farm State's Journey to Global Dominance, by Michael Rank. Kansas City: Five Minute Books, 2014. xi, 163 pp. Bibliography. $9.99 paperback; $2.99 e-book.

Reviewer Zachary Michael Jack is a seventh-generation Iowan, associate professor of English at North Central College, board member of the Midwestern History Association, and the author of *Iowa: The Definitive Collection*, among others.

Michael Rank's compelling book *How Iowa Conquered the World* reads more as public writing or journalism than it does as traditional, primary source-derived historiography, although it qualifies strictly as neither, and that's okay.

The author—a native Iowan from Knoxville, a doctoral candidate in Middle Eastern history, and a former journalist—leads with his thesis: "The goal of this book is to make an extremely difficult argument. I will attempt to convince you why Iowa is the greatest cultural force in the world. Not in the Midwest or the United States, but in the world" (3).

The straightforwardness, boldness, repetitiveness, and syntactically fragmented nature of that claim underlines the ethos behind Rank's project. Some historians would object to the whiff of sectionalism or chauvinism (or even jingoism) implicit in such an argument, as well as to its bombastic tendency, but I find the author's unapologetic pride in his home state refreshing. Rather than couch or obscure, Rank identifies his innate boosterism (bias?) and owns it, then moves on with his project.

In many ways the premise for *How Iowa Conquered the World* is derivative of a title published more than 20 years ago: Thomas Cahill's *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (1995). Like Cahill, Rank intends a popular rather than exclusively scholarly audience for his treatment of his home state's preeminence, and, like Cahill, he may succeed in offering an accessible synopsis or digest of one place's heroically, historically understated influence. Rank himself waits until page 125, in the book's closing chapter, to trace his inspiration, identifying Roifield Brown's "How Jamaica Conquered the World" podcast as analog and precedent for his own promotional act. "Much like myself," Rank explains, "he wants to sing those songs and make them known." The "Caribbean island known for reggae, dreadlocks, steel drums, and Olympic sprinters," he notes, "is another place that has the same number of residents and also has a mighty reach despite its small size "(125).

In offering an inventory of Jamaica's better-known cultural calling cards, Rank foregrounds his own coverage-via-inventory. The author intends to offer an hors d'oeuvres of Iowa's cultural legacy here, not a main course. At approximately 135 pages, minus bibliography and excessive back matter, the book is slight measured against conventional monographs. Indeed, the back jacket and introduction reiterate the sampler/survey methodology deployed therein, promising in bullet points to cover everything from how Iowa and Iowans "saved billions of people from starvation" to how it "created Silicon Valley in the 1960s." (The primary basis for the latter claim is that Robert Noyce, the Burlington, Iowa–born cofounder of the Intel Corporation, became a sort of honorary "mayor of Silicon Valley" [24].) Some historians will object to such sweeping claims, because Rank's argument rests, in fact, on case study. In fact, the author could better identify and signpost his methodologies throughout, as well as cite his sources (there is a bibliography but no endnotes and a paucity of in-text journalistic attributions).

Rank's online publisher, as it appears on Amazon.com, is the Amazon self-publishing platform CreateSpace. His book seems geared toward galvanizing Amazon readers in particular, as evidenced both by its affordability (free for Kindle subscribers), and by the author's unusually direct appeal in the back matter page titled "One Last Thing,"

where readers are reminded go to the book's Amazon page "to leave a review please. Thank you again for your support!" (163). The back matter of the print-on-demand title also includes an excerpt from Rank's work in progress and a page for "Other Books by Michael Rank," which lists such titles as *History's Most Insane Rulers* and *Greek Gods and Goddesses Gone Wild*.

Rank's approach is educational, entrepreneurial, and commercial. He brings a journalist's bent to bear, although he apparently conducted few if any original interviews. The metaphors with which he chooses to illustrate his thesis—comparing Iowa's underdog status to former Iowa State running back Troy Davis as the introduction's overriding metaphor—are curious, and yet they emphasize a whimsicality often eschewed in more hidebound historical scholarship. In the end, Rank appears both eager for, and solicitous of, readers; his ethos is earnest. Readers of the *Annals of Iowa* may wish to give *How Iowa Conquered the World* a try.

Natives of a Dry Place: *Stories of Dakota before the Oil Boom*, by Richard Edwards. Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2015. xvi, 198 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. $16.95 paperback.

Reviewer Paula M. Nelson is professor of history emeritus at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville. She is the author of *After the West Was Won: Homesteaders and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota, 1900–1917* (1986) and *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own: The West River Country of South Dakota in the Years of Depression and Dust* (1996).

We do not talk much about virtues these days. The word seems old-fashioned, descriptive of the old sexual morality, maybe, but not one for our modern world, so full of transgressive beliefs and behaviors. Along comes Richard Edwards, director of the Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, to remind us how just how much virtues matter. He is self-conscious about it, informing readers as he concludes his memoir that he does not see the inculcation and practice of virtues as conservative. That label reminds him of all of the evils of the modern-day political right, which he jabs vigorously in a few discordant lines near the end of his fine book. The lesson most readers will learn here is that teaching and practicing virtues is an excellent way to support a functional society. The people whose stories Edwards tells are an object lesson in their value.

Richard Edwards's grandparents homesteaded in Mountrail County, North Dakota, shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. His parents moved into Stanley, the county seat, where he was born and lived until age 12, when the family moved to Massachusetts. Although he left