A few maps are included at the start of the book, which were useful for setting the stage, but at times later in the book this reviewer felt a bit lost, especially when reading about parts of the state where my geographic familiarity isn't as strong. More maps, perhaps one leading each chapter, could have helped alleviate this issue.

However, this is a minor complaint. All in all, whether the book remains in the comforts of a home or rides shotgun down a dusty country road, Marx and Overturf have given readers a useful guidebook for those looking to explore Illinois' trails of yesterday and their relation to the landscape of today.

The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories, edited by Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021. xviii, 372 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $99.00 hardcover, $30.00 paperback, $30.00 e-book.

Reviewer Camden Burd is an assistant professor of history at Eastern Illinois University. His work focuses on U.S. environmental history during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has focused on eco-tourism in the Upper Midwest and plant nurseries in Rochester, New York.

The Great Plains is a region historically defined by its environmental extremes. It is at once a landscape whose history shares the hopeful optimism of early sodbusting and the harsh extremes of the dustbowl; the dual realities of the near extermination of American bison and the proliferation of cattle; a region where drought is common—wildfires too—even when vast aquifers of water lie beneath the surface. But the problem with histories of environmental extremes is that those stories miss the vast in-between. They overshadow how human beings have historically inhabited the region through adaptation, technological change, and resilience. It is those stories and themes that drive the contributing authors of *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*. In this collection, contributors push readers to move beyond a dichotomous interpretation of the region. The history of the Great Plains is neither a whiggish celebration of pioneering spirit or a brutal story of exploitation and environmental degradation. The Great*er* Plains, as editors Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan call it, "is a region where adaptation to changing environments advances our understanding beyond dust, drought, and declension"(xv). Such a narrow focus, the contributors demonstrate, is a failure to know this region in its full historical and environmental complexity.

The essays are divided into four sections focusing on key environmental themes of the Great Plains region: indigeneity and grassland

adaption, animals, modern agriculture, and energy. Within each section, authors explore the complex history of the region demonstrating that human beings have always been forced to adapt to the unique and shifting environmental realities of the region. Take for instance the work of Natalie Zappia, whose essay on Indigenous food systems on the Great Plains challenges readers to rethink temporal, spatial, and historiographical bounds. By outlining vast networks of agricultural exchange between Indigenous communities before and after the arrival of the horse on the plains, Zappia shows how the equestrian revolution built-upon earlier networks of exchange—the horse did not manifest them.

Examinations of animal histories of the Great Plains also reveal complex relationships between human beings and the natural world. Whether it be Clint Carrol's examination of Cherokee kinship ties to deer and panthers, George Colpitts' essay on the rise of accounting and exploitation of bison, or Jacob A. Blackwell's history of the legal responses to the rise of the twentieth-century cattle industry, it becomes clear to the reader that the relationship between human beings and animals has hardly ever been one of domination and control. Modern agriculture, too, offers stories of adaptation and resilience. Molly P. Rozum's essay on settler agricultural adaptation epitomizes the aims of the collection by tracking how generations of Northern Plains settlers were forced to regularly reimagine agricultural life in the face of ecological realities. Michael J. Lansing's essay on the history of the popular cereal, Wheaties, further demonstrates how the invention of the breakfast food was an adaptation to environmental crises, markets, and American diets.

The final section, "Energy Landscapes," demonstrates how national and international energy production has fundamentally remade the Great Plains landscape over the course of the twentieth century. Here, readers find essays that explore the rise of pipelines on the Great Plains, the conflicting debates between ranchers, mining companies, and environmentalists about the meaning of the region, and the ways in which oil and energy production shaped the lives of those living throughout the region. Julie Courtwright's essay on the nature of wind and the Great Plains is especially exemplary of the editors' charge. All at once wind is a resource to be harnessed, a force to be feared, and a nuisance or inconvenience to the daily lives of those who call the Great Plains home.

Each essay offers a particular perspective on how different groups have made a home in the Great Plains over time. Read alone, the essays are, at times, narrow—perhaps even too specific to compel readers to

truly reimagine the Great Plains as something entirely new. But collectively, *The Greater Plains* shines. In organizing this compilation, Frehner and Brosnan demonstrate that the Great*er* Plains are complex and nuanced, where stories of adaptation and resilience are the norm. Such a collection is not only critical to our understanding of the history of the region. But more significantly, *The Greater Plains* compels readers to think about the past with an eye on an uncertain and concerning future—one where resilience and adaptation are necessary.

A Big History of North America: From Montezuma to Monroe, by Kevin Jon Fernlund. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2022. 376 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. $95.00 hardcover, $30.00 paperback, $30.00 digital download.

> Reviewer Kyle B. Carpenter is associate vice chancellor of academic affairs and history instructor at the University of Arkansas Rich Mountain. His research focuses on economic, borderlands, and transnational history in antebellum America.

Kevin Jon Fernlund's *A Big History of North America: From Montezuma to Monroe* attempts to bridge historiographic divisions between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking North America. Using methods from the discipline of Big History, Fernlund provides a model for uniting the colonial and early national histories of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. He does so by studying the differences in the development of specific human groups on the continent. Rather than concentrating on the historical categories of race, class, and gender, Fernlund analyzes North Americans through the lens of "social development." He contends that "differences in development are the principal drivers of modern history (9)." To measure social development over such a broad space and time (1521–1827 North America), Fernlund borrows methodologies from the United Nations' Human Development Index. Through data such as mortality rates, gross domestic product, and literacy rates, he draws conclusions about various North American societies' social development. With his indexed data, Fernlund then analyzes and categorizes North American societies' social power, or ability to assert themselves when interacting with other societies. These complimentary data allow Fernlund to argue that the massive social power of the United States was due in large part to its relationship with its North American neighbors, Canada and Mexico. *A Big History of North America* offers an interesting amalgamation of theory and analysis that provides the reader with a perspective on North America as a coherent whole.