

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and
Social Sciences

Great Plains Studies, Center for

2009

Book Review: *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations* By David R. Montgomery

Mark S. Kuzila

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, mkuzila1@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch>



Part of the [Other International and Area Studies Commons](#)

Kuzila, Mark S., "Book Review: *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations* By David R. Montgomery" (2009). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 1014.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch/1014>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Great Plains Studies, Center for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations. By David R. Montgomery. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. ix + 285 pp. Maps, figures, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth, \$16.95 paper.

Being a soil scientist for over 30 years I have developed a passion for the soil. I have spent my working life focused on understanding the soil and managing soil resources. I thought that I had a full appreciation of the soil until I read *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations*. David Montgomery's book strengthened my appreciation for how important the soil is to our existence.

The book provides an understanding of the role that soil management has played in the success or failure of civilizations. It documents the fact that soil erosion in the 1930s in the Great Plains was part of a succession of soil erosions resulting from poor management that began thousands of years before. Unfortunately, lessons learned from the Great Plains in the 1930s have not been heeded, and major outbreaks of soil erosion have occurred since that time. The book provides an insight into the reasons why we should continue to strive for sustainable use of our soil resources. It is a must read for anyone who works with the soil, and it should be of interest to all who care about our natural resources. **Mark S. Kuzila**, *School of Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*.