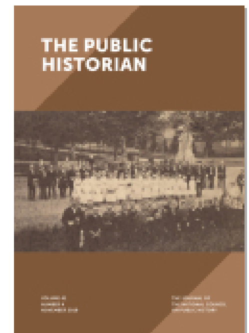
Monumental Seattle: The Stories Behind the City's Statues, Memorials, and Markers by Robert Spalding (review)



Madison Heslop

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Again, Lloyd functioned in a "public-private role" by seeking state power to aid his business enterprise, much in the tradition of Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover and the associationalism that informed his governance. When New Deal policies increased the rate of corporate income tax and targeted personal holding companies for taxation such as the one Lloyd controlled, his disdain for government intervention grew even though he benefitted greatly from significant tax savings by deducting the costs of drilling new wells. Throughout the 1930s, oil revenues allowed Lloyd to acquire additional commercial real estate, but his commitment wavered when prospective tenants proved unwilling to meet his demanding terms. Although state support partially contributed to his business success, his perception that the federal government intruded into business affairs intensified his opposition to regulatory measures. Such opposition did not, however, prevent him from seeking funding from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and accruing revenue in the form of lease payments from the Bonneville Power Administration, the State of Oregon, and the Department of the Interior. Lloyd died in 1953 but his vision for urban design came to fruition in 1960 when managers at the corporation he had founded completed the Lloyd Center in Portland, a regional shopping center and hotel complex that drew shoppers to the suburbs who otherwise would have patronized businesses in the urban core.

Adamson's book presents a welcome and much needed addition to the topic of California oil. His effort to illustrate how the oil industry was configured on a regional basis and how its impact reverberated outward may serve as a useful framework for public, urban, and environmental historians to consider how oil production transforms local sites but has broader economic, political and environmental implications. The author might have pushed analysis of the relationship between oil and urbanization more consistently throughout individual chapters and proffered how useful or applicable this framework might be for understanding oil's impact in other locales. One wonders whether the relationship between oil and urbanization was endemic to California or coincidental and whether such a relationship might have been equally characteristic of other extractive industries such as mining or even agriculture. This well-researched book will find an audience among specialists in the fields of oil, urban, and California history.

Brian Frehner, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Monumental Seattle: The Stories Behind the City's Statues, Memorials, and Markers by Robert Spalding. Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2018. ix + 202 pp.: illustrations, maps, appendices, notes, selected sources, index; paperback, $22.95.

Robert Spalding's *Monumental Seattle* is an eminently readable survey of monuments, memorials, and historical markers in Seattle, Washington, beginning in 1899. Intended and appropriate for a local public audience, Spalding contextualizes and

tells the stories of nearly one-hundred statues and plaques in the city in a straightforward narrative style. The book's contents are likely to be a jumping-off point for many future dives into local history, both casual and professional.

Readers of *Monumental Seattle* can expect a capably researched and informative tour of the expected moments and sites of note in Seattle history since 1852—and a number of less predictable diversions. Even readers familiar with the local history and landmarks are bound to encounter something new. I, for example, have lived within walking distance of Woodland Park Zoo for several years and never had any inkling that the zoo's grounds once displayed a monument to one of the country's less heralded presidents, Warren Harding.

The book and its chapters are neatly structured for use as either a reference text or a readable monograph. Spalding lays out the chapters in roughly chronological order and identifies common threads that link the monuments and memorials included in each, such as the proliferation of monuments to local figures in the 1910s and the influence of the Great Depression on the scale and production of memorials in the 1930s. Within chapters, subheadings identify each monument, beneath which Spalding recounts the history of the person or event memorialized, the creation and erection of said memorial, and, finally, its status today. Only the Chief-of-All-Women Pole at Pioneer Place receives its own chapter. The appendices at the book's close consist of further reference information. Appendix I names and transcribes the thirty-one maritime plaque inscriptions covered in chapter ten. Appendix II charts the names, locations, and descriptions of monuments and memorials completed in Seattle since the late nineteenth century. Lastly, Appendix III provides a table of historical markers and plaques.

Spalding draws heavily from local newspapers for contemporary accounts of people, events, and commemorations and makes use of an array of secondary sources to establish context. Morgan Murray and Roger Sale's still popular works *Skid Road: An Informal Portrait of Seattle* (1951) and *Seattle, Past to Present* (1976), respectively, make repeat appearances both in the body text and the footnotes. *Monumental Seattle*'s task is not to challenge orthodox histories and chronologies. Instead, the frequent invocation of institutionally buttressed stories and sources reinforces the author's aim to illuminate the power of narratives big and small to configure local memory.

From the start, Spalding demonstrates a strong understanding of the power of stories to shape memory and historical interpretation. Yet he pulls his punches rather than contend with the political stakes of his own narrative framing. Nowhere does settler colonialism—nor even the word "colonialism"—appear in the text of this book, though it is everywhere in the history portrayed. Despite leaning on Coll Thrush's *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (2007), more often than not, the histories of Duwamish and other Indigenous peoples in *Monumental Seattle* serve as prologues to the settler memories and stories that Spalding is focused on recounting.

The absence of any critical framework for reckoning with the city's colonial past is especially glaring in the second chapter, entitled "Founders, Firsts, and a Statue of Liberty," which opens with the story of the Birthplace of Seattle monument. Jean O'Brien's influential *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (2011) detailed the narrative process whereby local histories and memorials credit white settler individuals and institutions as "firsts" and ascribe the status of "last" to other figures and places that the authors or memorializers consider insufficiently modern. Monuments that commemorate "first" people, places, and events advocate for their permanence and primacy, devaluing Indigenous ways of life and replacing Native claims to land, names, and memory with their own. There is no greater example of this in the United States than Plymouth Rock, a piece of which, as Spalding notes in passing, was affixed to the Birthplace of Seattle monument in the 1920s. Between "first" settlers, a first post office, first school house, first sawmill, first cabin, and more in this chapter and beyond, Spalding firsts and lasts alongside Seattle's twentieth century mythmakers.

Ultimately, *Monumental Seattle* should be read as evidence of the ways monuments and memorialization persist as subjects of contestation. In the author's own words, "the meanings of a monument continually change and are therefore always unfinished" (xv).

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Summer of Hate: Charlottesville, USA by Hawes Spenser. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018. 247 pp.; maps, illus.; clothbound, $19.95.

In August 2017, media outlets around the world ran headline stories about violence that had broken out on the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia. The disorder occurred during the Unite the Right Rally, a demonstration by members of the far right against the removal of a statue of the Commander of the Confederate Army, Robert E. Lee. More than thirty people suffered injuries when white nationalists clashed with counter-protesters, provoking Virginia governor Terry McAuliffe the following morning to declare a state of emergency. Despite this, later that day James Alex Fields, Jr., a young white supremacist, rammed a Dodge Challenger into a crowd of liberal activists. One of those demonstrators, Heather Heyer, suffered a blunt-force trauma from which she died after being taken to the University of Virginia Medical Center.

What provoked so much anger and soul-searching was not only the immediate incidents that occurred in Charlottesville but also the response of President Donald J. Trump. In failing to denounce the far right and instead claiming that there was "hatred, bigotry and violence on many sides," the president drew heated criticism for apparently drawing a moral equivalence between white supremacists and those who opposed the rally.