“unrivaled” necessitated further description and interpretation in order to communicate the magnitude of the project (61). In addition, most of the visual record of Hoover Dam does not include images of accidents, labor unrest, actual women (instead of allegorical representations), and African Americans and Native peoples in any context other than a few staged photos. Arrigo attributes this to the “effectiveness of state-sanctioned efforts to control the depiction of certain peoples and to limit the circulation of images that might unveil undesirable cultural taboos or counter-narratives” (171).

*Imagining Hoover Dam* does not offer any additional insights into the history of the dam’s construction or its subsequent and ongoing maintenance, as most works on the structure have done. Rather, it details the ways in which different groups perceived Hoover Dam for particular purposes. In doing so, it provides public historians with an important avenue of inquiry; sometimes the more important discussion to have with audiences has more to do with their perceptions of the past than the actual events themselves. In this way it contributes to our knowledge about audience and memory in a similar manner to that of Ari Kelman’s recent study on the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. Kelman’s work, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Harvard University Press, 2013), tackles the intricate issues the National Park Service faced working with different constituencies and the various impacts stakeholders had on historical interpretation at the site. Arrigo’s focus on perception and his overt use of well-articulated theoretical structures makes his work an ideal model for practitioners and students of public history, moving the field beyond its traditional vocational orientation towards a more methodologically focused framework.

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There have been thousands of books on the oil and gas industry written in recent years by historians, journalists, economists, environmentalists, lawyers, and even architects. They cover the industry from China to the United States and from the Arctic to Africa. Many of these books are heavily biased or simplistic in their analyses. They depict hardworking men “pulling the dragons from the ground” and celebrate the economic contribution of the petroleum industry, or lament its environmental impact and lecture society on its addiction to oil. Therefore, I was rather skeptical when I approached *American Energy, Imperiled Coast: Oil and Gas Development in Louisiana’s Wetlands*. What first attracted me to the book were the impressive credentials of its author, Jason P. Theriot. Theriot, who holds a PhD in History from the
University of Houston, is a former Energy Policy Fellow at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and a past lead researcher on offshore oil and gas issues for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s Environmental Studies Program, Gulf of Mexico Region Oil and Gas. Indeed, in American Energy, Imperiled Coast, which is based on his doctoral research, Theriot successfully combines his deep understanding of the subject with a thorough historical methodology. His narrative and inquiries are firmly based in his field work. The book centers on communities and their cultural memory. It places a difficult academic discourse on oil and gas industries in the framework of public history. Theriot delivers a thought-through analysis of the complex and difficult relationship between the petroleum industry and the environment that intertwines politics, economics, technology, and the culture of Louisiana’s coastal communities. Yet, as much as it is based on his expertise in energy issues and comprehensive historical research, Theriot’s book is also very personal. Theriot’s family has been living in Louisiana’s marshlands since the expulsion of Nova Scotia Acadians in the early 1700s. Jason grew up listening to his family’s stories and experienced firsthand the changes that the oil and gas industry brought to Louisiana’s wetlands and to its society. This makes American Energy, Imperiled Coast especially useful to public historians studying processes of industrialization, who do not often find intimate, personal voices in academic histories of technologies.

Theriot is an excellent storyteller; his narrative is clear, easy to follow, and engaging. The author starts by setting up an economic dichotomy between Louisiana’s profitable offshore industry and the state’s marshes—the most productive wetlands in the United States. He then takes the reader through the history of early petroleum extraction in the region. However, he only discusses Louisiana’s oil fields in the context of the United States, with no mention of the developments that took place at the same time in other countries, for example on Lake Erie in Canada and in Azerbaijan. Still, the historical account is thorough. Theriot discusses the expansion of the industry into the marshlands in the 1930s and the 1940s. He describes the emergence of new technologies that allowed to move the drilling into the wetlands; enriches his analysis through case studies, such as an account of Texaco’s Terrebonne Bay project; and provides in-depth analysis of the skills and culture of the workforce. He depicts a dynamic and expansive industry that learned to deal with technological, social, and environmental challenges. He notes that as the industry brought economic benefits to the coastal communities, it also gradually transformed the region’s system of values and socio-political landscape. According to Theriot, this socio-economic change, embraced by the majority of people in the state, has had lasting implications for the conversation surrounding the environmental effects of the oil and gas industry on Louisiana’s wetlands. It influenced, in the long term, the country’s perception of the devastation that the industry has inflicted on the environment along the Gulf Coast as an isolated, regional issue. The complex correlation between a gradual industrial expansion and simultaneous adaptation of
social values in the area of petroleum expansion is often overlooked or ignored in the literature that discusses environmental impacts of the oil and gas infrastructure. This is frequently the case in the accounts of the Canadian oil sands industry, which often depicts Alberta’s oil-producing regions as alienated from the rest of the country and irrationally opposed, or even hostile to, environmental regulations for no reason other than corporate greed. Theriot does not give in to simplifications; he also thoughtfully avoids the trap of depicting the industry as overly negligent. He considers equally corporate culture, technologies, politics, and socio-cultural traditions as factors in the long-standing struggle to align petroleum developments with environmental protections.

In *American Energy, Imperiled Coast*, Theriot achieves a rare balance of methodological approaches that even an experienced public historian will find instructive. One of the most interesting accounts in the book, proving the depth of his analyses, is the description of competing interests of Louisiana’s oyster fishermen and the state’s petroleum industry, which ultimately resulted in the pipeline companies altering their practices and procedures. As he leads the reader through the more recent history of the expansion of Louisiana’s oil and gas infrastructure between the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Theriot turns the reader’s attention to a mounting body of scientific knowledge on the environmental impacts of the industry. Although he remains very conscious of the Gulf Coast’s industrial culture—he notes, for example, an outpouring of concern in Louisiana in response to a moratorium on drilling imposed by President Obama after the 2010 oil spill—he makes a strong environmental stand and advocates for a greater recognition of the declining state of Louisiana’s marshlands as a national rather than a regional issue. He skillfully uses a well-researched and engaging story to call for action. This makes *American Energy, Imperiled Coast* an accomplished case of public history.

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William B. Lees and Frederick P. Gaske’s *Recalling Deeds Immortal: Florida Monuments to the Civil War* catalogues one hundred monuments erected in the state of Florida and on nearby battlefields in honor of the soldiers who fought and died in the American Civil War. In the wake of the Civil War, which caused more than 750,000 soldier deaths and untold damage to civilian lives and property, towns and cities across the nation began building monuments to their soldier dead. These monuments to Union and Confederate soldiers took