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Sanctifying Slavery & Politics in South Carolina: TheLife of the Reverend Alexander Garden, 1685-1756

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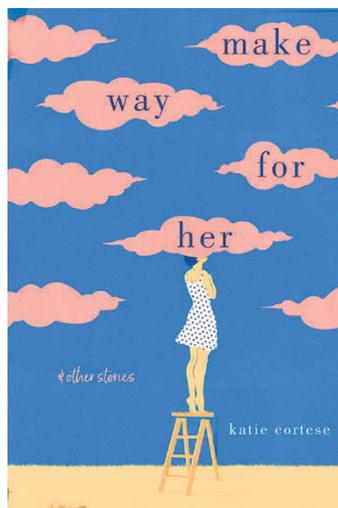
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artifacts, and local folklore to contextualize the often complex position of the plantation cook. Dispersed throughout the book are authentic recipes from Virginia's antebellum kitchen, contextualized with details of the kitchens and enslaved labor. This is an interesting read for those wanting to learn more about the lives of enslaved cook in antebellum history, southern foodways, and the history of American cuisine.

Kathelene McCarty Smith
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Make Way for Her and Other Stories. Cortese, Kate. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018. ISBN 978-0-8131-7512-6 (hardcover); ISBN 978-0-8131-7512-6 (epub). \$24.95. 188 p.



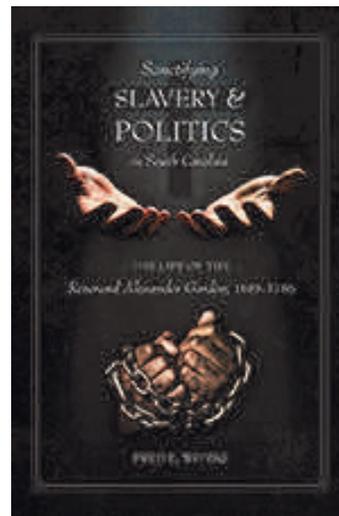
In this thought provoking and delightful selection of ten short stories by Katie Cortese, readers will find female narrators from five to forty relating narratives that are wist, funny, serendipitous, and sad, but always entertaining. In addition to the variety of ages, Cortese, as our guide, challenges us to explore many different places, geographically, situationally, and emotionally. Each story is layered and characters are remarkably well-drawn despite the brevity of the narratives. As the narrators explore their own stories, readers are treated to diverse plots and settings that include dense forests, YMCA cooking class, river boats, writing conferences, first love, and unrequited love. Each narrative has a completely different story to tell, some quite in the realm of examining our daily lives, and at least one with a touch of fantasy. Ultimately, Cortese relates through her well-done fiction that wisdom and observation are not age-related; sometimes they are merely in the right time and place.

Katie Cortese's stories and essays have appeared or are slated for such journals as *Indiana Review*, *Blackbird*, *Gulf Coast*, *Wigleaf*, *The Baltimore Review*, and elsewhere, including the Rose Metal Press anthology, *Family Resemblance: An Anthology and Exploration of 8 Hybrid Literary Genres*. She has also authored *Girl Power and*

other Short-Short Stories (ELJ Publications, 2015). Cortese holds a PhD from Florida State University and an MFA from Arizona State University, and teaches in the creative writing program at Texas Tech University where she serves as the fiction editor for *Iron Horse Literary Review*.

Sandra C. Clariday
Tennessee Wesleyan University

Sanctifying Slavery & Politics in South Carolina: The Life of the Reverend Alexander Garden, 1685-1756. Fred E. Witzig. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-61117-845-6 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-61117-846-3 (ebook). \$39.99 both formats. 235 p.



Fred E. Witzig, Associate Professor of history at Monmouth College (Monmouth, Illinois), makes a fairly convincing case for the importance of the Anglican Church establishment, largely through the efforts of Alexander Garden, to the development of a southern elite culture ("polite society") that successfully laid the foundations of what became the Old South in South Carolina and beyond.

Garden (1685-1756), whose early life in Scotland remains obscure, was engaged as minister at St. Philip's Church, the only Church of England congregation in Charles Town (now Charleston) in 1720 following the firing of his immediate predecessor and a prolonged period of instability at the church. Witzig speculates that Garden may have accepted such a remote post as a way to escape a possibly "socially despised parentage" in Scotland plus a combination of "opportunism, industry, and ambition" (p. 24). The pay and prestige might have been high, but Garden arrived at a particularly fraught period in the history of South Carolina.

The Yamassee War of 1715 was a devastating event that cast a lingering pall over the colony of South Carolina. Witzig describes a colony laboring under a state of distress, economic hardship, and, adding to the aftereffects of the

Yamasee War, he notes the constant state of dread experienced by the white population surrounded by a growing population of African slaves. Fears of slave violence proved justified by the 1739 Stono Rebellion. In addition, life in Charles Town and South Carolina was haunted by disease and the danger of hurricanes. Despite all of this, however, Charles Town and the colony proved to be a place of economic opportunity and social mobility for many. Witzig posits it was the leadership and dominance of “polite” society, *i.e.*, large planters and Charles Town merchants, that carried South Carolina through several difficult decades in the early eighteenth century before successfully establishing the colony as a foundation of the Old South that would last until the Civil War and, in some ways, even beyond. Alexander Garden played an important part in this story.

Relying on primary sources such as correspondence and church records, Fred Witzig’s picture of Alexander Garden portrays a man both admirable and somewhat flawed. Garden was admirable in his steady stewardship both of his immediate flock at St. Philip’s but also on a larger scale as the Church of England’s Commissary for the region; his strength of personality to endure a series of trials and tribulations; and a shrewd realism that allowed him to very effectively further the development of Charles Town and South Carolina as a member of “polite society.” He joined polite society in 1725 upon marrying Martha Guerard, a member of a wealthy slave owning family. Garden appears most flawed in his willingness to crush clerical rivals or ministers whose teachings he perceived to be in error and thus a danger to the stability of polite society. Perhaps this is most visible in his success in expelling John Wintley, minister of the nearby Christ Church Parish, in 1729. Wintley’s main error was in his open opposition to the often lax moral standards of polite society. While Garden observed high moral standards in his personal life, he took the side of polite society. He perceived Wintley’s preaching against the vices of the wealthy as a threat to polite society. Witzig argues that Garden saw Wintley as a danger to polite society since racial solidarity against the African slave population was the only thing serving to protect South Carolina’s social order from chaos and destruction (p. 53). Of course, Garden’s participation in polite society as a slave owner himself is not very admirable.

This all comes together in Garden’s encounters with the famous evangelist, George Whitefield, in 1740-1741. At first, Garden enjoyed a cordial relationship with Whitefield even though their approach to preaching was quite different. Just as John Wintley’s critiques of polite society prompted Garden to expel him, so too did Whitefield’s increasingly critical preaching against polite society prompt Garden to take similar action a dozen years later. Garden’s great concern, according to Witzig, was that Whitefield’s evangelical message “would lead inexorably to the success of slave rebellion and the death of white society” (p. 126). Garden’s anxiety made sense in light of the very recent (1739) Stono slave rebellion. While Garden did succeed in driving away Whitefield (by charging him with violating canons and articles of the

Church of England and not following the prescriptions of the *Book of Common Prayer*), Whitefield’s evangelical agitation led Garden to take a surprisingly progressive action in the context of a slaveholding society. Garden established a slave school in Charles Town for the purpose of teaching literacy to selected slaves for the purposes of Christianizing the slave population and thus making it more docile and compliant (p. 132-135). The slave school, although modest in scope, was fairly successful and continued for another decade after Garden’s death in 1756.

In *Sanctifying Slavery & Politics* Fred Witzig makes a good case for the importance of Alexander Garden, an otherwise mostly unsung relatively obscure figure in South Carolina’s colonial history. At times the text becomes a little dense but it is always interesting and Witzig provides a fascinating picture of South Carolina society during the first half of the eighteenth century. The concept of “polite society” is well developed and Witzig does a good job in connecting it to the religious establishment, especially through the person of Alexander Garden. Recognizing that every author has to make some compromises to make his/her book a manageable project, this reviewer would have preferred a bit more description and analysis of slave society itself since it plays such an important part of the story.

This is a scholarly work and would be most suitable for academic libraries and perhaps larger public libraries collecting in the areas of colonial history, South Carolina and southern history, religious history, and African American history.

Tim Dodge
 Auburn University

Chromatic Homes: The Joy of Color in Historic Places.
 John I. “Hans” Gilderbloom. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2018. ISBN: 0-8131-7614-X. \$24.95. 132 p.

CHROMATIC HOMES

The Joy of Color in Historic Places



John I. “Hans” Gilderbloom

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