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Other Girls to Burn

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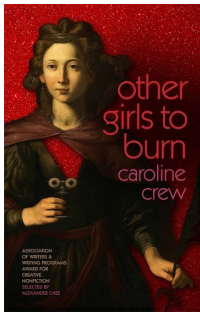
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study them. Both scholars and general readers interested in researching or learning about early Cuban refugee experiences will find *Ninety Miles and a Lifetime Away* an essential source of firsthand accounts and a worthy edition to the literature.

A. Blake Denton, The University of Arkansas at Monticello

Other Girls to Burn



Caroline Crew
Athens: University of Georgia
Press, 2021

ISBN: 9780820360430
128 p. \$22.95 (Pbk)

A 17th-century painting of Saint Lucy attributed to Giovanni Ricca graces the cover of poet and author Caroline Crew's collection of essays, *Other Girls to Burn*. The patron saint of the blind, Saint Lucy, one of the virgin martyrs of the early Roman church, spurned a fiancé to pledge her life and dowry to serve Christ and the poor. Her jilted betrothed denounced her as a Christian to Governor Paschasius of Syracuse who sentenced her to be forced into a brothel and repeatedly raped. When soldiers could not move her to take her away, she was burned. When fire proved ineffective, she was stabbed in the throat. As she is portrayed in Ricca's work, Saint Lucy is traditionally depicted holding a pair of human eyes – her eyes, which, depending upon the version of the story, were either gouged out during her torture by the Governor's soldiers or removed by Lucy herself to thwart her pagan admirer's attention, and miraculously restored by God after her death.

Saint Lucy's eyes stare blankly at the reader approaching Crew's slim volume and serve as an eerie summons for us to witness the ways women's lives and bodies are scrutinized, pathologized, monetized, and weaponized, not only by men, the church, and society but also by women themselves. The sixteen pieces gathered in this collection challenge readers to see how we are blind to the "standard double standard" (p. 105) that allows women to be both subjected to and sheltered

from violence while being shamed for showing any interest in exploring it or candidly addressing how it affects them.

Other Girls to Burn is a difficult and beautiful read, both in form and content. Classifying *Other Girls to Burn* as a collection of essays vastly underplays its scope and form. The entries shift stylistically between autobiography, laundry list, legal exhibits, Joycean soliloquy, genealogical data, and exegetical footnotes. Several pages of endnotes present essay-by-essay insight into Crew's sources and creative processes, offering a compelling invitation to follow her explorations, if not marvel at the breadth of her reading and research interests.

Topically, Crew traverses the esoteric and the familiar, invoking religious relics, UFC and MMA fighting, rape narratives, Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin, transatlantic communication, female mystics, nail polish, Aristotle, aging parents, and broken friendships. In "The Discomfort Index," Crew considers strip club culture and the "economy of attention" (p. 10) from the standpoint of consumer, and how, even as an audience member, she is coopted into performing for the male gaze. In another essay, the Go Go's "Vacation" serves to frame Crew's graduate school experience and the "central lie of white feminism" (p. 34) which functions within the systems of masculine culture and ignores the privilege inherent in being able to step back and take a break to "get away" from the struggle. "A Case Against Pathology" employs case studies and crime scene descriptions to liken hagiographies of the female martyrs to true crime stories, gradually revealing the "uniformity of these narratives" (p. 92) wherein "the ending [is] always the same: a corpse" (p. 88).

Taken individually, Crew's essays are personal, intense, and, at times, unsettling. Collectively, they speak to the contradictions women must navigate and push the reader "to consider the horror and continue" (p. 106).

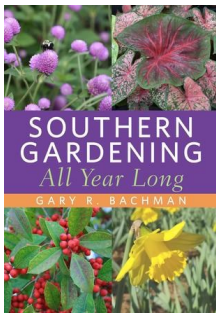
While her stories make little mention of the region except as autobiographical detail, Crew has adopted the southeast as her home. Born in England and educated at the University of St. Andrews and the University of Oxford, Crew holds a Ph.D. in English and Creative Writing from Georgia State University, in Atlanta. In addition to her

creative nonfiction work, she has written several poetry chapbooks as well as a full-length collection and served as an editor for *New South Journal*. She currently is serving as Visiting Professor of Creative Nonfiction at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina.

Other Girls to Burn, awarded the 2020 Association of Writers & Writing Programs Award for Creative Nonfiction, is suited for academic and public libraries alike, particularly college and university libraries that support women's studies programs and creative writing departments.

Amanda Nash, University of North Georgia

Southern Gardening All Year Long



Gary R. Bachman
Jackson: University Press of
Mississippi, 2022
ISBN: 9781496838902
224 p. \$25.00 (Pbk)

In *Southern Gardening All Year Long*, author Gary Bachman speaks to amateur and experienced gardeners alike, giving helpful tips and inspiration to anyone looking to try their hand at ornamental horticulture. Bachman walks the reader through the annual rhythms of a garden's life; each of the book's twelve chapters is dedicated to a different month and spotlights plants and landscaping techniques that suit that time of year. The format makes the book an ideal quick reference for gardeners, regardless of the season.

Each chapter is composed of short, readable columns that Bachman originally wrote for *Southern Gardening*, a multimedia production of the Mississippi State University Extension that he has written for and hosted for over a decade. This highlights reel from Bachman's *Southern Gardening* column reveals a wide range of interests, including lichens, garden art, and microgreens. However, the book's overwhelming focus is ornamental landscaping. Readers seeking guidance on vegetable gardening and native landscaping will find occasional words of advice, but Bachman's recommendations are geared more toward plants with visual appeal, hardiness, and longevity.

This focus on visual appeal is accentuated by the beautiful, full-page photographic spreads that accompany each column. Bachman's photographs vividly demonstrate the variety of colors, sizes, and variegation within a single plant genus – like the massive, colorful blooms of the Summer Storm hibiscus as compared to the dark, serrated foliage of the Mahogany Splendor hibiscus. The author also uses these photographs to demonstrate plant pairings that complement each other when placed together in the landscape.

Bachman is mindful that he is speaking to a diverse audience that may not be working with the same expertise, space, or even the same environment. While his recommendations are tailored to plants that suit the clay-heavy soil and high temperatures of Coastal Mississippi, he makes sure to note the broader plant hardiness zones in which his featured plants can thrive. He also doesn't limit his recommendations to gardeners with plenty of land; Bachman includes tips on helping plants thrive in containers and/or indoors. In one column, "Be Creative and Persistent in Tough Garden Areas," he identifies resilient plants and planting strategies that work in awkward spaces with less-than-ideal conditions – or, as he calls them, "hell strips."

Bachman also addresses gardeners of various skill levels and abilities. When Bachman uses horticulture lingo, such as "deadheading" or "forcing," he always clarifies with a definition, making the book accessible to newcomers. On the other hand, the author's interest in newly discovered and propagated plants – like his own discovery, the beautyberry selection Duet – may appeal to more experienced gardeners looking to work with new and exciting selections. Throughout the book, Bachman takes care to note award-winning plant selections, including Mississippi Medallion and All-America Selection winners as well as Louisiana Super Plants. For readers less in the know, a discussion of the qualities that make for an award winner would have been a helpful inclusion.

Importantly, Bachman's focus on accessibility doesn't end with his attention to skill level and space considerations. He also takes care to include tips for gardeners with physical conditions that may make gardening a challenge. Accessibility tips are interspersed throughout the book; Bachman also devotes an entire column, "Simple