

Planters' Plots to Backlot Stewpots:
Food, Race, and Labor in Charleston, South Carolina, 1780-1850

Kelly Kean Sharp

This dissertation is a farm to fork history of Charleston, South Carolina, over the early national and antebellum eras. The narrative thread of my work begins in the fields of regional plantations and suburban farms, pops into the meetings of the city's antebellum agronomic societies, winds through the esplanades of Charleston's Centre Market, stops into the smoky kitchen domains of enslaved cooks, and juxtaposes the meals consumed within the households of the city's white middling and elite class to middling free people of color and enslaved peoples. This dissertation builds on the work of scholars who have assessed various aspects of the South Carolina Lowcountry's history including plantation economies, urban landscape studies, enslaved labor history, and material culture. What makes my work unique is the inclusion and focus on the labor of Africans and African Americans in creating the culinary empire which emerges from the South Carolina Lowcountry. To do so, I draw from sources such as plantation account books, journals and private correspondence of residents and visitors, shipping records, gardening almanacs and journals, municipal and state laws, newspaper advertisements and editorials, recipe manuscripts, household inventories, and archeological evidence. Bridging labor and cultural history of the Lowcountry with cross-disciplinary studies of the larger Atlantic world, this work advances the understanding of the cultural adjustments and adaptations that developed in response to interactions among the region's racially, culturally, and economically diverse population.

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APPOINTMENTS

Luther College Decorah, IA
Assistant Professor in Africana Studies and History August 2018- present

University of California, Davis Davis, CA
Instructor of Record August 2017-June 2018

EDUCATION

University of California, Davis Davis, CA
Ph.D. in History June 2018
Director, Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor
A.B.D. June 2016
Masters received June 2015

Willamette University Salem, OR
Bachelor of Arts in History May 2011
Phi Beta Kappa, cum laude

PUBLICATIONS

Chapter in an Edited Volume

“The Creolized Kitchen: Interpreting the Life of a Catawba Indian-Made Pan from Urban Charleston, 1800-1830” in *Folk and Folks: Variations on the Vernacular* ed. Dale Couch (Athens, GA: Georgia Museum of Art), 2018.

Academic Articles

“Sowing Diversity: The Antebellum Roots of Truck Farming in the Coastal South,” *Agricultural History* (under review).

“African American Business History: Where We’ve Been and Where We’re Going,” *History Compass* (forthcoming, 2019).

“All-Consuming Provisions: The Role of Charleston’s Grocers in Food Distribution, 1790-1840,” *The Proceedings of the South Carolina Historical Association* (2017).

Encyclopedia Entries

“Fruits and Vegetables,” “Roasted Meat,” and “The Virginia Housewife,” in *World of Antebellum America: A Daily Life Encyclopedia*, ed. Alexandra Kindell (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Press, 2018).

Book Reviews

Review of *Catfish Dream: Ed Scott’s Fight for his Family Farm and Racial Injustice in the Mississippi Delta* in *Agricultural History* (forthcoming 2019).

Review of *The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South* in *Essays in History*, vol. 52 (2018).

Review of *The Travelers’ Charleston: Accounts of Charleston and Lowcountry, South Carolina, 1666-1861* in *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, vol. 118 no 4 (Winter 2018).

Review of *Southern Provisions: The Creation and Revival of a Cuisine* in *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, vol. 118 no 2 (Spring 2018).

Review of *Bound to the Fire: How Virginia’s Enslaved Cooks Helped Invent American Cuisine* in Coordinating Council of Women in History Newsletter, vol 49 no 2 (Spring 2017).

HONORS AND AWARDS

Associated Colleges of the Midwest Mellon Faculty Fellowship	Chicago, IL 2018-2023
Luther College Koebrick Endowment for New Faculty	Decorah, IA 2018-2022
South Carolina Historical Association Award for best student article published in <i>The Proceedings</i>	Columbia, SC March 2018
American Historical Association President’s Travel Grant	Washington, D.C. January, 2018
University of California, Davis Graduate Program Dissertation Fellowship Frank Goodman Fellowship	Davis, CA 2017-2018 2013-2014
Coordinating Council of Women Historians Graduate Student Fellowship, honorable mention	Hempstead, NY June, 2017

Business History Association K. Austin Kerr Prize for best first paper by a new scholar	Denver, CO March, 2017
Charleston Preservation Society Sallie E. Simons Scholarship	Charleston, SC March, 2017
Winterthur Museum, Library, and Gardens Cheryl A. Robertson Fellowship	Wilmington, DE October, 2016
Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Frank L. Horton Scholarship	Winston-Salem, NC 2015

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Agricultural History Society “African Roots in Southern Fields: Provisioning Antebellum Charleston”	Washington, DC June, 2019
American Historical Association “State of the Field: African American Business History”	Chicago, IL January, 2019
Society for Historians of the Early American Republic “More than Laundresses: The Contributions of Free Black Businesswomen in Antebellum Charleston, South Carolina”	Cleveland, OH July, 2018
Southern Association of Women Historians “‘Thorn of Crowns’: White Slaveholding Women’s Role in Shaping Food Consumption Culture in Antebellum Charleston”	Tuscaloosa, AL June, 2018
Southern Historical Association “Staples and Specialties: Regional Production for the Urban Market in Nineteenth-Century Charleston, South Carolina”	Dallas, TX November, 2017
American Historical Association, Pacific Coast Branch “Set the Oven to ‘Quick’: Manuscript Receipt Books and Antebellum Lowcountry Elite Standards of Taste”	Northridge, CA August, 2017
Business History Conference “No Free Market: The Enslaved Marketwomen of Charleston’s Centre Market”	Denver, CO March, 2017
Southern Forum on Agricultural, Rural, and Environmental History “Sowing Diversity: The Role of Societies and Seeds in Transforming Urban Offerings”	Houston, TX February, 2017

South Carolina Historical Association “All-Consuming Provisions: The Role of Charleston’s Grocers in Food Distribution, 1790-1840”	Columbia, SC March, 2016
University of Georgia Henry D. Green Decorative Arts Symposium “The Creolized Kitchen: Interpreting the Life of a Catawba Pan from Urban Charleston,1800-1830”	Athens, GA February, 2016
Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts “African and Native Indian Influences in Lowcountry Culinary Traditions”	Winston-Salem, NC July, 2015

INVITED TALKS

Manetti-Shrem Museum “The Urban Kitchen and the Property Within,”	Davis, California June 2017
University of California, Davis “Bonds of Slavery,” United States Women and Gender History, 1619-1865	Davis, California March 2017
“The Other Fifties: Lesbian Communities,” United States Women and Gender History, 1865-Present	March 2016
“Fighting for the Right: The Women’s Suffrage Movement” United States History, 1919-1945	May 2016
“Material History to Interpret the Urban Antebellum Lowcountry” Women and Gender History Research Cluster	January 2016
“Radical Feminism” History of the 1960’s	October 2015

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Coordinating Council for Women in History Mentorship Committee member	2017-present
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PUBLIC HISTORY

Researcher for 2018 Historic Tour, Preserve Sacramento, Sacramento, CA

Regular Contributor, “The Recipes Project” blog, recipes.hypotheses.org (beginning September, 2017)

Exhibitor, from this point forward: 2017 Arts and Humanities Graduate Exhibition, Davis, California. Manetti-Shrem Museum, May 27-June 14, 2017.

Curator, "The Emerson Institute: The Presbyterian Board and Early 20th Century Black Education in Western South Carolina," Blackville Historical Society, Blackville South Carolina.

"The Emerson Institute: Turn-of-the-Century School for a Rural Black Community," in *Presbyterian Historical Society Newsletter* (February, 2017).

LANGUAGES

Spanish Speaker, writer, reader

CERTIFICATIONS

Mental Health First Aid Decorah, IA
December, 2018

Safe Zone Decorah, IA
November, 2018

REFERENCES

Dr. Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, Associate Professor of History at University of California, Davis
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Dr. Novian Whitsitt, Professor of Africana Studies and English at Luther College
whitsino@luther.edu