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Michele Gillespie. *Katharine and R. J. Reynolds: Partners of Fortune in the Making of the New South.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. xiii + 381 pp. Illustrations. $32.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8203-3226-0.

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In this dual biography, Michele Gillespie richly describes the lives of Richard Joshua Reynolds (R. J.) and Katharine Reynolds. The more familiar of the couple, R. J. Reynolds gained fame and fortune as the founder and longtime director of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, best known as the manufacturer of Prince Albert pipe tobacco and Camel cigarettes. The biographical approach allows Gillespie to chart R. J. R.'s climb to the top of the tobacco industry, connecting this personal narrative to broader narratives in U.S. history, and particularly in southern history. Gillespie travels a less crowded path in her treatment of Katharine Smith Reynolds. In devoting equal time and space to R. J. R.'s wife, Gillespie transcends standard periodization and intertwines economic, social, and cultural history.

As Gillespie explains, although the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company looms large in the global tobacco industry, Reynolds had not been the subject of historical study. Studies of New South industrialization have focused on the development of cotton textile mills or on the growth of the Duke tobacco empire, R. J. R.'s rival in nearby Durham, North Carolina.[1] Gillespie takes up the task of restoring R. J. Reynolds to this New South narrative. It would be relatively easy to portray Reynolds as a callous industrialist who amassed great wealth at the expense of disenfranchised workers and uninformed consumers. In Gillespie's hands, we get a much more nuanced interpretation of a complex historical subject. Drawing on personal papers, business records, and newspaper reports, Gillespie reveals a man who was at once the product of a wealthy family and a self-made man; who offered opportunity for African Americans while supporting white political leaders who systematically restricted opportunities; and who built a global corporation while intentionally maintaining local roots.

Through Gillespie's biographical narrative, we get a firsthand view of the negotiations and refashioning that was necessary for R. J. R. to successfully navigate through postwar reconstruction and the early Jim Crow South, into the emerging national consumer markets and growing industrialization of the early twentieth century. Gillespie focuses considerable attention on the issue of race, describing R. J. R.'s responses to the increasing rigidity of Jim Crow segregation in the late nineteenth century. As she argues, business remained R. J. R.'s primary filter and it informed his decisions. He employed African Americans and supported community institutions like schools because it was good for business. However, like other New South industrialists of his time, R. J. R. did not use his considerable influence in an attempt to stem the tide of white supremacy and Jim Crow legislation, either at a local or state level. In this discussion, Gillespie successfully analyzes the seeming contradiction of Reynolds's efforts to "promote broad economic development that helped build a New South city," while also helping to "preserve a social and political conservatism that he condoned" (p. 6).

Gillespie argues that in order to understand Reynolds, readers must also understand Reynolds's wife, Katharine Smith Reynolds. R. J. R. married Katharine Smith, thirty years his junior, after the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company had achieved national success. Mrs. Reynolds's biographical narrative allows Gillespie to intertwine the details of elite southern women's activism with the broad story lines of economic and social history found in R. J. R.'s biography. As a result, the reader gains a better understanding of how gender shaped choices for elite southerners from the late nineteenth century through the second decade of the twentieth century. The strength of the Katharine Reynolds narrative is Gillespie's rich description of Reynolda, a model farm and village constructed outside of Winston-Salem. Gillespie convincingly argues that "Katharine's farm" was Mrs. Reynolds's crowning achievement, providing her with a vehicle to introduce model farming practices and domestic management to the mid-state region of North Carolina. This thread allows Gillespie to integrate the country-farm

movement into an analysis of southern progressive reform. As a result, readers gain insight into this agriculturally focused progressive management effort, providing an intriguing contrast to the progressive management strategies described in R. J. R.'s industrialized tobacco factories.

The biographical approach works on many levels. Gillespie is able to avoid the trap of standard periodization and demonstrate that historical subjects' lives, indeed our own lives, do not adhere neatly to historian-defined periods or eras. This focus on life span rather than period offers valuable insights into the ways in which individuals negotiate changing economic, cultural, and social landscapes. The dual biographical approach illustrates the full complexity of each historical subject's life, but also presents a particular set of challenges. Gillespie organizes her work into separate chapters that alternately focus on R. J. Reynolds and Katharine Smith Reynolds. While this approach effectively reinforces the extent to which R. J. R.'s world was separate from Katharine's, in terms of available opportunities and resources, it also complicates the reader's efforts to connect the two biographies. Each of the pair seems to drop into the other's chapters, playing a supporting role to a main character in an act played out in a distinctly gendered setting.

In situating the Reynoldses in the center of this narrative, Gillespie offers fresh insights on the emergence of the New South. This study will appeal to scholars interested in New South themes of work, gender, race, and reform at the turn of the century.

Notes

[1]. See for example: Pete Daniel, *Breaking the Land: The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Culture since 1880* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Robert F. Durden, *The Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1978); Douglas Flamming, *Creating the Modern South: Millhands and Managers in Dalton, Georgia, 1884-1984* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); and Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., *Like a Family: The Making of the Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

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