



Tragic No More: Mixed-Race Women and the Nexus of Sex and Celebrity

Caroline Streeter

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This book examines popular representations of biracial women of black and white descent in the United States, focusing on novels, television, music, and film. Although the emphasis is on the 1990s, the historical arc of the study begins in the 1930s. Caroline A. Streeeter explores the encounter between what she sees as two dominant narratives that frame the perception of mixed race in America. The first is based on the long-standing historical experience of white supremacy and black subjugation. The second is more recent and involves the post-Civil Rights expansion of interracial marriage and mixed-race identities. Streeeter analyzes the collision of these two narratives, the cultural anxieties they have triggered, and the role of black/white women in the simultaneous creation and undoing of racial categories? a charged, ambiguous cycle in American culture.

Streeeter's subjects include concert pianist Philippa Schuyler, Dorothy West's novel *The Wedding* (in print and on screen), Danzy Senna's novels *Caucasia* and *Symptomatic*, and celebrity performing artists Mariah Carey, Alicia Keys, and Halle Berry. She opens with a chapter that examines the layered media response to Essie Mae Washington-Williams, Senator Strom Thurmond's biracial daughter. Throughout the book, Streeeter engages the work of feminist critics and others who have written on interracial sexuality and marriage, biracial identity, the multiracial movement, and mixed race in cultural studies.

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