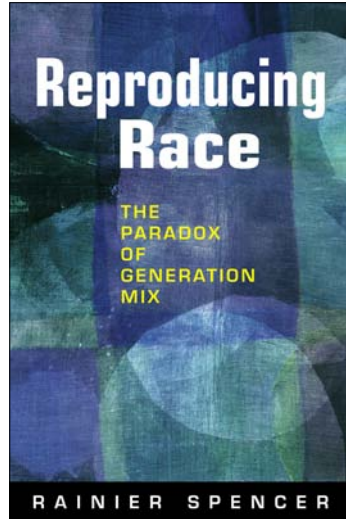


EXCERPTED FROM

Reproducing Race:
The Paradox of
Generation Mix

Rainier Spencer



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ISBNs: 978-1-58826-751-1 hc

978-1-58826-776-4 pb



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

1800 30th Street, Ste. 314

Boulder, CO 80301

USA

telephone 303.444.6684

fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the
Lynne Rienner Publishers website
www.rienner.com

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Introduction

This is a book about mulattoes—past, present, and future, as well as known, unknown, and denied.¹ The mulatto is the subject of my discussion, the basis of my argument, the voice I aim to empower. I am intending in this book to quite self-consciously and quite freely use the term *mulatto*, to bring it out of the state of historical suspended animation it has been in. Some will no doubt view this as something of a retrograde maneuver, but I would counter that it is instead a progressive move. I mean to speak the unspeakable in this book; not that mulatto is in fact an offensive word in any sense, but its current acceptable usage is limited very tightly to the past tense. For a variety of reasons, one does not speak of mulattoes today. To call a living person a mulatto would certainly be considered an insult. Indeed, to refer even to a nonliving person as a mulatto might be considered insulting depending on the time period in which the person lived. For instance, making reference as a mulatto to someone who died in the late twentieth century would be much more likely to be considered insulting than the same reference made to a person who died in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The reasons for this are related to the same kinds of euphemistic games that have taken place with other descriptive terms. For example, Negroes became colored people, who became Afro-American, who became black or African American. But unlike this example, *mulatto* was never replaced by a supposedly more progressive term; it simply faded from use.

Another kind of fading is taking place today, and it is one of the primary reasons I chose to write this book. I am referring to the purposeful fading of the mulatto—not just as a referent but as a concept altogether—from the American consciousness for the purpose of substituting what is seemingly another thing—but as I shall demonstrate, is in fact not at all another thing—in its place. This other thing that is not another thing goes by a variety of names: “Generation Mix,” “Generation M,” “Generation M(ul-

tiracial),” “Generation E. A.,” “Remix Generation,” and certainly several other just as authentically hip names that I have not as yet come across.² Rather than inject yet more “hipness” into this already crowded field, I shall utilize the existing term *Generation Mix*, by which I will mean people (typically, but not necessarily, young people) who consider themselves to be the immediately mixed or first-generation offspring of parents who are members of different biological racial groups.³ Generation Mix will generally be included when I discuss the membership, although not the leadership, of the American Multiracial Identity Movement, the amorphous entity that advocates on a variety of levels for acceptance of multiracial identity as a new variety of biological race. In this book, I will also make reference to the black/white members of Generation Mix as a subset of that group and of the American Multiracial Identity Movement.

Popular wisdom suggests that we are in the midst of a transformation in the way race is constructed in the United States. According to this view, individuals of mixed race, particularly first-generation multiracial people, are confounding the US racial order with their ambiguous phenotypes and purported ability to serve as living bridges between races. From his generally well-received March 18, 2008, speech on race, in which he positioned himself as having a direct and personal understanding of both black and white anger, and to his reference to himself as a “mutt,” President Barack Obama and his historic election have bolstered this view significantly.⁴ Indeed, many Americans hail Obama’s mixed-race background as portending quite literally our postracial future. It is a seductive promise. Will, as we are assured, the (multi)racial ambiguity of Generation Mix represent the vanguard of a new US racial order? Will it undermine centuries of racial hierarchy and veneration of whiteness? These are important questions that demand far more serious attention and discussion than they are typically allotted. They are questions that demand much deeper analysis than our glossy news-magazine society is motivated to provide.

All too often we are told that the (multi)racial ambiguity of Generation Mix will shatter the old racial order in the United States. We are told that this ambiguity will destabilize the current racial hierarchy, and, indeed, will eventually topple it as race itself becomes impossible to determine. And, apparently, we owe all of this to the legions of mixed-race teenagers who are proclaiming their racial newness while celebrating what they declare is their absolute difference from the members of existing racial groups. This is a claim, however, that hardly ever receives even the minimal sort of analysis one might expect for so important a topic. To put it colloquially, so pronounced and so affected is the celebration of Generation Mix that it is difficult for dissenters from this viewpoint to get a word in edgewise. As Catherine Squires points out, scholars whose analyses present challenges to this claim are “not the ones normally consulted by the mainstream press.”⁵

From academic supporters of multiraciality who assume too readily roles as scholarly cheerleaders as opposed to serving as the intellectual referees they should be, to popular media writers who are more interested in the production of hip storylines than in responsible journalism, we are witnessing nothing less than a self-inflicted and self-authorized societal hoodwinking of the first order.

That may seem a rather harsh indictment, undercutting the progressive role that has been assigned to multiracialism of late. But it would be every bit as unwise to underestimate the degree to which we Americans allow ourselves to be influenced by the manipulations of the popular media as it would be to underestimate the ferocious tenacity of those who are invested heavily in maintaining the current racial order—most especially the status of whiteness—even if it means making concessions in the form of minor adjustments to the US racial template that appear to privilege this newfound multiracial ambiguity. The vital point that seems always to be missed in the ubiquitous celebration of Generation Mix is that racial ambiguity, in and of itself, is no guarantee of political progressiveness, racial destabilization, or, indeed, of anything in particular.

Thankfully, though, not all scholars are allowing themselves to be swept up in the unreflective emotionalism of the ambiguity avalanche. A small group of critical multiracial identity theorists (among whom I include myself)—a group distinct from the more fashionable academic multiracial identity advocates—is attempting to bring the requisite scholarly rigor to what has otherwise been a generally mindless celebration of biological race and biological racial ambiguity. As Squires informs us, “this ‘ambiguity,’ however, is not part of the ‘fluidity’ of race lauded by scholars of passing, for example. This ambiguity is about exoticism and intrigue, providing opportunities for consumers to fantasize and speculate about the Other with no expectations of critical consideration of power and racial categories.”⁶ Squires makes an important point, for it is crucial to be able to separate racial ambiguity that is utilized to work consciously against racial hierarchies in the United States from racial ambiguity that is simply a form of self-interested celebration and faddishness that ends up reinforcing those very hierarchies. Pointing out this essential difference is a goal that shall remain in the forefront throughout this book as I reflect upon and interrogate racial ambiguity, multiracial identity, and mulattoes from a variety of perspectives that attend to the future of the US racial order.

When we consider mulattoes, we must of course consider hypodescent, the longstanding mechanism by which mulattoes are said to be produced. Although hypodescent developed in various ways throughout the Americas as a result of European colonization and slavery, it achieved its most extreme formulation in British North America, where (aside from notable exceptions in locales such as New Orleans, LA, and Charleston, SC) the

particular evolution of slavery relegated all degrees of black-white mixture to the black category. We must recognize as well that biological race, hypodescent, mulattoes, monoracial people, and multiracial people today are all figments of the American imaginary, as they have been for centuries. As I have argued elsewhere and will reiterate and expand upon in this book, the multiracial idea is the key to dissolving the hold that biological race maintains on us, but not in the way propounded by the American Multiracial Identity Movement.⁷ As I shall describe in Part 3, in an effort in which the multiracial idea will be fundamental, rather than the addition of another nonwhite group to the US racial order, what is needed to accomplish this task is what I term *racial suicide*.

The connecting factor in all of this is hypodescent and the mulattoes it is believed to produce. Though hypodescent applies de facto only to blacks, it is the basis for the entire structuring of the US racial paradigm. This is so because the category at the top of the racial hierarchy, *white*, has no way to constitute itself absent its relation to blackness, a phenomenon that has been well established by the related fields we now call critical race theory and whiteness studies, and exemplified by the work of scholars such as Cheryl Harris and David Roediger. For example, Abby Ferber makes the point in her argument that whiteness requires an *other*, specifically blackness, in order to establish itself as an identity.⁸ One might reasonably inquire whether something other than blackness could serve the function of the constitutive other, but I do not, at this point, believe so. Certainly, there are deep historical reasons why blackness serves this purpose, and I do not think that the Hispanic, Asian, or Native American categories possess the historical and still current level of revulsion that continues to mark blackness.

For several centuries, the primary racial dynamic in the United States has been the black/white one, with Native Americans being too few in number and also too somatically close to whiteness to stand as the kind of *other* that Afro-Americans were and still are. This is reflected easily in the unsuccessful late nineteenth-century attempt to assimilate Native Americans fully into US (white) society, a horrifyingly destructive mission that included removing children forcibly from their parents and sending them to boarding schools where their language and religion were punished out of them.⁹ Certainly, no such effort has ever been mounted to “assimilate the blacks!” And until the relatively recent wave of Asian and Hispanic immigration over the past forty or so years, those two categories were not only too limited geographically but also too small in number to represent the kind of *othering* fear that blackness did and still does. Moreover, despite a current rise in anti-immigrant feeling that is largely anti-Hispanic, there is also a counter-movement, what Eduardo Bonilla-Silva calls “the Latin-Americanization of whiteness in the United States.”¹⁰ As in the case of some Asians, many Hispanics are taking advantage of multiracialism to transition to a state of *hon-*

orary whiteness, a phenomenon whose corollary is that, once again, Afro-Americans are seen as the group to avoid.

As we know, Hispanic ancestry is assimilable to whiteness based on the fact that the paradigm recognizes both white and nonwhite Hispanic categories. We also know that Native American ancestry has long been assimilable to whiteness, from the much more open rules and laws governing Native American/white marriage throughout the nation's history to the aforementioned program to assimilate Native Americans. Finally, it is becoming clear that Asian ancestry can be assimilable to whiteness as well. From the desirability of Asian women to white males, and the resulting children, to the significant differences in wealth, education, and status that many Asian Americans (though certainly far from all) enjoy, it has become clear that over the course of several generations, a person of Asian/white descent can indeed become white in a way that a person of black/white descent in the identical generational status cannot, as long as the latter person's sub-Saharan African ancestry is known.¹¹

A key failure of opponents of the US racial paradigm has been an inability to articulate correctly the most critical aspect of the paradigm's nature. We like to think that we understand the paradigm, that in fact it is really a very simple idea consisting of four or five races with whites at the top of the hierarchy, followed in order by Asians, Hispanics (if conceived of racially), Native Americans, and then blacks.¹² It is true that this conception of the paradigm is certainly accurate, but it does not go far enough. Without further analysis, the key element of its being—its essentiality, one might say—is left unrevealed and, as a consequence, unproblematized. That essentiality is whiteness. This is why, despite all the various arguments they might deploy in attempting to de-emphasize the black/white binary, approaches such as Ronald Sundstrom's labored but inert critique invariably miss the mark, for they tend to disregard or even ignore the power of whiteness and white supremacy.¹³ What Sundstrom and others fail to account for is that without the blackness that is produced and reproduced by whiteness, there is no white supremacy.

The fact is that whiteness, while it has been forced by recent population trends to expand its boundaries by accepting specific and limited amounts of Asian, Hispanic, or Native American ancestry, cannot admit the public entry of blackness and still remain white. In the simplest sense, the entire paradigm reduces to the centuries-old dichotomy of black and white. This is surely not to say that members of the other groups live trouble-free lives untouched by racism, but rather that there simply is no US racial paradigm without blackness serving as the antipode of whiteness. Everything else flows from this primary, primordial relationship. Long before it became possible to even offer an academic description of the US racial paradigm there was the *de facto* reality that the offspring of a black/white heterosex-

ual encounter could be black or mixed-race, but not white. Lost in the media and academic frenzy over Generation Mix is the crucial reality that the ideology of the American Multiracial Identity Movement does absolutely nothing to challenge or subvert this age-old racial equation and, as we shall see in the pages that follow, actually does much to rejuvenate and endorse it. Unless something arrives to deconstruct in a radical way the status of whiteness at the top of the hierarchy, there is no hope for any real change to the racial order.

What must be understood and not allowed to become lost amidst the contemporary celebration of supposed racial ambiguity is that none of the claims to progressiveness made by Generation Mix have even the slightest impact upon the maintenance and administration of the US racial order because they have no impact upon the status of whiteness. As Heather Dalmage reminds us, “the myth of white racial purity, based on a biological notion of race, is indeed the foundation upon which the U.S. racist system was constructed. Yet a multiracial category will not challenge purity as the basis for whiteness. . . . Naming another category does not detract from white privilege; it may simply help individual whites fine-tune identities grounded in notions of superiority.”¹⁴ We may shuffle the intermediate categories, we may add nonwhite categories, and we may even see whiteness expand a bit to include some previously excluded people, but as long as black remains both at the bottom of the hierarchy and unassimilable to whiteness (while whiteness is easily assimilable to blackness), and as long as it remains impossible for a black woman to be seen as giving naturally conceived birth to a white child (while the reverse case continues its unproblematic acceptance), nothing has changed.¹⁵ Acknowledging this lack of change, Steve Garner points out that “the guys in the middle might be playing musical chairs, but it is not in any substantial way that the category ‘White’ seems to be diminishing through the mixed category.”¹⁶

The evil that is biological race in the US context begins and ends with the hard fact of hypodescent and the resulting exclusion of blackness from any participation in whiteness. Hypodescent allows for whiteness to participate in blackness, but not for blackness to participate in whiteness owing to the fact that whiteness cannot remain white when mixed with blackness. This, again, simply is the US racial paradigm in its most basic form. The solution does not lie in altering the paradigm so that it is somehow more equal or so that it includes more groups; the solution lies in rejecting both the paradigm and the hypodescent that forms its primary building block. Both the US racial paradigm and hypodescent are corruptions that should not be accommodated by any thinking person or by any coherent ideology, for they are primary vehicles of continued antiblackness and white supremacy in this country.

Recognizing this, if it were demonstrated that multiracial ideology de-

pendis in any way upon the very same hypodescent that undergirds the US racial paradigm, or indeed if it supports that paradigm in any way, such a revelation would represent a serious and very damaging problem for the American Multiracial Identity Movement, at least in terms of any question of its philosophical or intellectual validity, as well as any claims attributing to it the promise of a racially transcendent disruption of the paradigm. That the multiracial movement and its ideology are indeed entangled thoroughly with hypodescent will be a central and driving claim of this book. I will be making this point in a variety of ways throughout the book, arguing that those who proclaim that multiracial identity will destroy race are in fact living a lie. Some people who are nonwhite, including the black/white members of Generation Mix, may well be able to distance themselves from blackness, but such movement has no ultimate effect on the US racial order; it merely adds an additional category. For how can multiracial identity deconstruct race when it requires the system of racial categorization to even announce itself?

In relation to this, it is one of the primary contentions of this book that there is an important but suppressed relationship between American mulattoes and Generation Mix, a relationship that I shall endeavor to elaborate in the following chapters. That relationship revolves around the concept of biological racial mixture and whether that mixture is used to support or challenge the idea of biological race. My contention is that there is nothing particularly new or avant-garde about Generation Mix and, moreover, that its black/white members cannot with any consistency or philosophical validity distinguish themselves from the American mulattoes they claim to be both newer than and different from. The problem, though, goes beyond the mundane and perhaps neutral fact that Generation Mix is simply wrong about this. I argue that such claims of newness and difference, far from transcending race, serve instead to support contemporary antiblackness and white supremacy. This realization, therefore, moves these claims from the mere contemplation of accuracy and inaccuracy to the realm of moral consideration.

I have purposely, and I hope wisely, chosen a tripartite structure of past, present, and future for this book because, in addition to a certain aesthetic value, such a structure serves to highlight in an especially strong way the connections I am going to make in regard to mulattoes and the black/white members of Generation Mix today. Part 1, "The Mulatto Past," seeks to provide a brief and limited history of white American thought regarding mulattoes. Chapters 2 and 3 concern the representation of mulattoes from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries by white men who were invested in and operating from commonsense and "obvious" (to them) notions of white superiority and Negro (and therefore mulatto) inferiority. Various long-lasting and deprecatory mulatto myths resulted from these representa-

tions. In Chapter 2, “The Mixed-Race Background,” we shall see that from the late nineteenth century to the beginning of the early twentieth century, these myths were mainly physical or biological in nature. Chapter 3, “Of Tragic Mulattoes and Marginal Men,” concerns the more emotional and psychological myth of the marginal man that began to arise at the dawn of the twentieth century, and that will figure so prominently throughout the remainder of the book. The myth of the marginal man developed out of the tragic mulatto characterization represented in the plantation literature of white, often abolitionist, writers but that was given important scholarly substance in the early twentieth century by the emergent discipline of sociology. The notion of the marginal man—the inherently conflicted mulatto who rejects blackness and desires desperately to be white—while a fantasy stirred by the racist projection of white men’s own inner insecurities, nonetheless gained an authoritative currency in academic literature.

The racist myth of the marginal man was powerful, but as I will show via a review of contemporaneous literature by American mulatto writers in Chapter 4, “Mulatto Writers on Marginality,” it was rejected soundly by the very people it was intended to represent in so objectifying a way. Through an examination of their novels concerning racial passing, these formidable American writers—Charles Chesnutt, James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, Nella Larsen, and Jessie Fauset—relate to us their views concerning the motivations, attitudes, and racial identity choices of American mulattoes. What they have to tell us about supposed mulatto marginality flies in the face of white male sociologists’ psychological projection onto mulatto bodies of an insatiable desire for whiteness. Following an analysis of these mulatto writers’ works as regards the question of marginality, I undertake in Chapter 5, “Imitations of Life,” an extensive review of the *Imitation of Life* trilogy, the 1933 novel, and 1934 and 1959 films of that name, a review that seeks to illustrate the staying power through the years of the marginal man idea in the US popular consciousness, despite its utter falseness.

Chapter 6, “Rejecting a Shared Past,” addresses the question of just who is a mulatto today; the way the answer to that question impacts the relationship between Afro-Americans, mulattoes, and the black/white members of Generation Mix. This will lay the foundation for ensuing discussions in Parts 2 and 3 regarding the purported specialness of Generation Mix and the likelihood that recognition of multiracial identity will lead to the dismantling of race in the United States. In all, the aim of Part 1 is first and foremost to demonstrate that the black/white members of today’s Generation Mix are mulattoes, and that the narcissistic celebration of Generation Mix as new and different is an affront and an insult to the untold generations of American mulattoes who have come before.

In Part 2, “The Mulatto Present,” I endeavor to refute the increasingly popular notion that Generation Mix represents a progressive step toward de-

constructing the US racial order. Acknowledging the important work of Jared Sexton, in Chapter 7, “Postraciality, Multiraciality, and Antiracism,” I situate Generation Mix and the American Multiracial Identity Movement firmly in the orbit of contemporary antiracism and white supremacy.¹⁷ Refuting the notion of Generation Mix as a racially transcendent phenomenon, in Chapters 8 and 9 I examine in a critical way several never-questioned claims about multiracial identity that are presented typically as authoritative reasons for supporting multiracial ideology. Chapter 8, “Resurrecting Old Myths of Mulatto Marginality,” draws a critical link between the psycho-emotional myths of Chapter 3 and today’s claims of Generation Mix superiority, demonstrating that modern-day assertions of multiracial superiority represent a resurrection and a dubious recasting of long-discredited myths of mulatto marginality. I devote Chapter 9, “The False Promise of Racial Bridging,” to an extended deconstruction of the claim that black/white multiracials partake of white culture, and are thereby more cosmopolitan racially than “regular” Afro-Americans, thus making them better able—indeed situating them uniquely—to serve as bridges for racial reconciliation. Rather than performing as racial bridges, I argue instead that Generation Mix provides cover for activist white mothers of black/white children to continue distancing their children from blackness.¹⁸

In Chapter 10, “Assessing the New Millennium Marginal Man,” I question notions of identity that serve as bases for multiracial ideology and demonstrate that many of the claims made by multiracial activists and by scholars who support multiracial identity are—when held up to intellectual scrutiny—simply insupportable. Most importantly, I demonstrate that today’s Generation Mix, especially its black/white component, has resurrected the dead myth of the marginal man with its racist, antiracist foundation, and has breathed new life into that specious legend. The result is the fact that the American Multiracial Identity Movement and Generation Mix have associated themselves, sometimes quite openly, with a theory so racist and so demeaning to Afro-Americans that it belies the disarmingly fulsome message of harmony and reconciliation recited so often by the multiracial movement.

Part 3, “The Mulatto Future,” advances beyond the necessary criticisms of the US racial order and of the American Multiracial Identity Movement, and reaches for theoretical and practical strategies that can finally free us from our half-a-millennium of enthrallment to the false consciousness of biological race, and most especially whiteness. Despite the fact that multiracial advocates and the popular media all too frequently advance the notion that multiracial identity will lead to the demise of race in the United States, no one ever offers a remotely adequate argument for or demonstration of precisely how this is to be accomplished. Addressing this yawning vacuum, I assess the notion of presumed (multi)racial transcendence and show that

there is absolutely no reason to suspect that it is accurate. In support of this analysis, the idea of multiracialism as representing a militant stance to assume vis-à-vis the US racial paradigm is evaluated in Chapter 11, “Whither Multiracial Militancy?,” and is found wanting.

Chapter 12, “Conserving the Racial Order,” is concerned with power, with understanding the purpose of the ubiquitous racial check boxes so often railed against by multiracial advocates, and with questions about the sustainability of a multiracial category through time. In Chapter 13, “Mulatto (and White) Writers on Deconstructing Race,” I call on three of our early twentieth-century American mulatto authors from Chapter 4 (Chesnut, Johnson, and Larsen) along with several slightly earlier white authors of a similar mind to assist in demonstrating the fallaciousness of race in the hope that this time we will heed the ways that their cogent analyses serve to deconstruct race. After these analyses, I suggest that it may be necessary to speak the mulatto into existence, albeit contingently and only temporarily, in order to speak race out of existence.

Finally, in Chapter 14, “Beyond Generation Mix,” I reiterate that the pervasive and tenacious persistence of whiteness must be the target of all successful antiracist efforts, that mass celebration of Generation Mix contributes nothing to that important cause and in fact hampers it to a significant degree. I acknowledge the difficulty of the work that will have to be undertaken in order to undo whiteness, and I certainly agree with David Roediger that “with whites today having on average more than nine times the household wealth of African Americans and Latinos, and with white male incarceration rates at less than one-seventh those of African American males, desires to claim white identity and to defend the relative advantages attached to it will persist unless dramatic changes occur, even in the wake of post-civil rights gains for sections of communities of color.”¹⁹ This crucial task must not be underestimated.

Notes

1. Race terms in this book are always a reference to people’s misguided belief in biological race and the US racial paradigm. Given that my topic concerns the notion of racially mixed people in the United States, my use of such terms is necessary as I endeavor to engage the debate using the linguistic tools currently at our disposal. Race terms in this book, therefore, should always be read as if preceded by the words *so-called*. The only alternatives would have been to utilize far too many italicizations or to deploy cumbersome phraseology such as “persons who are perceived as, or who consider themselves to be, black” (or “white,” “black/white,” “mulatto,” or “multiracial,” etc.), which would have distracted unacceptably from the text itself.

2. Kimberly M. DaCosta, “Mixing It Up,” *Contexts* (Fall 2005): 15; DaCosta,

Making Multiracials: State, Family, and Market in the Redrawing of the Color Line (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 21; Elliott Lewis, *Fade: My Journeys in Multiracial America* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2006), 259–268; Catherine R. Squires, *Dispatches from the Color Line: The Press and Multiracial America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 161; Ruth La Ferla, “Generation E. A.: Ethnically Ambiguous,” *New York Times*, December 28, 2003, ST1, ST9; Sushi Das, “They’ve Got the Look,” *The Age*, April 20, 2004, <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/04/19/1082357106748.html>.” I include “Remix Generation” while acknowledging its primarily international usage; the other terms are all well in use in the United States.

3. “First-generation” multiracial individuals are taken to be those whose parents are presumed to be unmixed members of two distinct racial groups (i.e., black/white, Asian/Native American, etc.). The fact that this is scientific nonsense appears to have no impact on the thinking of those who advocate this particular identity.

4. In Obama’s own words, discussing the acquisition of a White House dog for his two daughters: “Obviously, a lot of shelter dogs are mutts like me.” Jeff Zeleny, “Obama, in His New Role as President-Elect, Calls for Stimulus Package,” *New York Times*, November 8, 2008, A10.

5. Squires, *Dispatches from the Color Line*, 51.

6. *Ibid.*, 169.

7. Rainier Spencer, *Spurious Issues: Race and Multiracial Identity Politics in the United States* (Boulder: Westview, 1999), 196–197; Spencer, “Beyond Pathology and Cheerleading: Insurgency, Dissolution, and Complicity in the Multiracial Idea,” in *The Politics of Multiracialism: Challenging Racial Thinking*, ed. Heather M. Dalmage, 108–119 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

8. Abby Ferber, *White Man Falling: Race, Gender, and White Supremacy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

9. Patricia P. Hilden, *When Nickels Were Indians: An Urban, Mixed-Blood Story* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 151–153.

10. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, “‘New Racism,’ Color-Blind Racism, and the Future of Whiteness in America,” in *White Out: The Continuing Significance of Racism*, ed. Ashley W. Doane and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, 277 (New York: Routledge, 2003).

11. As Rebecca King-O’Riain explains, “images of Asian American women (and men) as feminine may also be a key factor in the gender dynamics of Asian/white interracial couplings where the woman tends to be Asian and the man white.” Rebecca C. King-O’Riain, “Model Majority? The Struggle for Identity Among Multiracial Japanese Americans,” in *The Politics of Multiracialism: Challenging Racial Thinking*, ed. Heather M. Dalmage, 183 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

12. While commentators might debate the relative placement of each of the middle groups within the paradigm, the endpoints—white and black—are fixed absolutely.

13. Ronald R. Sundstrom, *The Browning of America and the Evasion of Social Justice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), chap 3.

14. Heather M. Dalmage, *Tripping on the Color Line: Black-White Multiracial Families in a Racially Divided World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 150.

15. I want to make clear that I see no intrinsic value in being assimilable to whiteness. I am here making a specific point about the exclusivity of whiteness in that it will extend the possibility of assimilation to some members of other groups

but not to blacks. This exclusivity of whiteness vis-à-vis blackness is, as I shall demonstrate in the chapters to follow, mirrored by a similar exclusivity exercised against blackness by the ideology of the American Multiracial Identity Movement.

16. Steve Garner, *Racisms: An Introduction* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2010), 101.

17. Jared Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

18. When I use the term *white mothers of black/white children* throughout this book I am referring specifically to those white mothers who have or who do indoctrinate their black/white children to a multiracial identity. It is not a reference to all white mothers of black/white children either now or in the past, but is rather a reference to a very specific subset of them.

19. David R. Roediger, *How Race Survived U.S. History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon* (New York: Verso, 2008), 212.