



## Fade to Black and White: Interracial Images in Popular Culture (Perspectives on a Multiracial America)

By Erica Chito Childs

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There is no teasing apart what interracial couples think of themselves from what society shows them about themselves. Following on her earlier ground-breaking study of the social worlds of interracial couples, Erica Chito Childs considers the larger context of social messages, conveyed by the media, that inform how we think about love across the color line. Examining a range of media, from movies to music to the web, *Fade to Black and White* offers an informative and provocative account of how the perception of interracial sexuality as 'deviant' has been transformed in the course of the 20th century and how race relations are understood today.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Erica Chito Childs' careful research and creative insights are clearly displayed in this engaging and interesting book. *Fade to Black and White* is an original study that convincingly shows how the depictions of interracial sex and marriage in popular culture and media reflect contemporary attitudes about race and sex in the United States. This book is a significant contribution to the study of American race relations. (William Julius Wilson, Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser University Professor, Harvard University)

Excellent and novel integration of a wide range of contemporary readings, films, television programs, news coverage and youth-oriented media's coverage of inter-racial relationships. It moves the discourse on the increasingly important area of inter-racial relationships to another plane, opening readers' eyes to subtle, but persisting framing patterns that both reflect and influence our views of inter-racial relationships. (Clara Rodriguez, Fordham University)

Childs does not explore the "half full" argument that media representations of a color-blind U.S., though not factual or realistic, are aspirational and index a progressive rollback of the most virulent forms of public racism in the U.S. Instead, she confronts the undeniable and unacceptable fact that racism remains powerful in popular culture. Recommended. (*CHOICE*, April 2010)

*Fade to Black and White* shows, first and foremost, how the racial exception can be used to prove the racial rule. Erica Chito Childs presents a provocative analysis of popular television shows, movies, and news in order to better understand the ideological work performed by the relatively rare interracial images that circulate in American popular culture. What she finds charts new ground in our understanding of an early 21st century conundrum: how it is that whiteness continues to be celebrated in what are supposedly colorblind times. (Darnell Hunt, Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA)

#### About the Author

**Erica Chito Childs** is associate professor of sociology at Hunter College, City University of New York. She is the author of *Navigating Interracial Borders: Black-White Couples and their Social Worlds*.

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