

How am I integrating this information into my knowledge base; and 2) Where does dialogue begin in examining race relations when groups view reality differently? Overall the two authors' attempts to critically discuss these issues is effective and provides me with a re-integrative factor in putting together ongoing analysis of new knowledge and consciousness.

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Book Reviews

Eve Harris (Director and Producer). *Secret Jews of the Hispanic Southwest*. Eve Harris, 568 12th Avenue, Apt. A, San Francisco, CA 94118; (415-387-7934). 1/2" VHS videocassette, 18:09 minutes. 1995. \$20.00 (includes shipping and handling).

Although this film is short, it is sweet to the eyes and ears. The story is brief and may appear simple, but its ramifications are extensive, reaching back into the distant past and extending from the present into the future regarding complex matters of ethnicity and ethnic identities. The material is particularly significant to those involved in Hispanic and Judaic studies. Beyond those areas, however, the data present some challenges to definitions of ethnicity, the perceived longevity of certain group and individual ethnic identities, and our knowledge of the processes of culture change.

As implied in the title of the film, Harris is exploring individual and family identities that are, or have been until recently, held in secret. This situation, of course, sets some serious methodological limits to as full an examination as one would be able to conduct, for example, on Hispanics, American Indians, African American, Latvian Americans, or Jews who are not trying to conceal their identities. The circumstances also give rise to some controversies, often bitter, especially among certain Jewish scholars who essentially deny that secret Jews could exist in the American southwest. In some quarters, the investigation of such a possibility is almost taboo. On the other hand, the literature on secret Jews (also referred to as Hidden Jews, Crypto-Jews, or Marranos) in Spain, Portugal and Latin America is fairly extensive. Crypto-Judaism has continued to some degree in those areas and today individuals in considerable numbers are coming out of their clandestine closets. Is it impossible that similar processes are occurring today in the American southwest?

Despite these limitations, Harris gives a fascinating glimpse into this question. With funding from the Tucson/Pima Arts Council and the Tucson Community Cable Corporation, she interviews four informants who

report the following kinds of behavior in their otherwise Hispanic Catholic families: grandmothers who furtively lit candles on Friday evenings, families who refrained from work on Saturdays, a ranch family who raised pigs but would not eat pork, another family whose members were "allergic" to pork, and meals at which milk was not served along with meat. Over the centuries these practices have apparently lost their original ritual meanings and their context within Judaism per se, something akin to biological organs that have become vestigial in organic evolution. Yet into the twentieth century, Hispanic elders carry on these practices, not knowing the reasons why but cautiously whispering to their grandchildren, "Somos Judios" ("We are Jews"). The aunt of one Hispanic informant further told her niece that they were "Levines," probably not fully understanding the reference to the Levites or temple attendant priests in traditional Judaism. Although these four informants agreed to face Harris' camera, most individuals involved in these secret practices would not do so. One of the interviewees explains this fact forcefully: "The imperative not to tell is strong."

This imperative of secrecy is further revealed as Harris turns her camera on Stanley Hordes, former state historian for New Mexico. Hordes describes how the Sephardic Jews in Spain and Portugal were forced to convert or be expelled from Iberia in 1492. Many of these "Conversos" or "New Christians" escaped to the frontiers of the New World where the Inquisition continued but with somewhat less efficiency than in their European homeland. In one old adobe house in New Mexico, Hordes found next to a crucifix an object covered by many layers of paint: it was a mezuzah (a doorpost amulet containing Hebrew prayers). The continuation of these ritual practices and shreds of identity, though vestigial, are certainly intriguing. Even more astounding is the clear and pervasive sense of fear which people feel today as a consequence of events that occurred five hundred years ago.

In sum, this film offers an opportunity to ponder matters of ethnicity and personal identification via an excellent videographic piece: the southwestern scenery is dramatic, the interviewees engaging, and the background Sephardic music poignant.

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David A. Hollinger. *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*. (New York: Basic Books, 1995) 210 pp., \$13.00 paper.

This important volume by the distinguished intellectual historian, David Hollinger, sorts through key multicultural issues and brings a much needed freshness to a very stale, angry debate. In outlining the social contours of a postethnic America, he describes a country less