

The pool of eligible marriage mates becomes even smaller because Christians and Muslims are not allowed to marry each other.

Egwuonwu provided an interesting account of Africans who favor polygamy. His explanation will appear legitimate for most uninformed readers. This book is saturated with information that reveals the hidden aspects of African culture. The saliency of ethnicity on social relationships in Africa was the motivating force for this work. It is apparent that, in general, marriage problems in Africa are the result of negative inter-ethnic relations.

The comprehensiveness of the Egwuonwu study is reflected in two appendices on the data collection device and descriptive statistics. Twenty-five frequency tables are used to summarize a wide range of data on the values and perceptions of Africans concerning marriage-related issues. The author's integration of this vast amount of information is nothing less than remarkable.

In sum, *Marriage Problems in Africa* is a welcome addition to existing books on ethnic relations and marriage and the family. Tables were used sparingly and judiciously. They are located in the appendix. A sincere concern for the reader's susceptibility to imposing figures is marked by the absence of such devices in the body of the text. This text will be most useful in undergraduate courses in minority groups, race and ethnic relations, marriage and the family, and social change and development.

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Louise Erdrich. *Love Medicine*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984) 272 pp., \$13.95.

Love Medicine brings together the stories of the Kashpaws and Lamartines, two Chippewa families of North Dakota. Two major themes, love and death, produce both the continuity of the novel and of family traditions that are the foundation of each character's life. As different individuals tell their stories, the reader is given a multifaceted perspective of the events that influence the families over a fifty-year period.

Louise Erdrich presents a diverse group of characters connected by common ancestors and culture. Two brothers, Nector and Eli, stay with

their mother when the older siblings leave the family home in order to benefit from government redistribution of reservation lands. When the brothers reach school age their mother hides Eli from the authorities and sends just Nector to the boarding school run by white priests. While they remain connected throughout their lives, this division in childhood sets Nector and Eli on completely different paths. Eli follows the old ways and is strongly rooted to the earth while Nector works for white people and becomes the tribal council member who is caught between the tribe and white government.

The three generations that follow between 1934 and 1984 reflect a diversity inherent in a people with the many life options that exist in Native American culture today. Stories are told of those who stay on reservation land within the strong family structure provided by Marie, Nector's wife. Others move far away from the reservation to completely break family ties. Inability to gain a foothold in either world shatters the lives of still others. June Kashpaw's early death from what appears to be alcoholism exemplifies this group.

Several characters tell the story of June's life and death, including June herself. This provides greater perspective and allows one to see beyond the alcoholism to reach an understanding of one woman's life, loves, and death. Erdrich has great understanding of and sensitivity to alcoholism as a problem within the Native American community and shares this brilliantly in her novel.

The short story format tied together by common events and characters (June and her death representing just one example of this) is remarkably effective. It sets a tone reminiscent of folk histories passed from one generation to another. One story told from many viewpoints leads to an understanding that past realities depend on the storyteller and are not immutable.

As a popular novel, *Love Medicine* provides enjoyable reading. The stories capture the imagination and take the reader into the worlds of the Kashpaws and Lamartines, into love and death. I highly recommend this novel both for its entertainment value and for its explorations into what it means to be human.

— Barbara Brydon
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