

For students of Native American cultures, Edward Spicer's scholarship has indeed made all the difference.

— Gretchen Harvey  
North Dakota State University

**Paul R. Spickard. *Mixed Blood—Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America*. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989) 532 pp., \$29.95.**

Just as the mixing of peoples has been a dominant theme in American social history, it has also been a compelling, if not controversial, theme in American social science. Sociologists have long recognized that intermarriage is an important social phenomenon in American society. Thus, early American social observers were drawn to study this area of social life. From Frederick Hoffman's earliest studies of black/white couples in the late nineteenth century to W. E. B. Du Bois's observations on intermarriage at the beginning of the twentieth century, the systematic study of intermarriage stands as one of the initial starting points for American sociology.

In *Mixed Blood*, Paul R. Spickard examines the major theoretical efforts emerging from sociological work on intermarriage and compares these with the intermarriage experiences during the twentieth century of three groups: Japanese Americans, Jewish Americans, and African Americans. He also includes an interesting chapter on the encounters of Japanese women and American men in the years following World War II.

Spickard correctly identifies an emphasis on social structure with sociological theories on intermarriage. That is, generally sociologists have been prone to address social structural influences such as demography, social class, and economic forces on rates of intermarriage. These differing approaches vary in their complexity, and the reader will find it refreshing that Spickard is able to present most of them in a concise and deliberate style without sacrificing the integrity of their essences.

One social structural theme sounded is the influence of demographic factors on the dynamics of intermarriage, such as the notion that the larger the minority group the less likely intermarriage will occur. Another theme involves that of group boundaries. Theories such as Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy's "triple melting pot" hypothesis and Emory Bogardus's "social distance" work posit that some group boundaries are more easily surmounted than others. For instance, religious differences are more easily breached than differences of race.

Most prominent perhaps in the theoretical efforts has been the notion of hypogamy typically associated with Robert Merton. Here is the assertion that intermarriage follows an exchange system whereby lower social caste men of wealth and talent trade those attributes for higher social caste

women who lack the attributes of wealth, talent or beauty. While taking care to explore the merits of this perspective, Spickard finally concludes that "this rule of hypogamy seems to confuse as much as it explains."

While the specifics of these sociological approaches differ, nevertheless, they contain a common emphasis—the influence of social structure on the shaping of individual social behavior. As explanations for some phenomenon, these theories have a great deal of merit. However, Spickard leads us in a different direction by simply pointing that while social structure is important, "culture also counts."

From this premise Spickard builds a thorough analysis of the way in which cultural, ethnic images have impacted on the experience of mixing among the three groups he has selected for treatment. Although this historian does not state so explicitly, sociologists will find it most interesting that Spickard is actually moving us away from more Marxian and Mertonian models of thinking about intermarriage to an approach that is consistent with a Weberian theoretical framework. As far as this reviewer is concerned, this contribution is a valuable service.

*Mixed Blood* is thoroughly researched and well written. Spickard narrates the historical and cultural experiences of the three groups while largely avoiding overwhelming the reader with a myriad of statistics on intermarriage rates. Some readers may be disappointed that some groups have been omitted and may find that segments of Parts I and III are a bit tedious. Nevertheless, most will find *Mixed Blood* a good addition to the body of literature on intermarriage.

— Terry E. Huffman  
Northern State University

**Dorothy Sterling. *Black Foremothers: Three Lives*. (New York: The Feminist Press, 1988) 176 pp., \$9.95 paper.**

*Black Foremothers* is a much needed book written about the lives of three important black women: Ellen Craft, Ida B. Wells and Mary Church Terrell. The author, Dorothy Sterling, is to be commended for her ability to piece together the lives of these women and present them in such an interesting manner. In the foreword, Margaret Walker states that the author is highly qualified to write biographies of black women because of her intense study of American black people for at least twenty-five years.

This second edition of *Black Foremothers* includes an interesting six-page foreword by Margaret Walker, an equally interesting twenty-three page introduction by Barbara Christian, and two pages of a selected table of African American history. These three parts set the stage for the main text. The text is arranged in three units, with internal subdivisions, includes one page about the author, and ends with a fifteen-page bibliography and index.