Mixed Race Relationships in the UK:
An Annotated Bibliography of Sources

by

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Bibliographies in Ethnic Relations No.14

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June 1996
Acknowledgements

Thanks to my supervisor Dr. Steven Vertovec, Anne Shaw and other members of staff at CRER for their help. Thanks also to the ESRC for my research award.

Biographical Notes

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This bibliography is the result of study in the area of mixed race relationships in the UK, for a Ph.D. in Race and Ethnic Studies at CRER. His research is due to be completed in 1998, and this is his first publication.

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Introduction

There is a dearth of information on mixed race relationships in the UK. This is curious since it is often the area of ‘race relations’ which excites the most public condemnation and personal hostility. It is an extremely controversial subject on which nearly everyone has an opinion. Early public opinion surveys often included a question ‘would you let your daughter marry a...’ so as to provide an indication of the level of racial prejudice in the UK. Racial prejudice is roughly regarded by many authors to have disappeared when intermarriage increases to a certain level. Many books make oblique references to interracial relationships, but very few deal with it explicitly. There is more work in the United States, but even there scholars have noted the paucity of data on the area, and this is in a country which records ‘race’ at many official levels.

This bibliography is extremely unlikely to be an exhaustive account of all the references to mixed race relationships, but should nevertheless include all the important academic and major non-academic publications which would be of interest to anyone wishing to gain a grasp on the subject. Although this bibliography is concerned with sources on mixed relationships in the United Kingdom, some publications in the American and French field are included simply because they may be the only source on that particular area, or of general use and of a high quality. American and French texts are indicated in the annotations. Sources are divided into books, articles in periodicals, and newspaper clippings held at CRER.

Films and documentaries are of course, as valuable as newspaper or academic information in gauging the level of public debate and interest, and those films which immediately spring to mind would be the recent films such as Spike Lee’s Jungle Fever and Mira Nair’s Mississippi Masala. However, this
itself may be an impossible task given the ubiquity of mixed relationships as the subject of films. Shakespeare covered the area five hundred years ago, not only in *Othello*, but also in his first play *Titus Andronicus* and it was also a theme in the *Tempest*. Joseph Conrad’s novels looked at the same theme, as did Rider Haggard. *Wuthering Heights* was also concerned - Heathcliff was a mulatto. Many films emanating from the Bollywood (Bombay) film industry also challenge the improprieties of romantic relationships between castes or races.

The discourses surrounding interracial relationships have many facets, not least those of racial science (e.g. Kohn), cultural difference (e.g. Grearson and Smith), desire (e.g. Young), public condemnation, racism and identity (e.g. Alibhai-Brown and Montague). This underlines the fact that sexual discourse is often hidden and has to be uncovered and elucidated by the researcher. Sexuality is a primary feature of human life, its vastness has led to a proliferation of books on the subject, and while the study of interracial relationships has remained on the edges of academic discussion, it is an extremely powerful area of debate in the modern world.
Books

— Perhaps the most well known of modern books on the subject. Consists of a series of largely unstructured interviews with people in mixed race relationships. Useful source on social prejudice and people’s relationships, with a concise introduction to the subject and debate. Although not an academic enquiry, it nevertheless illustrates some of the main problems that people face and how they deal with them.

— Examines structures of power in Imperial India, and how official attitudes and policies were influenced by ideas of racial and sexual propriety.

— Not directly concerned with miscegenation but has some use in looking at what racial science had to say about race mixing between the world wars on pp.147-167.

— Psychological and sociological look at ‘black psychology’, with two chapters examining the psychopathology of mixed relationships. Fanon has a difficult style, which reflects translation from the French, but this is quite a damning account
of mixed relationships, arguing that they follow psychological imperatives established under slavery.

— Essential reading for anyone looking at the history of Blacks in Britain. Does not deal with mixed relationships, but is useful for anyone wishing to get a grasp of the sort of contact white Britons had with people of African and West Indian descent in Britain.

— This book was published by the BBC to accompany a TV series of the same name. It was not intended to cover wider theoretical, political and economic points, and largely records the problems experienced by colonials in romantic encounters with the colonised. It is quick reading.

— Is concerned with theories of assimilation in the United States, and so is not concerned with the UK, but will be of use to the researcher because it discusses in some detail theories of assimilation, including marital assimilation, which is seen as a necessary precondition for cultural and structural assimilation.

— Written by women about the experiences, dilemmas and solutions in intercultural relationships. It has a deeply personal standpoint and is quite varied, but insists that an intercultural relationship involves crossing national boundaries. It is good reading and highlights problems of identity and cultural
difference, but may be overemphasising cultural conflict in mixed relationships.

— The compiler’s own work at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations should be completed towards the end of 1998. The final shape of the thesis is not clear at this stage, but should analyse the discourses surrounding mixed race relationships in the UK, and provide a valuable contribution to the debate. The author maintains an internet site at URL http://www.csv.warwick.ac.uk/~errbm/ detailing some current work.

— This early book centres around a woman’s experience of working during the second world war in America in a canteen with a no discrimination policy, and the various problems she encountered in dealing with prejudiced people. She includes several chapters on sexuality, some of which is quite well written.

— A very well written, entertaining and often funny look at sexual contact between whites and blacks in the Empire. It is comprehensive and underlines the importance of looking at sexuality when regarding contact between coloniser and colonised. He looks at morality in the UK and abroad, the amount and variety of sexual contact between peoples, the underlying power structure, and records a number of personal histories which are very interesting. Important reading for the researcher of interracial sexual relations.

— Examines about a hundred interracial marriages in London. The work is largely statistical in nature, and tests various hypotheses about interracial marriages. Information was gained largely by interview and covers fields such as how the couple met, courted, reactions of respective families, children and the happiness and stability of marriages. Unfortunately, Kannan’s style is rather dry, and exacerbated by his insistence on figures and numbers, and thus makes rather hard reading. His conclusion however, is good, and could be read without much reference to the preceding statistical work.

— A well considered history of racial science. This is not directly concerned with mixed relationships but is useful reading since it considers various movements such as eugenics and racial hygiene which are implicitly concerned with interracial sexual congress (pp.33ff). Kohn also has an internet site for continued discussion in this area, which can be found on URL http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/racegallery/.

— This book examines the contemporary views of African-Carribbeans and South Asians regarding the various aspects of identity. One chapter is concerned with mixed marriages. Research was carried out by interview and group discussions, and indicates that Carribbeans are largely tolerant of mixed marriages while South Asians are largely opposed. Indicates the main areas which are regarded as problematic, and is useful for the researcher because it specifically looks at the views of ethnic minority members.

— The authors of this volume are largely concerned with genetics and race, and thus contribute to the usual IQ and related arguments about the inferiority of blacks, but make some interesting comments on genetics and mixed marriages, such the ‘myth’ of the melting pot (pp.24ff), and racial hybridity (pp.90ff).

— One of the first major studies of ethnic minorities. This is a study of West Indian migrants in Brixton, looking at conditions of employment, housing, attitudes, cultural and family life, and a small section on mixed marriages, revealing the level of ignorance and prejudice in the late 1950s.

— A comparative study of race relations in Great Britain and South Africa. Records the high level of prejudice and legal injunctions in South Africa, and its proscriptive effects on other areas of social life. In Britain, the level of prejudice was shown to be high, and he speculates on the social causes of intermarriage and highlights the differences between South Africa, the UK and the USA. For South Africa and mixed relationships see pp.84ff and for the UK see pp.281ff.

— This is a comprehensive work on West Indian workers in Liverpool, 1941-51, and has a chapter on housing, marriage and sexual relations. This is interesting, sometimes amusing and sometimes very sad. He notes the intense level of prejudice regarding sexual relations and sexual stereotypes. He indicates that patterns of intermarriage are more likely to be a black man
with a white woman, in contrast to South Africa, the USA and the West Indies where the pattern appears to be reversed, and the white woman is more likely to be socially isolated.

— An early anti-racist book that recognises the importance of the “bogey of miscegenation” played in the pre- and post-war world and underlines the confusion surrounding the ideas of pure races. Rogers’ language is a little dated, and he was reviled in his time for claiming negro ancestry for many people, but he is determined in this volume to underline the degree of intermixing that has gone on since the origin of the human species. He details the encroachment of different ‘races’ on each others space, and the intermixing that since went on. Much of what he writes is hypothetical, given the lack of evidence about ancient times, but he does write with good reference to the sources and includes many pictures, including controversial (at the time) revelations over the racial ancestry of famous people, including Beethoven, Dumas, and Pushkin. All of Rogers’ books here are useful reading because they detail the amount of racial intermixing that occurred in history, ancient and modern, which is only referred to briefly in subsequent works.

— A further history of miscegenation by Rogers, looking at racial intermixing in North and South America. This is useful in cataloguing the range of sexual contact between the races in the Americas, and includes many pictures of individuals, indicating a ‘Negro strain’ or a ‘Mongoloid strain’ in their appearance. Rogers is clearly reliant on prevailing notions of thought, which paradoxically helps to undermine the case of superior/inferior races, by stressing its contradictions. Another anti-racist book in
the style of his previous work, highlighting famous persons with ‘Negro’ ancestry, and valuable reading.


— Rogers finishes his trilogy, beginning with a spirited defence of his work against criticisms levelled against the first two volumes. This is a more personal work, detailing his fascination with prejudice and racial intermixture, although one gets little impressions of Rogers’ own background and development of views. He explicitly (as with his previous volumes) links racism to capitalism. This final volume is more diverse in the areas it looks at than his previous writings, covering areas such as which race attracts the other, homosexuality, racial preferences in partners, legal and social views and so on. Well researched, again with more pictures of prominent people with non-white appearances, and good reading. Clearly anti-racist, as with his previous work, and Rogers claims here to have spent some forty years researching this area. Rogers’ works are written ahead of their time, even if the language is a little out of date for the modern reader.


— This is concerned with the children resultant of mixed relationships in America, so it may not be of direct use to the UK researcher, but some of the essays are useful in providing background reading about the concerns of people in mixed relationship.


— This is an American book, but is one of the few qualitative studies undertaken in looking at contemporary mixed race couples. The authors’ methodology does not make it a
conclusive work, for example, they interviewed 22 black/white couples in the same geographical area, and the couples were interviewed together by another interracial couple. This may have made some responses a little less revealing. The authors believed that analysis should be kept to a minimum, and the book consists mainly of excerpts from the interviews compiled on under subject headings. Valuable, but not decisive.

— Has no direct concern with mixed marriages but does briefly consider interracial relationships and marriages (pp.114ff) and provides a basic framework for understanding and explaining marriage in sociological terms.

— This is a well researched volume, a comprehensive account of mixed marriages in America, examining intermarriages in Japanese, Jewish and Black groups in the US. Again, this is not concerned with the UK, but may be of use for the researcher simply because it provides a good look at the history of interracial marriages in another country.

— After the second world war, UNESCO was determined to collect scientific evidence to disprove any biological basis of inequality between the races, and this is the result. There are many useful segments which look at interracial mixing. Chapters by Juan Comas, Michel Leivis and Harry Shapiro should be of primary use, although the whole book is worth reading.
— Although concerned with the United States, this fairly comprehensive book charts the history of those people of mixed ancestry in the US. Some chapters can be fairly heavy reading, but it does illustrate some of the dynamics of mixed relationships from slavery onwards.

— Enlightening exposition of racial science in the nineteenth century underlying the crucial role played by interracial sexual intercourse and race crossing in race theory. Excellent for the researcher in showing the reason for prejudice against mixed race unions, and the role of sexuality in the colonial period.

Periodical Articles

BAGLEY, Christopher (1972a): “Patterns of Inter-Ethnic Marriage in Great Britain.” *Phylon*, vol. 23, no. 4.
BAGLEY, Christopher (1972b): “Interracial Marriage in Britain - Some Statistics”, *New Community*, vol. 1, no. 4, Summer.
— These two items are virtually identical and are perhaps the first statistical studies on the level of intermarriage in the UK. Bagley uses the Registrar Generals Quarterly Returns of 1969, and shows that the rate of intermarriage between white and coloured is 1.79%

— Considers intermarriage in France, and appears to be rather badly translated from the French. A few considerations of mixed
marriages, providing a good position to look at the contact between different cultures.

— Damning account of interracial sex, arguing that the pattern of sexual relations between the races is conditioned by slavery, and the impact this has on the black community.

— Suggests a possible co-genetic and cultural preference for lighter skinned marital partners in all social groups.

— Statistical work using OPCS and Labour Force Survey (LFS) information. Shows levels of intermarriage in the UK, as well as more general information on family structure in the various ethnic groups.

— More comprehensive chapter using more reliable information. The majority of this chapter is taken up with elucidating the marriage patterns among Britain’s ethnic minority populations, a shorter part discusses patterns of interethnic marriage and cohabitation. Berrington suggests that the rate of intermarriage is about 1.3% in Britain. This is a useful statistical paper because of the relative reliability of the source data, as compared to the smaller size LFS and GHS surveys.


— Brah interviewed South Asian teenagers in Southall and found that they were likely to disapprove of intermarriages and were more willing to submit to parental authority.


— Looks at miscegenation and the formation of sexualities in colonial literature, in particular in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. Shows the act of miscegenation to be so despicable it could not even be articulated, and notes the silence of African women in these novels.


— Uses the 1981 LFS as a primary source for statistical information, saying that the rate of intermarriage is about 1%, and looks for any growing trends.
— Reviews the existing statistical literature on intermarriage, and provides information from the General Household Survey of 1983 that the rate of intermarriage is about 0.98%.

— Considers photographic images of blacks in post-war Britain, looking at the unspoken discourse of miscegenation.

— Harris demonstrates how British social policy towards black seamen in the various ports was influenced by views and prejudices of black sexual activity, and the perceived problem of ‘half-caste’ children.

— This large article was reprinted with a few changes as a chapter in Hyam’s book Empire and Sexual Opportunity, cited above.

— Not directly concerned with mixed relationships. She looks at the psychological causes of prejudice in people, and does consider sexual factors.
— Statistical work using the LFS of 1979. Estimates that the rate of intermarriage in the UK is as low as one in three hundred, and notes the lack of accurate demographic data.


— A hundred-page MA dissertation which was awarded a distinction. Well written, well researched account of miscegenation in racial science, but restricts itself to looking at sexual contact between Africans and whites.

— Briefly looks at British official attitudes to mixed race unions in the Raj, and their refusal to recognise the marriage between a Rajah and his Australian wife.

— Theoretical paper, and the origin of the ‘racial-caste hypogamy’ theory, arguing that intermarriage is more likely to be between a black man with a higher economic status, and a white woman with a lower economic status. The woman trades her ethnic identity for greater socio-economic status, and acts a bridge for the black man to the wider white society.
— Monohan uses information from the US state of Iowa in the period 1940-67 to show that black man - white woman marriages were more enduring than endogamous marriage between all black and all white contractants. This study did, however, indicate that demographic information was extremely poor.

— Osbourne interviewed about 20 people in mixed relationships, and found a general preference amongst African/Caribbean people for white culture. This is fairly quick reading despite the chunky look of the thesis.

— Short paper using the LFSs of 1988-90, showing the difference in marriage patterns between ethnic groups and the different rates of intermarriage in the 1989 LFS.

— A short but good history of biological notions of race, and considers miscegenation, with examples from Nazi Germany.
— Using information from a survey conducted in the South Asian community in Blackburn in 1977, Robinson finds extremely high rates of endogamy according to criteria of ethnicity such as religion, language, and birthplace. This has a few theoretical difficulties, such as regarding the Asian communities failure to break down internal cleavages by out-marriage (e.g. Sikhs marrying Muslims) as a necessary precondition for Asians marrying into white families. Nevertheless, this is useful because it looks at figures from the Asian perspective.

— An early paper indicating that all ethnic groups are unlikely to marry out of their group. Looks at some information from other countries.

— Argues that children of South Asian immigrants are more ‘assimilated’ than their parents, using various statistical-cultural models.

— Short article arguing that intermarriage is a valuable solution to some sorts of social strife.

— Agreed at UNESCO’s Moscow conference in 1964, this states that interbreeding has no undesirable biological consequences.

— Uses the concept of marginality to examine the position of mothers in interracial families. Wilson’s information is from interviews and shows that women in interracial families are also in a ‘marginal’ position, never quite sure of being ostracised or accepted.

Newspaper Articles

Newspaper articles are in chronological order from 1990 to early 1996 and the vast majority are held in the CRER resources library. This is unlikely to be a comprehensive list, but underlines the main areas of debate in the press regarding mixed relationships. Most articles are concerned with the problems encountered in a mixed relationship.

“We should be free to have white partners”, The Voice, 13 Nov. 1990, p. 2, by Stanley Ayodeji.
— A polemic in which the author argues against pressure from black hard-line groups to marry only black partners, that it is a personal decision.

“Marriage brokers help to bridge the racial divide”, The Daily Telegraph, 4 December 1990, by Amit Roy.
— Describes Asian marriage agencies, sometimes putting together white men wanting “a good faithful wife”, with Asian women.

“Is love right for black and white?” The Sun, 12 Jan 1991.
— Looks briefly at some famous and not-famous mixed couples, saying they “face special problems”.
— Details hate mail directed to Dawn French, because of her marriage to black comedian Lenny Henry.

— Letter from a white woman married to an Asian Muslim, touching on several problematic areas of her life.

— Discussion of interracial relationships with a historical and political perspective, arguing that integration through marriage is desirable if difficult.

— Letter criticising previous article.

— Various young people tell of their experiences in mixed relationships, highlighting racist reactions.

— The author tells of her experience in a mixed race family, detailing prevailing views.

— A letter in response to the article above.

— The marriage of white model Kate Tett to black footballer Andy Gray, telling how they overcame initial opposition.
— Marriages between Filipina women and British men, looking at successful and unsuccessful marriages. The ‘catalogue bride’ agencies and the gruesome murder of Arminda Perry, brutally murdered by her English husband.

— Marriage of Jews to non-Jews and how some rabbis believe the way forward is in making non-Jews more welcome.

— First of two articles in the wake of Alibhai-Brown and Montague’s *The Colour of Love*. A Bengali woman and her white husband talk of their relationship, of the hurdles to be overcome, and stressing the positive side.

— Second of two articles, telling of a mother’s reactions and eventual solution when her daughter converted to Islam and married a Pakistani, and a mixed race woman coming to terms with her identity.

— The authors, using material from their book *The Colour of Love*, outline the prejudice faced by mixed couples and how they cope.
— Three letters from women in mixed relationships criticising the previous article.

— Several personal stories recounting vehement opposition to mixed marriages.

— Frank Bruno tells of the racist abuse he suffered because of his marriage to his white wife, Laura.

— Two personal stories, one telling of the difficulties of a Sikh wanting to marry a Muslim, and the other of a Jew wishing to marry a Catholic. Tells of the pressures when the direction of love seems to be in contradiction to tradition, family and friends.

— Interviews with mixed race couples about their children and particular problems in bringing them up.

— Review of a TV programme *The Colour of Love*, touching on the main issues.
“We were in love. Then he took another wife”, *The Independent*, 9 Aug 1993, p.11, by Olivia Fare.
— Gwen Herron’s tragic story of marriage to an Indian Muslim, whom she met in 1938. Tells of the intolerance of her husband’s family, his taking of a new wife, her children, and finally his death.

“Mixing it up with white men isn’t easy”, *The Independent*, 5th Oct 1993, p.16, by Emma Lindsey.
— The author recounts her personal experiences in a mixed relationship, noting social ostracism and differential attitudes to black men dating white woman and white men dating black women.

— Younge’s article considers the marriage of Boris Becker to black woman Barbara Feltus, and looks at the various problems encountered in a cross-cultural, cross-racial relationship. Bernard gives the case of a marriage challenged by authorities in France on immigration grounds, and Belleman looks at the Netherlands, with another mixed couple.

— Looks at intermarriage in the various communities, emphasising that Jews outmarrying is a cause of concern for Jewish leaders, and indicates that blacks are outmarrying at a higher rate than Asians. Looks at social consequences.

— In depth article looking at relationships between black men and white women, and the pressures they experience from various white and black groups against intermixing.
— The author tells of the tribulations in finding the right wedding ceremony for her and her fiancé.

“Some black people shun me for loving a white woman”, *Today*, 22 Jul 1994, by David Jones.
— Bernie Grant MP tells of rejection he receives at the hands of black people because his wife, Sharon Lawrence, is white.

— A black and white couple who had twins, one black and one white, tell their tale. *The Sun* also comments on p.6.

— Longish article considering main points of mixed relationships, looking at social consequences, loss of culture etc., with some case study examples.

— Considers the pros and cons of circumcision for her son. Her husband is Jewish and she is Gentile.

— Responses to Jones’ dilemma regarding the circumcision of her son (above).

— An interview with Carol Spencer, who married a much younger Gambian man Lamin Marong. Describes the course of their relationship and the reactions of family and friends.
— First of many articles concerning the marriage of Pakistani cricketer Imran Khan to millionaire Sir James Goldsmith’s daughter, Jemima. Details of the controversy in Pakistan and the UK.

— Continuing from the marriage of Imran Khan and Jemima Goldsmith, the author interviews three women who have already converted to Islam.

— Front page article on the Khan - Goldsmith marriage. Considers the cultural adjustments Jemima may be required to make, and speculates on Khans political ambitions and motivation.

— A criticism of media coverage of the Khan - Goldsmith marriage, citing the coverage on Goldsmith’s conversion and cultural differences, and the repression of Muslim women.

— About a TV show later cancelled in which comedian Lenny Henry’s sister details how she was shunned by her white mother-in-law (see below).
— Discusses the results of an ICM poll carried out for the *Express*, indicating greater tolerance to mixed marriages, and expressing concern for the children of mixed marriages.

“Mixed race TV show is cancelled” *Birmingham Express and Star*, 12 Sep 1995.
— The cancellation of the TV show described above.

— About the decline of Britain’s black paper *The Voice*, indicating that a sizeable amount of the readership are in mixed relationships.

— *The Observer’s* Doctor columnist looks at biology and sexual impulses, looking at racial differences and discussing Dawkin’s *The Selfish Gene*.

— The author interviews Imran Khan on various aspects of his life, including his marriage.

— The parents of the one-black, one-white twins tell of difficulties faced at nursery school.
— Examines the phenomena of successful black men, such as OJ Simpson, Harry Belafonte etc., of marrying white wives, as some sort of status symbol.

“Rewrite the script”, *The Voice*, 9 Jan 1996, p.9, by Helen Kolawole.
— Looks at TV programmes which portray blacks as in black-white relationships, and looks at the lack of roles in black-black relationships.

— Concise article looking at the demographic and ethnic minority information revealed by analysis of the 1991 census, including the significant fact that 40% of young black men in Britain are married to or live with white women, and considers the changing marriage and work patterns of various groups.