

Book Review: Is Marriage for White People?

Forget Black men? Author says Black women should marry outside their comfort zone

"Over the past half-century, African-Americans have become the most unmarried people in our nation. By far. We are the least likely to marry and the most likely to divorce; we maintain fewer committed and enduring relationships than any other group. Not since slavery have Black men and women been as un-partnered as we are now..."

Why? Black women of all socioeconomic classes remain single in part because the ranks of Black men have been decimated by incarceration, educational failure, and economic disadvantage... Yet despite the shortage of Black male peers, Black women do not marry men of other races.

Black women marry across class lines, but not race lines. They marry down but not out. Thus, they lead the most racially-segregated intimate lives of any Americans."

Excerpted from the Introduction (pgs. 2-3)

This book has the sort of eye-catching title which suggests that the content might be superficial. But no, the author, a professor of law at Stanford University, launched a serious investigation here into the question of whether African-Americans are the marrying kind anymore. Professor Ralph Richard Banks was



BOOK REVIEWS

by Kam Williams

ostensibly inspired by the troubling statistics indicating that "Jumping the Broom" has become less and less popular not only among ghetto-dwelling Blacks but also among the middle and upper-classes. So, he decided to examine the issue of the break-

down of the African-American family in depth by conducting research, by amassing a combination of anecdotal and scientific evidence.

The upshot of that effort is "Is Marriage for White People?" a controversial opus which offers a surprising solution to the burgeoning problem. Believe it or not, the groundbreaking book makes the case for sisters getting out of their comfort zone and entering more romantic relationships with Caucasians, Asians and Latinos.

Banks' basic thesis is that because Black females are generally better-educated and make more money than brothers, it's silly for them to restrict themselves to a dating pool of just Black men. Besides, he says Black males tend to take them for granted, and to think nothing of sleeping with more than one woman at once.

Paradoxically, the author ultimately arrives at the counter-intuitive conclusion that, "For Black women, interracial mar-



Ralph Richard Banks

riage doesn't abandon race, it serves the race," because "If more Black women married non-Black men, more Black men and women might marry each other." That humdinger of a plan might very well be the answer, but it sure sounds to me a lot like traveling East in order to go West.

To order a copy of *Is Marriage for White People* visit:
<http://astore.amazon.com/theska-20>

Is Marriage for White People?

How the African-American Marriage Decline Affects Everyone by Ralph Richard Banks, Esq.

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