



What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America

Peggy Pascoe

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A long-awaited history that promises to dramatically change our understanding of race in America, *What Comes Naturally* traces the origins, spread, and demise of miscegenation laws in the United States--laws that banned interracial marriage and sex, most often between whites and members of other races. Peggy Pascoe demonstrates how these laws were enacted and applied not just in the South but throughout most of the country, in the West, the North, and the Midwest. Beginning in the Reconstruction era, when the term miscegenation first was coined, she traces the creation of a racial hierarchy that bolstered white supremacy and banned the marriage of Whites to Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and American Indians as well as the marriage of Whites to Blacks. She ends not simply with the landmark 1967 case of *Loving v. Virginia*, in which the Supreme Court finally struck down miscegenation laws throughout the country, but looks at the implications of ideas of colorblindness that replaced them. *What Comes Naturally* is both accessible to the general reader and informative to the specialist, a rare feat for an original work of history based on archival research.

What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America Details

Date : Published January 16th 2009 by Oxford University Press, USA

ISBN : 9780195094633

Author : Peggy Pascoe

Format : Hardcover 416 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Race, North American Hi..., American History, Law, Sexuality

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From Reader Review What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America for online ebook

Brittney Martinez says

An excellent look at all aspects of miscegenation laws in American history. It focuses not just on black/white marriage, but all races covered by the laws passed at the time. A very interesting read that didn't feel too dry or academic.

!Tæmbu?u says

Reviewed by The New Yorker

Nicholas says

Will remain the definitive history of miscegenation and its laws in the United States. Totally fascinating and utterly readable.

Megan says

Pascoe has done her research and brings to light the struggle biracial couples have had to navigate and the reality of white supremacy.

Fraser Sherman says

Pascoe's tone gets heavily academic in spots, but not so much I'm cutting the rating. This starts in the late 1800s, when "miscegenation" was coined as a word to replace the older "amalgamation" of the races. Pascoe sees the growth in anti-miscegenation laws as part of a general effort to preserve the "white race" and white supremacy, and shows how the specific details varied from state to state (the west coast threw in Chinese and Japanese, some states including Native Americans), and then the gradual unraveling that culminated in Loving vs. Virginia, the Supreme Court that struck down interracial marriage bans. Pascoe, though, argues this wasn't at all some inevitable march of progress and that Loving could easily have been decided on narrow grounds that would leave the bulk of the laws in place. A great job.

Elizabeth says

from the library

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Elizabeth Smith says

Very informative
