



Children of Perdition: Melungeons And the Struggle of Mixed America (Melungeon Series)

Tim Hashaw

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Some oppressed groups fought with guns, some fought in court, some exercised civil disobedience; the Melungeons, however, fought by telling folktales. Whites and blacks gave the name "children of perdition" to mixed Americans during the 300 years that marriage between whites and nonwhites was outlawed. Mixed communities ranked socially below communities of freed slaves although they had lighter skin. To escape persecution caused by the stigma of having African blood, these groups invented fantastic stories of their origins, known generally as "lost colony" legends. The author documents the histories of several related mixed communities that began in Virginia in 1619 and still exist today, and shows how they responded to racism over four centuries. Finally, Children of Perdition explains why many Americans view mixing as unnatural and shows how mixed people continue to confront the Jim Crow "one drop" standard today.

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