



Divided Sisters

By Midge Wilson, Kathy Russell

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Since the advent of the women's movement, women have often expressed the belief that black and white women in society have a great many common concerns, and are in fact natural allies. The reality is more sobering. In *Divided Sisters*, Midge Wilson and Kathy Russell, the acclaimed authors of *The Color Complex*, tackle the nature of relationships between black and white women, and explore how they do, and don't, get along.

Based on scores of interviews, cultural literature and extensive research, *Divided Sisters* examines relations between black and white women as children, as adults, at school and in college, at work and at home. Truthfully as adults relatively few women feel they are close friends with a woman from another racial background. The book exposes many of the challenges and obstacles that complicate interracial relationships in a society with a long history of racial inequality. What Midge and Kathy discover is that the concerns and frustrations of black and white women are often different, and that these differences are frequently not communicated. For example, women thrown together for the first time in college are often ill-prepared to handle cultural differences in dress, customs, attitudes and background. In addition, peer pressure, economic and historical inequality, real or perceived racism, and fear, play a role in dividing rather than uniting women.

Divided Sisters is a landmark book that will open readers' eyes to the realities and challenges of bridging what is too frequently a cultural divide."

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Wilson and Russell (a white woman and a black woman, who wrote *The Color Complex*, on color consciousness among blacks, with Ronald Hall) offer here another thought-provoking mix of analysis and anecdote. Interracial friendships among girls are dropped during the teen years, influenced by issues of sexual maturity, classroom style and standards of beauty, according to the authors; they suggest that "we expand notions of what we call attractive." They note that popular notions of black women's promiscuity confuse differences of race with those of class; they also explore touchy subjects such as interracial dating and campus friendships. They observe that feminist politics differs between black women and white women and explore how stereotypes govern depictions of women's cross-race relations in the popular media. Some of the authors' advice: educate students about the legacy of tension, seek out materials that fight gender/race stereotypes and-because blacks know more about whites than vice versa-make sure white girls learn about the history and social factors that shape their black sisters.

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From the Publisher

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From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Susan Rooks:

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Gary McKinney:

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Thomas Hodge:

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Raymond Nelson:

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