

“A RACE OF MULES”: MIXED-BLOODS IN WESTERN AMERICAN FICTION

Brian Hubner

#12 - 241 Young Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada, R3C 1Z1

Abstract / Resume

The regional literature of the American west includes a wide variety of characters. One character is hard to find, however: the Métis or mixed blood, for these novels lack appropriate literary space within their structure for Métis. As a result Métis, when they do appear, are forced to choose between either White or Indian worlds.

La littérature régionale de l'Amérique de l'ouest comprend une grande variété de personnages. Cependant, il est difficile de trouver un personnage: le Métis ou le sang-mêlé, car il manque à ces romans un espace littéraire propre aux Métis. Par conséquent, lorsque les Métis apparaissent enfin, ils sont obligés de choisir ou le monde des blancs ou celui des autochtones.

The regional literature of the American West—divided by some, including critic John Milton, into a serious form, the *Western novel*, and an inferior form, the *western*—has been one of the most enduring and popular forms of American writing (Milton, 1980:2). A wide variety of characters can commonly be found in this literature: cowboys, mountain men, homesteaders, saloon girls, and of course Indians. Less prevalent is an odd, hybrid creature, variously named, the *halfbreed*, *mixed-blood*, *half-blood*, or Métis. This particular character is difficult to find; sometimes he or she actually appears to be invisible, for a good reason: a study of western American literature indicates that the literary space does not exist within the structure of either the American *Western novel* or the *western* for a Métis character to exist as a culturally distinct entity. American Métis (Mixed-bloods) are forced to decide between the White and Indian worlds, a choice that reflects the actual situation in which Métis historically found themselves, a position that is quite different in both the literature and the history of Canada.

Leslie A. Fiedler in *The Return of the Vanishing American* deals with the place of the American Indian in western American literature. Fiedler believes that the Indian was central to this literature; to him it is “the presence of the Indian which defines the mythological West” (1968:21). The critical moment is the encounter of the central White character with the Indian. As Fiedler explains:

The Western story in archetypal form is then, a fiction dealing with the confrontation in the wilderness of a transplanted WASP and a radically alien other, an Indian—leading either to a metamorphosis of the WASP into something neither White or Red (sometimes by adoption, sometimes by sheer emulation, but never by actual miscegenation), or else to the annihilation of the Indian (sometimes by castration-conversion or penning off into a ghetto, sometimes by sheer murder) (*Ibid.*:24).

To Fiedler the essential creation myth of America is that contact with the new land and the wilderness has resulted in the establishment of a new race, the creation of an American who has renewed and legitimized himself by triumphing over the primal forces of nature (*Ibid.*:117). Such a race cannot be created by the union of body; it must be spiritual. Fiedler examines Whites, spiritual Mixed-bloods and those with whom they were in conflict, the Indians, but almost completely ignores literal Mixed-bloods. There is good reason for this: within Fiedler's theoretical framework a literal Mixed-blood could not function as a central character. The conflict must be spiritual and not physical, and the new race must be born of a white, non-Aboriginal father, not a brown, Aboriginal, one.

In *The Half-Blood: A Cultural Symbol in 19th Century American Fiction*,

William J. Scheick more closely narrows his focus to what he calls the “half-blood”. Scheick believes the Mixed-blood person was a cultural symbol that indicated unresolved conflict similar, but not identical to, the symbolism of the Indian. Scheick sees this Mixed-blood essence as the dark element that lies latent in all people. This dark and savage side of human nature was a reminder of “...the veneer-like fragility of the social order” (1979:18). The physical existence of the Mixed-blood was a living example of the potential pollution of the body, and exposed the deep-seated fear of miscegenation. In his study, Scheick also finds 19th century literary Mixed-bloods had certain general characteristics: they were sexually promiscuous, and multiplied fast enough to be threatening; they often allied themselves with Indians and could act as go-betweens with the White world; and they were usually clannish (*Ibid.*:5-6).

Scheick examines the “half-blood” on a region by region basis, and finds their literary image varies geographically. In the southern U.S.A. the response was to see the “halfbreed” as an unnatural creature, grotesque and evil, a variation of the African American (*Ibid.*:19; 29). In Western writing the image was given somewhat more latitude. Métis characters indicated the persistence of the French in the West and Mid-West, as they did the Spanish in the South:

...the alleged numerical threat of the [M]etis was augmented by a tendency on the part of [W]hite settlers to associate the [W]hite heritage of the mixed-blood Indian with a European or foreign presence in the New World (Anglo-Americans excepted of course) (*Ibid.*:5).

In the literature he studies, Scheick finds Mixed-bloods of all regions, like Indians, headed towards extinction: they will either die or be assimilated (*Ibid.*:84).

Scheick, like Fiedler, identified two distinct types of Mixed-bloods: *spiritual*, and *literal*. He found in the fiction he examined that most authors substituted spiritual Mixed-bloods, usually White, of a figurative sense, for Halfbreeds in fact. To use Mixed-bloods in such a way, Scheick believed, simply avoided the whole issue of unresolved conflict (*Ibid.*:71). Scheick's analysis indicated why Mixed-blood persons could not be used as heroes in the schema of Fiedler: they were too closely identified with the dark other, the Indian, so that only a White-colored character would do.

A study of Mixed-blood characters in western American fiction reveals an additional dimension to the studies of Fiedler and Scheick. The treatment of Mixed-bloods in the literature examined generally corresponds to the observations of Scheick concerning the fear of miscegenation and the persistence of the French in the West. This “halfbreed” is a remnant of the

“Old World” that is destined to disappear before the advance of the Anglo-American and his civilization. In other cases the Mixed-blood is an offshoot of the Indian who flirts with the White world, sometimes acting as an intermediary between the White and Indian spheres, but usually only briefly. A genuine Mixed-blood protagonist cannot exist in this literature because his (or rarely her) place, as defined by Fiedler, is already occupied by the suitable non-Aboriginal “spiritual” Mixed-blood who must descend to the level of the “savage” to prove himself. When Halfbreeds do exist as developed characters, they are rapidly forced to make a decision for either the White—or more commonly the Indian world—or they are destroyed.

Western American literature's point of origin has been identified as James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* chronicling the adventures of Natty Bumppo, the first and still the best-known spiritual Mixed-blood (Milton, 1980:4-5). Natty (or “Hawkeye”) was, as Fiedler puts it, the first not quite White man of literature (1968:25). The last novel of the saga, *The Prairie* (Cooper, 1827), finds the action in a landscape Cooper had never seen—the prairie of the Missouri River country around 1804 (Milton, 1980:84). Hawkeye, now an old man working as a trapper, minces no words when he tells of his thoughts on the mixing of White and Indian blood in these districts: “...the half-and-halves*, that one meets, in these savage districts, are altogether more barbarous than the real savage.” Cooper's note [*] leaves no doubt of his own opinion: “Half-breeds; men born of Indian women by white fathers. This race has much of the depravity of civilization without the virtues of the savage” (1827:24). These people may claim “to be ranked in the class of white men,” but Cooper made it clear they were not (*Ibid.*:116). When Hawkeye is asked if he is White or Indian he makes sure that there cannot be any question: “Still am I a man without the cross of Indian blood...” (*Ibid.*:80). Hawkeye, Cooper's link between the world of the Anglo-American and the vanishing Indian, cannot be a literal Mixed-blood as they are obviously too debased: “Unlike most of those who live a border life, he united the better, instead of the worst, qualities of the two people” (*Ibid.*:125). The fear of miscegenation is firmly stated by the old trapper's naturalist companion, a doctor modeled on Dr. Edwin James of the Col. Stephen Long Expedition, the report of which Cooper depended upon for his descriptions of the West. When asked about taking a Native wife the doctor replies:

I am indisposed to matrimony in general, and more especially to all admixture of the varieties of *species*, which only tend to tarnish the beauty and to interrupt the harmony of nature. Moreover it is a painful innovation on the order of all nomenclatures (*Ibid.*:250).

In the Indian camp, Chief Mahtoree offers the Indian maiden Skipping Fawn to the squatter Ishmael Bush, but Bush's wife Esther berates him by saying: "Would you disgrace colour, and family, and nation by mixing white blood with red, and would ye be the parent of a race of mules!" (*Ibid.*:339). For Cooper, the Mixed-bloods are strange creatures, more akin to Indians than to Whites, and generally an abomination. The idea of a new race in America is found in Cooper's writing, but it is not a race of literal Mixed-bloods; the new race was to be White and of Anglo-American origin (*Ibid.*:167-68).

If Cooper's *The Prairie* is the acknowledged general starting point of the Western novel, then Owen Wister's *The Virginian* is clearly one of the most influential Western novels ever written and the prototypical western. In *The Virginian*, a Mixed-blood character does not exist; the "Virginian," who is described as the "natural man himself," "the wildman," and the "untamed man," is his spiritual replacement, leaving no room for a literal Mixed-blood (Wister, 1956:323). Since the publication of *The Virginian*, Wister's most popular work, hundreds of "pulp" westerns have followed the formula, but most of them, such as the immensely popular *Shane* (Schaefer, 1963), do not include a literal Mixed-blood character. Fewer westerns actually centre on genuine Mixed-blood characters.¹ One which does is Wade Everett's *The Whiskey Traders*. In this western, Brent Barga is a one-quarter Peigan Indian who feels alienated by the White world because of his "harsh" face, high cheekbones, coarse black hair, a thin predatory nose, and an angry slit of a mouth, all of which betray the Indian blood "he had always hated" (1968:9;144). At the book's conclusion, Brent escapes from the world that calls him a "breed" and a "goddamned Indian" by joining it and marrying Paula, the daughter of his White ranch boss. He is thus transformed into a White, "Virginian-like," character, but convention demands that a literal Mixed-blood cannot marry a White person: Paula, however, is one-eighth Choctaw!

A group of novels usually considered much more seriously, praised for their accuracy and myth-breaking, is A.B. Guthrie's trilogy of *The Big Sky* (1947), a mountain man story, *The Way West* (1949), an Oregon trail tale, and *These Thousand Hills* (1956), a settlement story (Milton, 1980:47,70-71; Fiedler, 1968:137). Three mountain men dominate *The Big Sky*: Jim Deakins, Dick Summers and Boone Caudill. The trio travels West on the Missouri River on boats crewed by men identified as "French," "Creoles," "Canadians," or "half-breeds"—all obvious Mixed-bloods. These child-like men laugh and sing dirty songs while they roll their "frog-like eyes." They are, of course, sexually uncontrolled and engage in behavior that civilized Anglo-Americans either shun or find strange: calling on God's help when in danger, and eating skunk meat. The Creoles are described as half-animal

and half-human:

The Missouri wasn't made for a whiteman, not the way it was for the French. They were ducks, or like the beavers, sure and happy on the water and clumsy and half-scared off it (Guthrie, 1947:83).

These French Métis abruptly disappear in *The Big Sky*, like the American Métis themselves, as the West of the White man comes to dominate their world. When the Missouri riverboats are ambushed by Indians all the French Mixed-bloods are swiftly killed while, not surprisingly, all three White mountain men escape to continue their adventures in the wilderness. They are needed to usher in the new world as the old one is eliminated. The fear of miscegenation does not entirely vanish, however. Ironically it rears its ugly head in the form of the blind baby born to the degenerate mountain man Caudill, a spiritual Mixed-blood who has gone too far, and his Indian wife, Teal Eye. Boone orders the woman to kill the baby and shoots the man he believes is the child's father, his friend, Jim Deakins (Guthrie, 1947:334-342). When Dick Summers leads a pioneer wagon train to Oregon in Guthrie's second novel of the trilogy, *The Way West*, the Métis, French or otherwise, have disappeared. "Halfbreeds" now exist only in the memory of the spiritual Mixed-blood Summers, the clear descendant of Hawkeye, who is completely at ease with the natural world and the Indians. He ponders the bygone days and the "half-breeds [children] he left behind" (*Ibid.*, 1949:224). The Mixed-bloods are an unwanted byproduct of civilizing of the West; as part of an older West they are swept away.

Mountain men dominate the works of other Western authors. Don Berry's *Moontrap: A Novel* (1962) is set in Summers' eventual destination of Oregon. The central characters, Johnson "Jaybird" Monday, another spiritual Mixed-blood, and his Shoshone wife, Mary Deer Walking, are engaged in trying to make a new life for themselves in the emerging world of agriculture and the settler. There is no doubt of the place that Mixed-bloods have in this world. One named Pikuni, is a degenerate who is described as half-Blackfoot and half-white "an' that's damn bad blood on both sides" (*Ibid.*:74). The product of Monday's and Mary's union is similar to that of Caudill and Teal Eye: a breach-birth Métis the parents call Webster. Monday realizes the truth: "Son of Mary Walking Deer Walking. That's a death certificate..." (*Ibid.*:159-160). The Reverend Andrews, one of his symbolic executioners, leaves no question in his Fourth of July speech where the civilized world stands on the question of miscegenation:

I say—to mingle this sacred blood with the taint of savagery!
To satisfy their unnatural lusts they stop at nothing, sending
forth upon this green land of Oregon the unclear spawn of

animal couplings, neither red or white, the taint and decay and ineradicable blot of mixed blood children (*Ibid.*:200).

Mary, driven by despair, hangs herself and apparently kills the infant. The baby is followed in death by his namesake, the old mountain man Webster, and by his father, both shot by agents of civilization solidifying their control over Oregon Territory.

Two other classic examples of the mountain man genre are Vardis Fisher's *Mountain Man: A Novel of Male and Female in the Early American West*, and Frederick Manfred's *Lord Grizzly*. In *Mountain Man*, Fisher is painstakingly accurate with the details of the life of the mountain men, but Mixed-bloods barely exist (Milton, 1980:132-133). The "Mountain Man" Sam Minard is a spiritual Mixed-blood capable of the cosmic vision denied by White heritage (Fiedler, 1968:162-163). The progeny of Sam, Fisher's all-too-perfect rendering of "Crow-killer" John Johnson and his Flathead Indian wife, again thrusts the fear of miscegenation to the fore. Their child is doomed, this time even before it is born, as mother and unborn are butchered by Crow Indians. White revulsion at Sam's contemplation of fathering a Mixed-blood child is expressed by "Powder River" Charley who, despite having a Crow wife, is revolted by the thought: "But the son! Half-breed children were, for him, a species of animal slightly above the greaser" (Fisher, 1967:123). A "greaser" is of course another species of "halfbreed," this time a product of Spanish interaction with the Indians south of the Rio Grande. In *The Ox-Bow Incident*, Walter Van Tilburg Clark does not include any characters strictly identified as "halfbreeds," but the "Mexican" who is lynched with the suspected rustlers would undoubtedly be of mixed White and Indian ancestry. Such characters serve the same role as the French Métis in the northwest. Manfred's novel is another retelling of mountain man life, this time the epic of Hugh Glass' crawl after being mauled by grizzly bear and left for dead by his companions. Manfred's few Mixed-bloods are like the Métis boatmen of Guthrie: vaguely French in origin, with names like Pierre and Joseph: men with "dark disgruntled faces," cowardly, "pork-eating nerds" (Manfred, 1964:52). The only Mixed-blood Manfred identifies on an individual level is the part Indian, part African-American Rose, a definitely unsavoury character who is described as speaking in surges like an Indian, and being "horse-faced" (*Ibid.*:26-27; 32).

Milton Lott's *The Last Hunt* (1954), an anti-mountain man novel, is a cynical and somewhat depressing response to the over indulgence and idealization of authors such as Fisher and Guthrie. In *The Last Hunt*, buffalo hunters Sandy, Jimmy, Charley, and Woodfoot do not discover spiritual rebirth in the virgin wilderness, only rotting corpses and the unquestionable end of the pre-Euro-American West. Jimmy O'Brien, a red-headed son of

an Irishman who died at Little Bighorn, is perhaps the most convincing and well-rounded American Mixed-blood character examined in the course of this study (Lott, 1954:12). After Jimmy's superficial transformation through a haircut and new clothes, he appears White enough to be hired by Sandy as a buffalo skinner, but not quite enough to enter a whorehouse reserved for Whites only. In *The Last Hunt* Jimmy oscillates between the White and Indian worlds. He seeks approval and companionship in the world of the buffalo hunters, but he kills and scalps one of the cowboys who has hanged his friend Spotted Hand. When Jimmy relates these bloody events to Grey Elk, the old Indian concludes: "Not wrong. Just not Indian. Maybe not white either" (*Ibid.*:43-44). Jimmy tries the White way with the buffalo hunters, but his feelings remain ambiguous: "A nostalgia for his life with the Indians alternated with a desire to be White to find a place with these men" (*Ibid.*:295). Yet the way of Grey Elk, the free life of a Plains Indian, is not possible; it no longer exists. As the Reservation Indian Sammy says: "I'm no more Indian than I am white" (*Ibid.*:355). In the end, Jimmy returns to the Reservation. His choice is between the White and Indian worlds; it has been framed in terms of that duality, never with the possibility of a separate Mixed-blood identity. Lott outlines these choices more successfully than others, but has also failed to give "halfbreeds" a distinct identity. That identity remains the domain of the spiritual Mixed-blood Sandy McKenzie, a White buffalo hunter. Lott makes him everything but a real Métis: he was born and hunted buffalo out of Red River, Manitoba, and although his birth father and mother are both White, his father's second wife is half-French and half-Dakota (*Ibid.*:72). Still, the novelistic space that Sandy occupies cannot be given to a literal Mixed-blood; the genre demands he must be White.

Frank Waters and James Welch, two authors of Native American ancestry, deal with Jimmy's dilemma in more contemporary settings in *The Man Who Killed the Deer* (Waters, 1971) and *Winter in the Blood* (Welch, 1975). Waters, often noted for his sensitive portrayals of Native Americans, creates the character of Martiniano in *The Man Who Killed the Deer*, a Mixed-blood of unfamiliar sort, part Apache, part Pueblo, and spiritually part White, having been educated in government schools. His act of killing a deer sets him against both the White and the Indian worlds, the former for hunting out of season and the latter for not performing the required rituals. Martiniano refuses to wear traditional clothing, and marries outside his pueblo. He feels White and Indian at the same time, but is not accepted by either. Milton in *The Novel of the American West*, sees Martiniano's choices in this way: "...the Pueblo ways, the new ways of the white man, or his own way which could be a part of the other two or an extension into a new way" (Milton, 1980:295). Martiniano, who could be called a spiritual White man,

gradually makes his choice in the rest of the book. Guided by his wife, who becomes "Deer Mother," he integrates himself into the tribe. This parallels the Pueblo's recovery of the sacred Dawn Lake which forms the back drop to the young Indian's story. Both processes are complete when a child is born to the couple, signifying Martiniano's rebirth as an Indian, and Dawn Lake is returned, a process Martiniano has inadvertently started (Waters, 1971:202; 212). Martiniano has chosen to be an Indian: the third choice of the new way is not considered. The Indian spiritual Mixed-blood can no more choose a fresh path than the White spiritual Mixed-blood, or the literal Métis. In American western fiction this path does not exist.

A similar situation faces the narrator in James Welch's *Winter in the Blood*, a novel set in northern Montana. This unnamed Indian's uncertainty with his identity and ancestry stems from the fact that although his grandmother is Blackfoot, he believes his grandfather was "Doagie," a Mixed-blood drifter. He is alienated between the White world and the Indian world. On a trip to Havre, Montana, is victimized by both: "I was a stranger to both and both had beaten me" (Welch, 1975:135). The protagonist of *Winter in the Blood* is only able to resolve this conflict when he discovers the truth of his heritage, that the old Indian Yellow Calf was the father of his mother Teresa. The conflict is resolved, as it could only have been: a choice is made between the White world on the one hand and Indian ways on the other.

Very recent western novels that include Mixed-blood characters do not deviate from this pattern. In Louise Erdrich's feminist chronicle *The Beet Queen*, a collection of characters, both male and female, exhibit obvious eccentricities, but emerge mutually accepting and interdependent. These include a Chippewa Mixed-blood woman named Celestine James and her Indian half brother, Russel Kashpaw. The French-speaking Celestine is clearly Indian in appearance: olive skinned, black-eyed, and big boned, her broad face showing "big, raw features" (Erdrich, 1987:230). Celestine and her brother Russel are clearly different, but the people in their immediate circle are accepting of this difference. Only those outside the group recognize who Celestine is and react to it. At the "Beet" parade, the White youths recognize Dot, her daughter, and comment: "Her mother (Celestine) is that big Indian woman. That six-footer" (*Ibid.*:297). In *The Beet Queen*, the Mixed-blood characters cannot choose a path between the Indian and the White worlds; such a way does not exist because it is swallowed up by their basic humanity. Interestingly enough, the French "halfbreeds" of the old Upper Missouri fur trade make a brief appearance: an Indian woman who sells pots and pans out of the back of a cart is said to be from a Reservation "inhabited by Chippewa of fiercer-looking French-Indians with stringy black beards and long moustaches" (*Ibid.*:48).

Larry Woiwode looked at the White and Indian dilemma from the perspective of a contemporary White writer and came to the same conclusion: that one must choose between being White or Indian: a Mixed-blood identity typically does not exist. In his book *Indian Affairs: A Novel*, Chris and Ellen Van Eenanam retreat to a cabin in Michigan so he can write his Ph.D. dissertation. Chris is a literal Mixed-blood (his grandfather was Lakota), but he is also a spiritual Mixed-blood having been educated in the East. Unlike his friend Beau, an educated Indian he knew in New York, Chris has spent his whole life concerned that he was really White inside, and by the time he is in Michigan he believes it: "He was on the other side of history now, a settler surrounded by braves" (Woiwode, 1992:115). Through intellectual and personal experience, as when he is insulted by a rude woman in a bar ("Sure you're an Indian"), Chris becomes secure in his basic Indian identity as he gets closer to his Indian heritage (*Ibid.*:169). In the novel's climax: "The portion of him that was Indian, or pure instinct, had gained ascendance...(*Ibid.*:268). Chris comes to terms with Indian nature, but discovers it is, for him, a dead end, and in a somewhat lame conclusion he chooses the White way, after all, and leaves for New York.

Dick Harrison, in his comparative studies of American and Canadian literature, has identified the basic point of departure between the popular western fictions of the two nations. In essence, he suggests, the root difference between the two societies is the lack of a frontier, in the Turnerian sense, in the Canadian pioneer West (1977:49-51). In the United States, the central myth concerns the descent into nature, which results in the legitimization of the society in North America. The central figure is often a "half-savage" (a spiritual Mixed-blood) torn between the wilderness (individual freedom) and civilization, able to establish civilization, but not able to enjoy it as it becomes secure (1992:744). In western literature this results in a meta-narrative utilizing dramatic linear forms, mainly romantic and epic. Canadian literature lacks such a meta-narrative, but in its place Canadians have placed the dialectic at the heart of Canadian fiction. The conflict is primarily between the Euro-Canadian (self) and the North American landscape (the unnamed other), but unlike the exclusive nature of American fiction, Canadians have sought mediating forms to resolve the tension (1993:2-4;11-14).

Harrison's ideas should hold true of literature dealing with Mixed-bloods in the West. Emma La Roque, commenting on "halfbreeds" in Canadian fiction, found them split between "civilization" and "savagery." She discovered that most Mixed-blood characters contained these elements simultaneously, creating a tension that is unresolvable, and resulting in Mixed-bloods existing with non-integrated personalities (La Roque, 1983:88-89). The important point to note here is that Canadians have felt no need to

force Mixed-blood characters to choose White over Indian or visa versa. La Roque feels that fuller Mixed-blood characters have appeared in recent Canadian literature, especially in Margaret Laurence's treatment of the Métis Tonnerre family (*Ibid.*:91).

The characterizations of Laurence's *The Diviners* (1975) are worth examining as an example of a Canadian treatment of a Mixed-blood character. In *The Diviners*, Morag Gunn, the descendant of Scottish immigrants, tries to teach her eighteen year old daughter Pique the reality of the girl's unique identity. Pique's father was the Indian/French Jules Tonnerre, and Pique is conscious of her divided existence; she exclaims: "I don't want to be split. I want to be together. But I'm not. I don't know where I belong." Morag, who has discovered that all histories have differing points of view and the truth is a synthesis of all of them, replies: "Does it have to be either/or?" (Laurence, 1975:350). Pique eventually decides that she need not be split between the White and Indian world, that she can be something else, that she can be Métis, and thus resolves her inner conflict by planning to go west and live with the extended family of her uncle, Jacques Tonnerre (*Ibid.*:438-437). This novel follows the pattern which Harrison has identified for western Canadian literature: a mediating form—in this case a separate people, the Métis—as the solution to the unresolved conflict of a Mixed-blood character, otherwise forced to choose between being either White or Indian.

Western literature reflects the fundamental historical reality of Mixed-bloods in the U.S.A. and Canada. Historian Frits Pannekoek (1991) in his study of the Red River Métis, *A Snug Little Flock*, observes that American Mixed-bloods failed to develop a strong collective identity and were thus forced either to become White, or to go on the Reservation and become Indian. Pannekoek indicates that this was largely due to United States government policy which treated them as either White or Indian, but not unique, and that this was accepted in the U.S.A. by the Métis themselves, including among them the Métis leader Louis Riel. Pannekoek writes that the U.S. authorities believed they "owed the Métis nothing as a group" (1991:4).

The image and place of Mixed-bloods in western American and Canadian fictions is very different and supports Harrison's theoretical framework: it indicates a fundamental difference in Canadian and American views of themselves and their nations. In American fiction, Mixed-blood characters must choose one of two paths: the Indian or the White way, because only a literal Whiteman, such as Jack Crabb of Thomas Berger's immensely successful *Little Big Man* (1964), is able to satisfy the creation myth of American society and descend into nature; a "wild," Mixed-blood character cannot serve this function. American writers, like the U.S. government of

the 19th century, seem to believe they owe Mixed-bloods nothing, and so render them as a “race of mules”—a sterile dead end that exists only in limbo, outside the essential structure of the American western novel.

Note

1. Perhaps the most popular “western” ever to include a Mixed-blood character is Louis L'Amour's *Hondo* (1953). Recent “westerns” which feature halfbreeds include Glen A. Blackburn's *Apache Half-Breed* (1974), Mick Clumpner's *The Half-Breed* (1982), and the series by Captain D.L. “Pappy” Hicks which chronicle the adventure of his ancestor, Milton Hicks, commencing with *Breed's Rampage* (1988).

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I knew the history of race and blood was an ugly one. America's earliest blood bank, founded in 1937 at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, noted race on donor forms and other blood banks followed suit. During World War II, African-American blood was labeled N for Negro (and some centers refused African-American donors outright) and given only to African-American soldiers. In a diverse population like that of the United States, finding a matched donor becomes more challenging for a patient with a mixed ethnic background. "Let's say you have someone with African roots and someone from Asian descent coming together, and then they have an offspring of mixed ethnicities," Dr. Madbouly said. The guarantee of free speech enshrined in the U.S. Bill of Rights draws upon two millennia of Western thought about the value and necessity of free inquiry. Acclaimed legal scholar George Anastaplo traces the philosophical development of the idea of free inquiry from Plato's Apology to Socrates to John Milton's Areopagitica. He describes how these seminal texts and others by such diverse thinkers as St. Paul, Thomas More, and John Stuart Mill influenced the formation and the earliest applications of the First Amendment. Anastaplo also focuses on the critical free speech implications of a dozen