



# **Soul Mates: Religion, Sex, Love, and Marriage among African Americans and Latinos**

*W. Bradford Wilcox, Nicholas H. Wolfinger*

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In 1994, David Hernandez, a small-time drug-dealer in Spanish Harlem, got out of the drug business and turned his life over to God. After he joined Victory Chapel—a vibrant Bronx-based Pentecostal church—he saw his life change in many ways: today he is a member of the NYPD, married, the father of three, and still an active member of his church. David Hernandez is just one of the many individuals whose stories inform *Soul Mates*, which draws on both national surveys and in-depth interviews to paint a detailed portrait of the largely positive influence exercised by churches on relationships and marriage among African Americans and Latinos—and whites as well.

*Soul Mates* shines a much-needed spotlight on the lives of strong and happy minority couples. Wilcox and Wolfinger find that both married and unmarried minority couples who attend church together are significantly more likely to enjoy happy relationships than black and Latino couples who do not regularly attend. They argue that churches serving these communities promote a code of decency encompassing hard work, temperance, and personal responsibility that benefits black and Latino families.

Wilcox and Wolfinger provide a compelling look at faith and family life among blacks and Latinos. The book offers a wealth of critical insight into the effect of religion on minority relationships, as well as the unique economic and cultural challenges facing African American and Latino families in twenty-first-century America.

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