

## The Global History of Black Girlhood

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Edited by Corinne T. Field and LaKisha Michelle Simmons, the essays collected in *The Global History of Black Girlhood* are groundbreaking, delivering history lessons with present-day implications.

Drawing insights from research into the historical experiences of Black girls and the meaning of Black girlhood, this book honors the dignity and individuality of Black girls—and of what they experience as a group. It focuses on formative experiences of girlhood and Black identity around the world—ones that are marked by the limited means of influence that young people have. In a time when so many frameworks center American women, its treatment is refreshing in its breadth. Its work is also nuanced, recognizing shared themes while resisting crafting a universal narrative. It works to show how elements of collective and individual identity build on and disrupt one other.

Field and Simmons's discussions are thorough and deep, and they open the door to future explorations of the topic. They begin by examining a protest in South Africa against a high school's regulations for girls' hair. Later accounts come from places including Cuba, Germany, and the United States. Ethical and political questions are raised throughout, as are explorations of decisions within legal and educational systems.

The contributors include professors in women's studies and African American studies, as well as activists, social workers, artists, and historians. Their voices are wise and hopeful, culminating in Ruth Nicole Brown's direct address to Black girls. The appendix equips Black girls to collect and share their own stories, too, as well as the stories of other women whom they know.

The essays collected in *The Global History of Black Girlhood* see "the world *with* and *for* Black girls."

MELISSA WUSKE (September / October 2022)

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