

Edited by De-Valera NYM Botchway, Awo Sarpong, Charles Quist-Adade

New Perspectives on African Childhood

Constructions, Histories, Representations and Understandings

SERIES IN SOCIOLOGY

About the editor

De-Valera N.Y.M. Botchway (PhD) is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana. His research and teaching interests are the history of Black Religious and Cultural Nationalism(s), African Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Children in Popular Culture, Regionalism and Integration in Africa, and Africans in Dispersion. He has authored books and several articles in different refereed journals and books. He co-authored 'Freaks in Procession? Fancy Dress Masquerade as a Haven for Negotiating Eccentricity during Childhood. A Study of Child Masqueraders in Cape Coast' in *Misfit Children: An Enquiry into Childhood Belongings* and co-edited the book *Africa and the First World War: Remembrance, Memories and Representations after 100 Years*. He also edits three journals—*Drumspeak*, *Asemka* and *Abibisem*—at UCC, and belongs to the Historical Society of Ghana.

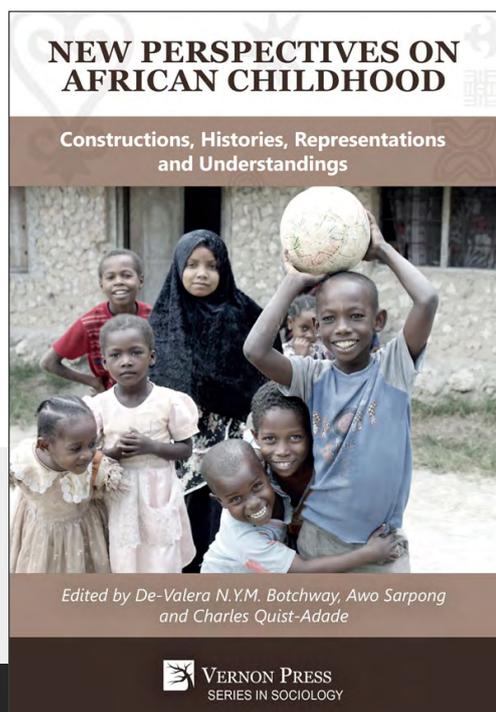
Awo Sarpong (PhD) is a lecturer in the Department of Basic Education at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana. She has authored several articles in different journals and books including 'Freaks in Procession? Fancy Dress Masquerade as a Haven for Negotiating Eccentricity during Childhood. A Study of Child Masqueraders in Cape Coast' in *Misfit Children: An Enquiry into Childhood Belongings* and "Bo Me Truo": A Female-Centred Sun Fire Nudity Dance Ritual of Fertility of the Sehwi People of Ghana' in the journal *Chronica Mundi*. She draws on her rich experiences of Basic Education teaching and research to undertake this project on African childhood.

Charles Quist-Adade (PhD) is an experienced teacher and researcher in the Sociology Department at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Canada. His research and teaching interests are Social Justice, Globalization, Racialization and Anti-racism, Social Theory, and Pan-Africanist and Global South issues. He has authored and co-authored several books such as *In the Shadows of the Kremlin and the White House: Africa's Media, An Introduction to Critical Sociology: From Modernity to Postmodernity* (with Amir Mirfakhraie), *Africa's Many Divides and Africa's Future,*

Re-engaging the African Diaspora (with Wendy Royal) and *From the Local to the Global: Theories and Key Issues in Global Justice*. He has won several teaching awards and accolades, including being cited twice in the Academic Edition of Canada's premier news magazine *Macleans* as one of the top three most popular and one of 10 best professors at the University of Windsor. He draws on these rich experiences to undertake this project on African childhood.

Summary

What does it mean to be a child in Africa? In the detached Western media, narratives of penury, wickedness and death have dominated portrayals of African childhood. The hegemonic lens of the West has failed to take into account the intricacies of not only what it means to be an African child in local and culturally specific contexts, but also African childhood in general. Challenging colonial discourses, this edited volume guides the reader through different comprehensions and perspectives of childhood in Africa. Using a blend of theory, empiricism and history, the contributors to this volume offer studies from a range of fields including African literature, Afro-centric psychology and sociology. Importantly, in its eclectic geographical coverage of Africa, this book unashamedly presents the good, the bad and the ugly of African childhood. The resilience, creativity, pains and triumphs of African childhood are skilfully woven together to present the myriad of lived experiences and aspirations of children from across Africa. As an important contribution to African childhood studies, this book has the potential to be used by policymakers to shape, sustain or change socio-cultural, economic and education systems that accommodate African childhood dynamics and experiences at different levels.



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