

Reviews

This book reframes childhood sexuality through how law is read and practised. By showing how institutions construct the sexual child, it argues that legal protection for children that denies their sexual agency is unjust. This is the book the field has been waiting for. It sets a new agenda on childhood, gender, sexuality and the law, and will be of value for years to come.

Professor Deevia Bhana, South African Research Chair (Gender and Childhood Sexuality), University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

This innovative study, grounded in rich and contemporary theoretical foundations, considers how legal systems have evolved to address adolescent sexuality. Through the lenses of colonialism, human rights, and feminist and post-structural thought, Godfrey Kangaude perceptively analyses how laws and court judgments have both succeeded in and failed treating adolescent curiosity, experimentation and maturation humanely. His conclusions offer valuable guidance to educators, social justice and legal advocates, legislators and judges worldwide, to better equip adolescents to function responsibly as sexual human beings.

Professor Rebecca Cook, Professor of Law Emerita, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, Canada

Drawing on law's own language, Kangaude compels us to confront how the very frameworks designed to protect children can also reproduce silences around their sexual agency. By situating childhood sexuality within human-rights discourse, he bridges the gap between protection and participation, especially in matters of sexuality. Childhood sexuality has long been an uncomfortable subject within children's rights discourse, complicating implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This is an important and courageous contribution to rethinking child law and sexual agency, not only for Malawi, but for Africa and beyond.

Professor Ann Skelton, Professor of Law at the University of Pretoria and Leiden University; former Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child