



Shades of Difference: Why Skin Color Matters

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Shades of Difference addresses the widespread but little studied phenomenon of *colorism*—the preference for lighter skin and the ranking of individual worth according to skin tone. Examining the social and cultural significance of skin color in a broad range of societies and historical periods, this insightful collection looks at how skin color affects people's opportunities in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and North America.

Is skin color bias distinct from racial bias? How does skin color preference relate to gender, given the association of lightness with desirability and beauty in women? The authors of this volume explore these and other questions as they take a closer look at the role Western-dominated culture and media have played in disseminating the ideal of light skin globally. With its comparative, international focus, this enlightening book will provide innovative insights and expand the dialogue around race and gender in the social sciences, ethnic studies, African American studies, and gender and women's studies.

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