



Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya

Lynn M. Thomas

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In more than a metaphorical sense, the womb has proven to be an important site of political struggle in and about Africa. By examining the political significance—and complex ramifications—of reproductive controversies in twentieth-century Kenya, this book explores why and how control of female initiation, abortion, childbirth, and premarital pregnancy have been crucial to the exercise of colonial and postcolonial power. This innovative book enriches the study of gender, reproduction, sexuality, and African history by revealing how reproductive controversies challenged long-standing social hierarchies and contributed to the construction of new ones that continue to influence the fraught politics of abortion, birth control, female genital cutting, and HIV/AIDS in Africa.

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