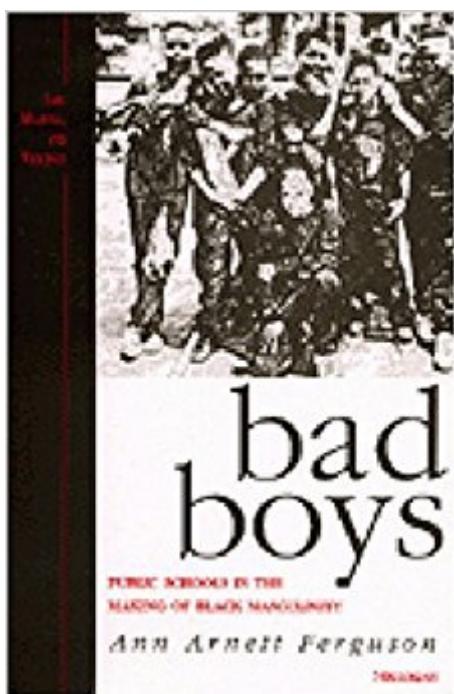


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# Bad Boys: Public Schools In The Making Of Black Masculinity (Law, Meaning, And Violence)



## **Synopsis**

Statistics show that black males are disproportionately getting in trouble and being suspended from the nation's school systems. Based on three years of participant observation research at an elementary school, *Bad Boys* offers a richly textured account of daily interactions between teachers and students to understand this serious problem. Ann Arnett Ferguson demonstrates how a group of eleven- and twelve-year-old males are identified by school personnel as "bound for jail" and how the youth construct a sense of self under such adverse circumstances. The author focuses on the perspective and voices of pre-adolescent African American boys. How does it feel to be labeled "unsalvageable" by your teacher? How does one endure school when the educators predict one's future as "a jail cell with your name on it?" Through interviews and participation with these youth in classrooms, playgrounds, movie theaters, and video arcades, the author explores what "getting into trouble" means for the boys themselves. She argues that rather than simply internalizing these labels, the boys look critically at schooling as they dispute and evaluate the meaning and motivation behind the labels that have been attached to them. Supplementing the perspectives of the boys with interviews with teachers, principals, truant officers, and relatives of the students, the author constructs a disturbing picture of how educators' beliefs in a "natural difference" of black children and the "criminal inclination" of black males shapes decisions that disproportionately single out black males as being "at risk" for failure and punishment. *Bad Boys* is a powerful challenge to prevailing views on the problem of black males in our schools today. It will be of interest to educators, parents, and youth, and to all professionals and students in the fields of African-American studies, childhood studies, gender studies, juvenile studies, social work, and sociology, as well as anyone who is concerned about the way our schools are shaping the next generation of African American boys. Anne Arnett Ferguson is Assistant Professor of Afro-American Studies and Women's Studies, Smith College.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

Some will not like the content of this book because it disturbs their "post-racial" world view of United States society. Some will not like it because they themselves stand indicted. Others will weep or nearly weep as did I, because Dr. Ferguson affirms that what was hoped to be a local, misread problem is exactly what it appears to be. If you look at the inner-city and wonder what are the roots of the chaos, mayhem and poverty, you will find a major root in this book - the administration of public education in Black and Latino communities. Education is the one humanly administered faculty that can level the playing field for all people. It is an indispensable foundation for true democracy, creating intellectual capital in the form of invention, creativity, industry and prosperity. Unfortunately, public education as an institution has been used to deform and debase the intellect and potential of some, a device to manipulate self-esteem, achievement and to create a class of underlings and slaves. I can say no more than you must read this one and Dr. Raymond Winbush's "The Warrior Method: A Parents' Guide to Rearing Healthy Black Boys".

Phenomenal ethnography. Brilliant discussions. A must read for all elementary and middle school teachers. A cautionary tale of what happens when we fear the word racism more than inequality itself.

A must read for the culturally competent.

Everyone should read this book!

Great book and I would recommend it to everyone!

Great book. Def. recommend it. arrived on time

Incredible, painful, informative and affirming - are the gamut of emotions this book will wring from

you. If you are in education, this will remind you of the calling to make a difference. If you are in education and you work with people who have lost their spark or become victims of the failing system, this book will help them see themselves and hopefully, turn around. This book will help you call yourself to action, to battle against the inequalities of a system that allows children to fail or believes that some children don't deserve to learn.

I got the book just in time and it was in the promised condition. I would buy from this vendor again.

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