African-American Children at Church
A Sociocultural Perspective

African-American Children at Church explores African-American socialization beliefs and practices, based on the findings of a unique, four-year study in a Baptist church in Salt Lake City, Utah. By combining the ethnographic approaches of anthropology with the detailed naturalistic observations of developmental psychology, Dr. Haight provides a rich description of actual socialization practices along with an interpretation of what those patterns mean to the participants themselves. Based on extensive interviews with successful African-American adults involved with children, this book begins with the exploration of adults’ beliefs about socialization issues focusing on the role of religion in the development of resilience. Drawing from naturalistic observations of adult–child interaction, the book then describes actual socialization contexts and practices that may help to nurture competencies in African-American children. The text focuses on Sunday School and includes narrative practices and patterns of adult–child conflict and play. A final section describes how this research was used in the development of a preventive, educational intervention program for children.

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN AT CHURCH

A Sociocultural Perspective

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University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign
To Jim, Matthew, and Camilla
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