The Grind

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Acknowledgments

In many ways this book began long before my formal training as an ethnographer. Growing up in East Oakland, I spent years walking the streets of the community as I traveled to and from school, work, the grocery store, and so on. It was then that I first became troubled by the routine public interactions and encounters black women and girls faced, with violence, hostility, harassment, and humiliation being a part of each day. Returning as a graduate student I employed my ethnographic training in a quest to uncover what exactly women here were encountering, what their interactions mean, and how they make sense of these daily lived experiences. I was disturbed by the trauma that resulted from such encounters and equally intrigued by the conditions under which these realities were unfolding. The Grind is an ethnographic account of how black women and girls work tirelessly to navigate poor inner-city life and the myriad ways in which it is complicated by their race and gender. To the women who allowed me into their community and their lives, thank you for sharing your important stories.

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