

# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences



**Falaq Kagda.** *Festivals of the World: Kenya.* Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens, 1997. 32 pp. \$18.60 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8368-1685-3.

**Reviewed by** Brenda F. Randolph (Africa Access)

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## Festivals of the World: Kenya

This work is part of a series that introduces young readers to festivals and cultures in various parts of the world. At the outset of this book on Kenya, a number of Kenyan celebrations are described in a line or two. Some are treated in greater depth later in the text and a number are mentioned with no further explanation. Most of the text describes rural rites of passage ceremonies that few American children have experienced. Parallel events or celebrations that Western children could understand more readily are given short shrift.

An inordinate amount of the text focuses on the cattle-keeping Maasai, a tiny minority group in Kenya that only numbers about 250,000. They appear in over

eighteen photographs while the Kikuyu who number over 4.5 million are featured in only a handful. The author uses stereotypical or inaccurate terms such as “tribe,” “hut,” and “fierce” and errs when stating that there is an African language called “Bantu” (the term Bantu refers to a language family not a specific language). Students are not likely to gain a balanced or well-informed picture of Kenyan festivals from this book.

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