



# **Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-Of-The-Century Chicago**

*Anne Knupfer*

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During the Progressive Era, over 150 African American women's clubs flourished in Chicago. Through these clubs, women created a vibrant social world of their own, seeking to achieve social and political uplift by educating themselves and the members of their communities. In politics, they battled legal discrimination, advocated anti-lynching laws, and fought for suffrage. In the tradition of other mothering, in which the community shares in the care and raising of all its children, the club women established kindergartens, youth clubs, and homes for the elderly. In *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood*, Anne Meis Knupfer documents how the club women created multiple allegiances through social and club networks and sheds light on the life experiences of African American women in urban centers throughout the country. Drawing upon the primary documents of African American newspapers, journals, and speeches of the time, this book chronicles and analyzes the complexity and richness of the African American club women's lives as they lifted while others climbed.

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