



8 Ball Chicks

Gini Sikes

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Dismissed by the police as mere adjuncts to or gofers for male gangs, girl gang members are in fact often as emotionally closed off and dangerous as their male counterparts. Carrying razor blades in their mouths and guns in their jackets for defense, they initiate drive-by shootings, carry out car jackings, stomp outsiders who stumble onto or dare to enter the neighborhood, viciously retaliate against other gangs and ferociously guard their home turf.

But Sikes also captures the differences that distinguish girl gangs-abortion, teen pregnancy and teen motherhood, endless beatings and the humiliation of being forced to have sex with a lineup of male gangbangers during initiation, haphazardly raising kids in a household of drugs and guns with a part-time boyfriend off gangbanging himself. Veteran journalist Gini Sikes spends a year in the ghettos following the lives of several key gang members in South Central Los Angeles, San Antonio, and Milwaukee. In 8 *Ball Chicks*, we discover the fear and desperate desire for respect and status that drive girls into gangs in the first place--and the dreams and ambitions that occasionally help them to escape the catch-22 of their existence.

From the Trade Paperback edition.



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