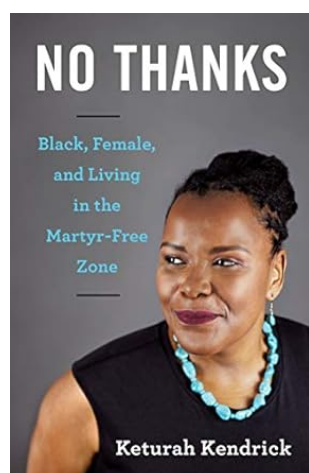




## No Thanks

Black, Female, And Living in the Martyr-Free Zone

by Keturah Kendrick



Non-Fiction - Memoir

184 Pages

Reviewed on 06/09/2020

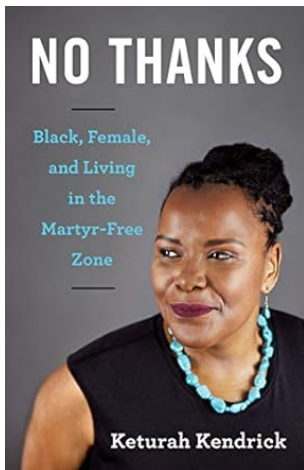
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## Book Review

**Reviewed by Grant Leishman for Readers' Favorite**

No Thanks: Black, Female, and Living in the Martyr-Free Zone by Keturah Kendrick is a collection of essays that show the author's journey to freedom in a world bound by expectations and pressures to conform as an educated black woman. The author explains and rationalizes her choices in life that have brought her into conflict, and often incredulity, from not only other women, black and non-black, but also from those who are supposed to have her back – family and friends. She enumerates the many reasons for her decision, as a woman, to remain childless, against the accepted norm in her family and circle. She also presents some compelling evidence to show her decision should not be taken as just a selfish desire and that many women have experienced similar desires after becoming mothers. She also takes the opportunity to explain her atheistic beliefs and how hard it is in the black community to actually profess a lack of belief in a ruling deity, especially to elder members of her community. Kendrick takes us on a journey to Rwanda and Shanghai where she has been working as an ex-pat and examines some of the issues and problems that can occur when ex-pats are thrown together in situations well outside of their comfort zones.

Reading No Thanks as an elderly, WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) male, who doesn't live in the US, was a revelation for me, especially at this time when black consciousness is so much to the fore and so many of us are trying our utmost to understand the black experience and empathize with it. Keturah Kendrick opened my eyes to not only what it is to be black but even more importantly what it is to be an intelligent, critical-thinking, and free black woman. So much focus at the moment is on the black male experience, it was fascinating to read the female perspective and especially one that is so eloquently expressed. What I loved was the total unwavering belief and commitment of the author in herself and her decisions. It is rare to find someone who goes so "against the grain" of her cultural and societal norms and remains so confident and certain of her decisions. I couldn't help but find myself nodding sagely at several points and agreeing with the author. As an ex-pat myself, I found myself readily identifying with some of the people Keturah came into contact with overseas. If anything, her journey helped to explain some of the reasons for my own personal journey and that alone made the book a winner



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— in my eyes. If you want to understand the black perspective from a feminine point of view, read —  
this excellent book which I highly recommend.