



Blue Boys of Zaire:

These Kota youths are undergoing a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood. They have been painted blue — the color of death — symbolizing childhood's end and their soon-to-come rebirth as men. Meeting them in this state, other villagers pretend not to see them, recognizing them only after their return from the bush and their ritual transformation into adults. This Kota ceremony has changed to fit modern life. It now comes later in life — after public schooling; and cash gifts have replaced animal sacrifice.

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