

LOVE
IN THE
TIME
OF
AIDS



INEQUALITY, GENDER,
AND RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA



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ONE

Gender and AIDS in an Unequal World

In 2006, Jacob Zuma, then sixty-four and South Africa's former deputy president, was accused of rape. Zuma, who had entered anti-apartheid politics after growing up in rural KwaZulu-Natal, faced charges from a woman he had known for some time—her father was a fellow member of the African National Congress before his death. “Khwezi” (Star), as she was called by her supporters, was only half Zuma's age and an HIV-positive AIDS activist.

The trial—in the words of one newspaper headline, “23 Days That Shook Our World”—appeared to crystallize fundamental gulfs in South Africa's young democracy.¹ Outside the court, and watched by the hungry media, some of Zuma's supporters burnt photographs of Khwezi and yelled, “Burn the bitch!” Inside the courtroom, Zuma controversially drew on Zulu customs to claim that he could acquire sex relatively easily and was therefore no rapist: “*Angisona isishimane mina*,” he stated (I don't struggle to attract women/I am not a sissy). He also argued that in Zulu culture a man who left a woman sexually aroused could himself be charged with rape. Zuma's defense, in other words, was that he was no rapist, just a traditional patriarch with a large sexual appetite.²

Separated by police from Zuma's supporters, gender activists shouted strong support for Khwezi. They argued that prominent politicians should be upholding, not undermining, the post-apartheid constitution's commitment to gender rights. The international and national press generally agreed: the *South African Mail & Guardian*, for instance, described Zuma's statements as “Neanderthal.”³ The trial's importance, commentators noted, was paramount in a country that was purportedly the rape and AIDS capital of the globe.⁴

Yet, despite this controversy, Zuma's political career went from strength to strength after his acquittal. Three years later, and following a bitter leadership battle within the ruling ANC party, a popular “Zunami” led to his election as president with 66 percent of the vote. How did a self-proclaimed sexist, a man charged with rape (and later corruption), become so popular in a country that overthrew the most oppressive, the most rights-denying, the most illiberal, system of racial rule—apartheid?

Zuma's story came to intrigue me in part because he frequently made assertions about the naturalness of Zulu patriarchy that my research tried to

destabilize. Certainly, the obstacles Khwezi and thousands of women like her faced in pursuing a rape charge revealed deep male biases in supposedly liberal legal institutions and in society at large. For many within AIDS circles, the Zuma trial was an iconic moment that laid bare the extent of gender inequalities in the country.

But what also fascinated me was countless women's undoubted enthusiasm for Zuma. Living in my field site, Mandeni, KwaZulu-Natal, in April 2006 during the rape trial, I spoke with numerous *isiZulu* speakers about the leader; conversations were especially pertinent because he hailed from Nkandla, a rural area only some seventy kilometers to the northwest. In contrast to dominant criticisms, many women I knew told me that Zuma was a respectable man and celebrated the fact that he had several wives. This sentiment was repeated across the country.⁵

Subsequent events were to show that public adulation for Zuma had limits, if these could also be framed in terms of a gendered sense of respectability. In early 2010 it came to light that he had fathered a child out of wedlock with the thirty-nine-year-old daughter of a prominent soccer administrator. Facing sustained criticism, he was forced to apologize publicly.

Nevertheless, the undoubted support of many women for the Zunami provides a revealing entry point into gender in the midst of an AIDS pandemic. Zuma's court testimony in 2006 is a good place to start; it imparts some subtle clues as to his esteem and, by association, the intricate gendering of the South African postcolony. More than simply a titanic struggle between men and women or rights and tradition, the trial represented something of a meeting point for divergent meanings of gender and intimacy.

Consider first Zuma's statement that he had offered to pay *ilobolo* (bride-wealth) to marry Khwezi after she accused him of rape. The English-speaking press poured scorn on this statement, but *ilobolo* enjoys such gravitas that the *isiZulu* press did not present Zuma's comments in such negative terms.⁶ Indeed, to dismiss *ilobolo* as simply a patriarchal tradition or a sign of the commodification of relationships (i.e., a bribe) is to miss the way it marks respectability—even more so today than formerly because of the rarity of marriage among young, often unemployed, South Africans. As capitalism bit deeper into the twentieth century, *ilobolo* connected work to kin and wages to love in profoundly important ways.

Commentators also seized on Zuma's use of the phrase "*isibaya sikababa wakhe*" (her father's cattle kraal) to refer to a woman's genitalia. Yet the term draws meaning not simply because it signifies men's unbridled control over women. The reference to a cattle kraal warns that a daughter's impregnation will reduce the *ilobolo* cattle a father receives. In the course of my research,

many older people used the phrase and some compared it favorably with a brash contemporary youth culture out of which emerged songs with titles such as “Sika Lekhekhe” (literally “cut the cake,” where *ikhekhe* is slang for a woman’s genitalia).⁷ Zuma’s use of the cattle metaphor spoke—rather ironically, given the context—to an era when society valued not simply sexual pleasure nor sexual conquest but childbirth and kinship.

These points might appear trivial in the face of terrible acts of male power in South Africa today. But they provide important glimpses into the quite profound shifts that have taken place in South Africans’ intimate lives over the last generation and which I detail throughout this book. This does not in any way assume that sexual violence should not be an important point of focus—obviously it is the most common reading of the rape trial and a major theme in the study of gender and AIDS in South Africa today. But they raise questions about how fundamental shifts in political economy and intimacy are embodied in other ways. The Zuma rape trial certainly represents masculine views on gender and sex—but it also raises important questions about love, children, labor, and kinship.

AIDS and the Political Economy and Geography of Intimacy

This book is an ethnography of one place, Mandeni, KwaZulu-Natal, and presents arguments about why AIDS emerged so quickly in South Africa. In giving considerable attention to gender, I oppose claims by men like Zuma that culture is static by showing how even some of the most celebrated Zulu “traditions” emerged in the colonial period. At the same time, the profound mismatch between criticisms of Zuma and his popularity among many South Africans, including women, suggests that we must sharpen our analysis still further. To this end, I combine ethnography and history to illuminate the deep connections between political economy and *intimacy*—a broader term than sex that extends analysis into fertility, love, marriage, and genital pleasure. This allows me, in turn, to argue that profound recent transformations in intimacy at a time of chronic unemployment and reduced marriage rates must be taken more seriously. The key question then is not *whether* gender is central to understanding AIDS but *how* the pandemic is gendered. This story is centered on one of the areas worst affected by HIV in the world: in 2008 a shocking 39 percent of women tested positive for HIV in antenatal clinics in the KwaZulu-Natal province.⁸

I tell this story by bringing political economy into constant tension with the everyday lives and emotions of those most marginalized in society. The embodiment of inequalities that drives AIDS today is undeniably a form of

“structural violence,” to use a term popularized by anthropologist-doctor Paul Farmer.⁹ Yet, as Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois note, the concept of structural violence often fails to move from a political-economic context into everyday worlds to capture “how victims become victimizers and how that hides local understandings of structural power relations.”¹⁰ By constantly viewing the economic and the intimate as dialectical—that is, in an ever-changing relationship to one another and other socio-spatial processes—I show how new patterns of inequality became embodied among marginalized South Africans.¹¹ An example of how I take this forward is the book’s attention to changing understandings and embodiments of love as the country’s political economy transformed.

Inseparable from mapping transformations to gender and intimacy is my attempt to provide a more detailed analysis of AIDS’ social roots.¹² The most influential political-economic explanation for AIDS in South Africa is men’s long history of circular migration to the gold and diamond mines. Yet this fails to capture key contemporary trends, especially the rise of unemployment and the greater mobility of women. Indeed, the dramatic pace of the pandemic and its specific social geography raise searching questions about the country’s new fault lines. From 1990 to 2005, the national prevalence of HIV rose from less than 1 percent to nearly 30 percent among pregnant women.¹³ And surprisingly little attention is given to AIDS’ geography, despite the fact that four studies have now suggested that the highest HIV rates are found in informal/shack settlements, areas that house some of the poorest South Africans.¹⁴ Such an analysis yields the argument that the scale of the AIDS pandemic was neither an inevitable consequence of apartheid nor simply a product of former president Mbeki’s much-criticized questioning of the causal link between HIV and AIDS. A politics of AIDS that connects disease to its social and geographical roots, one already forged in South Africa by health activists, can help reverse infection trends.

In brief, to explain South Africa’s rapid rise in HIV prevalence, the book’s central argument is that intimacy, especially what I call the *materiality of everyday sex*, has become a key juncture between production and social reproduction in the current era of chronic unemployment and capital-led globalization. In other words, as unemployment has cast a cruel but uneven shadow on the country, certain aspects of intimacy have come to play a more central and material role in the “fleshy, messy, and indeterminate stuff of everyday life.”¹⁵ In South Africa, the recession of the mid-1970s signaled a decisive shift from labor shortages to unemployment, and this pattern continued throughout the 1980s and after apartheid ended. Joblessness and labor market casualization

engendered an extraordinary social gap between a shrinking group of mostly male core workers and the rest of the population.¹⁶ Of particular importance, women's rapid movement into the labor force, while at first partly driven by industrial employment, has not been matched by employment growth in recent years. Along with reduced marriage rates, these labor market changes represent a generational shift that can be crudely summarized as follows: from mostly men *earning a living* and supporting a wife to many men and women *making a living* in multifarious ways.¹⁷

How can we conceptualize intimacy, an intensely personal and embodied part of life, in relation to making a living in economically hard times? A rich literature on social reproduction now connects the economy, gender, and matters of everyday life: in the realm of intimacy, longstanding themes include how wives' domestic and sexual labor subsidizes capitalist production and how sex workers provide men with not only sex but "the comforts of home."¹⁸ From the 1980s, the ascendancy of free-market economics, together with the relative decline of nuclear families, yielded new research themes. In the current "globalization" era, commentators point out, life for many, especially women, is more insecure: states have rolled back social provisions and a "vagabond" capital is ever more able to shirk support for aspects of social reproduction from health benefits to pensions.¹⁹

The concept of social reproduction helps to situate South Africans' bodies within wider processes, including colonialism, capitalism, and state practices. However, the dialectic relationship between political economy and intimacy I forefront emphasizes constant, intricate changes to bodily practices that a historical-ethnographic approach can best illuminate. This ethnography, begun only six years after democracy, uses life stories and observations to show how young South Africans navigate, while simultaneously producing, intimate relationships at a time of growing inequalities but political freedom.

As unemployment rose, young South Africans found it especially hard to find work: by 2005 a staggering 72 percent of women and 58 percent of men aged between fifteen and twenty-four were unemployed.²⁰ In part because of rising unemployment and increasing female mobility, marriage in South Africa has undergone perhaps one of the sharpest reductions in the world, with the proportion of Africans living in a married union halving from the 1960s; in many ways marriage has today become a middle-class institution.

I emphasize in some detail how intense gendered conflicts—a kind of structural distrust—result in part from the almost complete demise of marriage and the tensions inherent in navigating alternative life paths. And this analysis allows me to argue that, from roughly the 1980s, something of a

perfect storm of political economy, gender, and household and family trends resulted, just as HIV found its way into South Africa. I summarize these processes as the *changing political economy and geography of intimacy*. As I explain later, this concept is an analytical tool to highlight certain recent shifts in intimate relations that affected the rapid onset of AIDS; rather than charting unambiguous historical ruptures, much of my empirical evidence will focus on more contradictory tensions that are necessary to understand this and other abstractions.

I also need to state very clearly that I do not conceptualize declining marriage rates as some kind of reduction in morality, ending of love, or “break-down” of the heterosexual family. These unhelpful tropes have been widely repeated in South Africa and elsewhere for many decades. They tend, as I argue throughout this book, to underestimate how racial rule not only weakened certain aspects of the patriarchal family but also promoted new “patriarchal bargains” between men and women.²¹ To understand South Africa today it is, therefore, vital to avoid a picture of apartheid as a blunt force that drove a linear decline of sexual morals; instead we must ask how a range of social processes reconfigured money, morality, dependency, power, pleasure, and pain in different social milieus. Similarly, while I consider political economy in detail, poverty is not, on its own, an adequate explanation for AIDS, since many affected people can be relatively well off.²²

Instead, I argue that we must pay more attention to how the coming together of low marriage rates and wealth and poverty in such close proximity—common features across Southern Africa where HIV rates are the highest—can today drive gender relations and material sexual relationships that fuel AIDS. Sex workers explicitly selling sex are obviously at high risk of contracting HIV. Yet, more significant to the scale of South Africa’s AIDS pandemic, I argue, are boyfriend-girlfriend “gift” relationships that involve material benefits for unmarried women but also feelings of love and a wide range of moral and reciprocal obligations. This is the scenario that I describe as *the materiality of everyday sex*.²³

Gender and the Paralyzing Binary of Rights and Tradition

I return now to the gendering of AIDS. It took until the 1990s for gender to be given any real consideration in AIDS policy circles. Yet women constitute 60 percent of all HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa, an area harboring 68 percent of the global 33.4 million infections.²⁴ Rape is one reason for this discrepancy, and the Zuma rape trial vividly showed the failure of legal

institutions in South Africa to protect women from male violence. Women are also biologically more susceptible to AIDS: the female genital tract has a greater exposed surface area than the male genital tract. Moreover, younger women have less mature genital tissue and thus are even more susceptible to infection.²⁵ In addition, the most widely promoted technology used to protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), the male condom, depends on men's willingness to use it.

Given the above, feminist activists have played a critical role in drawing attention to the gendering of the AIDS pandemic. Long struggles have been waged in favor of female condoms and microbicides, the latter being compounds inserted by a woman into her vagina to reduce the chances of STI (including HIV) transmission; these are still in the trial stage. Transnational campaigns have, in turn, forged important alliances against sexual violence. Activists have also played a critical role in challenging the "imperial moralities" of George Bush's PEPFAR fund (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief); this initiative favored organizations that promoted sexual abstinence and forced recipients to sign pledges opposing abortion.²⁶

Many such campaigns on AIDS and gender have been framed in terms of "rights." From the 1960s the U.S.'s civil rights movement, and from the 1970s the gay rights movement, won important gains, in part by arguing that rights must be extended to marginalized groups. And in respect to AIDS, George Bush's moral conservatism, for instance, could be presented as denying women basic sexual and reproductive rights.

Yet while rights represent an enormously powerful and important agenda, I follow scholars who argue that we must consider their deeply paradoxical nature.²⁷ This is particularly pertinent in South Africa, where the remarkable advent of democracy gave rights-talk a stark immediacy in both the policy world and South Africans' everyday lives. Symbolized by Nelson Mandela's personal forgiveness, democracy replaced apartheid with a new flag, a new anthem, strong narratives of nation-building, and a form of citizenship underpinned by human rights. But this embrace of liberal democratic rights also gave credence to the view that what went before democracy was somewhat backward ("Neanderthal," to use the *Mail & Guardian's* description of Zuma)—or at the very least not worthy of reexamination in the modern era. And terrible acts of male power, which some men justify through "tradition," also help to portray gender as a zero-sum phenomenon, with rights leading the battle for equality. I make three further points on gender and rights below.

First, as many observers have noted, middle-class citizens typically have the greatest means to enforce liberal rights. To put it crudely, a rights-based

agenda runs the risk of downplaying the political-economic roots of AIDS. In respect to gender, Shireen Hassim has chronicled how the women's movement ultimately had more success in enshrining formal legal rights than in creating substantive (redistributive) gender change during South Africa's democratic transition.²⁸ The 1996 constitution did go beyond an orthodox liberal framework. Designed to redress the racist past, it protected certain socio-economic rights, including housing and health; citizens have drawn on these proactively, with some success. Exactly how rights play out in the realm of AIDS, however, demands more critical analysis.

A second closely related point is that gender-rights approaches do not always recognize the multiple inequalities with which gender is entangled. As Linzi Manicom argues, post-apartheid discourses of gender and citizenship can work to cast gender as the only means through which women can achieve social justice. At the time of South Africa's political transition, she argues, feminist writings on citizenship were "rendered in the grammar of liberal democracy," and this produced "*gendered* political subjects in ways that emphasize gender over other contending social identifications."²⁹ This point raises questions about the extent to which a poorer South African woman might share the same notion of citizenship and rights as a richer woman; indeed, it suggests that the very meaning of womanhood may vary across vast social differences. It alerts us that gender-rights language today can downplay the inseparability of being a female-bodied person and simultaneously being racialized, classed, and sexualized in profoundly important, and often very diverse, ways.

My third point is the need to subject "rights" as well as "tradition"—their frequent nemesis—to rigorous historical and ethnographic interrogation. Colonialism brought liberalism to Africa but also "indirect rule," a form of governance whereby settlers devolved day-to-day power to "traditional" structures led by chiefs. As the anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff describe, this history means that "built into the very scaffolding of all postcolonies" is both a modernist culture of rights-based legality and simultaneously the ability of citizens to make powerful claims by evoking cultural difference.³⁰

Importantly, the post-apartheid government did not question, and indeed sought to further institutionalize, this binary. In 1996, two years after the apartheid regime ended, South Africa's new constitution advanced a series of rights, including some concerning gender and same-sex relations. At the same time, the constitution granted citizens the right to practice their tradition (for instance, Zuma had the right to testify in court in isiZulu and defend himself as someone simply practicing Zulu customs). Separate institutions were established along these binary lines, for instance a Human Rights Commission and

a House of Traditional Leaders. Here are two poles in society that work to solidify consciousness into one of two camps.

Yet South Africans always exceed this tradition/ rights binary in revealing ways. The isiZulu verb *ukulunga*, from which the word *amalungelo* (rights) derives, is actually more akin to the phrase “to be right,” and therefore holds wider meanings than modern universalistic notions of rights. One dictionary, for instance, defines *lunga* as “Get or be in order, fit correct, be as it should be . . . Be morally good, be righteous.”³¹ Hence, while gender rights typically occupy the headlines today, I stress how they always come together with gendered expectations of “rights and wrongs.” And only historical analysis can allow us to see how the era of modern liberal rights contains within it the sediments of these past expectations and contestations.

My historical ethnography involved long periods of living in an informal settlement and studying the history of intimacy in this and surrounding areas, especially Sundumbili township, one of many planned settlements built for “Africans.” Particularly in my early years of research, when the constitution was being widely publicized, I was struck by how frequently rights were discussed by young people. Their creative and varied employment of rights made me somewhat doubtful about rights’ claims to speak to universal norms and to be able to prevail over the AIDS pandemic. Moreover, to my surprise, older women recalled that “traditional” institutions like Inkatha had actually brought them some rights, albeit tied up with the preservation of hierarchies based on *inhlonipho*, or respect.³²

Yet, while skeptical of some claims attached to rights, I do not see them as simply a mechanism that “governs” (somewhat passive) bodies—a view that can downplay the ways in which rights are both mutable and highly contested. The strength of ethnography is its ability to reveal the “micro processes lodged in moments of transformation.”³³ I show, for instance, how women draw on rights to actively contest intimate relations, including the use of condoms. At the same time, I also demonstrate how rights-based AIDS messages can also be spectacularly turned on their head: some women can argue that rights and equality brought them the right to have multiple boyfriends—an entitlement that men often claim is solely theirs.

A number of studies on gender rights do, of course, take these intricacies and paradoxes into consideration.³⁴ But we can pause and consider the significance of South Africa’s realization of rights just at the time that it confronted AIDS, a disease already saturated with racialized and spatialized meanings. And we should note how, from the outset, traditional/modern binaries have framed questions of “African AIDS”: many of the earliest explanations for high

HIV prevalence in Africa blamed it on so-called “traditional” practices such as “dry sex” or “witchcraft.”³⁵ Might African patriarchy become a new kind of exotic and backward set of practices on which AIDS is blamed?

Relevant to this question is the enormous influence development agencies and Western academics have in framing AIDS interventions in poor countries. More than twenty years ago, Chandra Mohanty famously drew attention to the tendency of Western accounts to create a homogenous category of “Third World Women,” to whom modernizing interventions can be directed.³⁶ More recently, Amina Mama warned that a large “gender and development” industry can lead to “gender technocrats touting a new kind of export product.”³⁷ These critiques raise an important question: what essences of womanhood do intervention campaigns draw on? And here Wendy Brown cautions that discourses of rights can, ironically, be deeply masculinist in assuming an “ontologically autonomous, self-sufficient, unencumbered subject.”³⁸

Let me put these points in a different way, since they might seem a particularly problematic matter for a man, and a white man at that, to raise. At a time when gender is, at last, receiving attention from national governments and international organizations, there are worrying signs that cursory and decontextualized understandings of gender are being instituted. The prominence of rights in South Africa’s recent democratization makes it especially important that we critically evaluate their implementation. To use a policy example, one prominent section in UNAIDS’ *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic* is called “Gender Inequality and Harmful Gender Norms.”³⁹ AIDS practitioners, it suggests, must zero in on harmful gender norms and remove or modernize them. Phrases like “traditional expectations related to masculinity” give the impression that to do so, all that is needed is a good dose of Western liberalism.

This approach can be deeply dehistoricizing and analytically weak. Does women’s support for Zuma constitute a harmful gender norm? What do we mean by empowerment? Should we ever use such loaded words as “tradition” to talk about historical practices? Of course, the AIDS pandemic stimulated much rich work on gender, some of which I draw on in this book. And rights are not always tied up with problematic views of gender. Yet, especially in a new liberal democracy like South Africa, they represent a key vocabulary whose paradoxes are rarely questioned within the AIDS policy world.

Some Concepts: Gender, Intimacy, the Household, and Love

In developing a historical-ethnographic approach to AIDS, I conceive of political economy and intimacy as being mutually constituted within mul-

multiple geographies. Migration patterns, work, the T.V., and many other factors affect the way both male-female and same-sex couples engage today in their intimate lives. These dynamics intersect especially closely with meanings and practices around gender, and I have already argued that more attention to history must be given when using this concept. As Joan Scott says, a central question must be “*how* hierarchies such as those of gender are constructed and legitimized . . . a study of processes, not of origins, of multiple rather than single causes.”⁴⁰

Scott also insists that gender history is not equivalent to women’s histories, and work on masculinities takes up this challenge. Raewyn Connell’s influential concept of “hegemonic masculinity” captures the ongoing cultural politics of gender, but I also hope to contribute to her lesser-used analysis of cathexis, or the emotional side of male power.⁴¹ Of course, women’s emotional attachment to men has long formed an important part of feminist writings, including in Simone de Beauvoir’s landmark discussion of love in *The Second Sex*.⁴² One contribution I hope to make, however, is to bring men and women as well as masculinities and femininities into the same conceptual frame.⁴³

I use “gender,” then, to represent a social hierarchy formed in relation to perceived biological differences in reproductive organs (differences themselves historically-geographically constructed). At its simplest level, this hierarchy advantages certain people (mostly but not always male-bodied persons) and disadvantages others (often female-bodied persons). It is contested but also constantly reiterated, including through institutions like the labor market that, around the world, tend to advantage men. And gender is never simply “acted on” in simple ways. For instance, the employment of gender “rights” narratives helps to produce what we mean by gender rather than affecting a stable, predefined entity. It is now relatively common in the academy (although less so in AIDS work) to conceive of gender as cross-cut by other forms of difference: for instance, race, class, and sexuality. But none of these categories, such as sexuality, are preformed, and we must be attentive to their usefulness in different contexts.⁴⁴ I cannot deal in depth with these questions but hope to approach some of these tensions, at least in a way helpful to my project, through an historical analysis of gender and intimacy.

My intention in using the word “intimacy” is not to downplay the high levels of violence perpetrated by men on women in South Africa and elsewhere. However, the more I tried to understand the history of AIDS, the more my focus expanded outward from what Foucault famously described as the “fictitious unity” of “sex.”⁴⁵ The broader concept of intimacy allows me to give attention to shifting notions of masculinities and femininities, questions around

fertility, same-sex as well as female-male relations, matters of pleasure, and the vastly understudied sphere of love.⁴⁶ Indeed, when South Africanist historians have differentiated between sex and intimacy, for instance in considering interracial marriage (and not simply sex), their work has revealed much about the intricate contours of racial rule.⁴⁷ Yet AIDS writings have tended to fixate on “sex” without considering in any detail what is meant by the term—or adequately considering its constitution through historical-geographical change.

Another reason I use the word “intimacy” is that until quite recently “sexuality” was a term without much meaning in my research site. Of course the notion of “having a sexuality” is relatively new everywhere it exists, and is tied to the rise of medical discourses and disciplines like sexology. But the central focus of this study is not on the production of the discourse of “sexuality,” nor on any “indigenous” alternative, nor on the way people take up (subject) positions through such discourses. While I hope to contribute to the study of the history of sexuality in South Africa, this book’s aim is more restricted: to explore a wide range of changes that led to patterns of intimate practices and meanings that now drive AIDS.

Erotic practices are enormously varied and I agree with those who argue that studies of intimacy in Africa are generally heteronormative.⁴⁸ At the same time, I accept the prevailing view that most South Africans become infected with HIV through male-female sex. I try to deal with this tension in the following way. While giving most attention to male-female intimacy, I consider same-sex relationships throughout—if perhaps not to the extent merited by previous silences. I argue, for instance, that sexual networks comprise not only male-female but also male-male linkages (and no doubt female-female ones, although I have less evidence for this). And I follow scholars who argue for caution when we interpret past practices of male-male “sex,” in part because marriage to women remained important to many of these men. One contribution of this book, therefore, is to provide a particularly detailed study of male-female intimacy and gender that recognizes, although it does not always pursue in detail, connections between male-female and same-sex intimacy.

Following from the above, I must use the words “sex” and “sexuality” with some caution. Of course I cannot avoid these concepts, especially “sex,” which is an English word widely incorporated into isiZulu conversations today. Indeed, as the book moves through the twentieth century I increasingly use “sex”—like many South Africans—to mean penis-vagina penetration and to signify a discourse that ties erotic pleasure to an individual’s identity.

In considering the “household” (rather than simply the “family”) I hope to capture the fluid, interconnected geographies of reciprocity and attach-

ment that exist as people make a living in different ways and places.⁴⁹ In general terms, I use “household” to mean either a single person or a group of people who share significant elements of life, from remittances to daily meals. Households can therefore be made up of married couples, a lone migrant worker, cohabiting male-female or same-sex couples, and many other arrangements. More than one household can live in a single dwelling, and households can stretch between homes in different locations. If the definition sounds somewhat broad, this is because there is a complex array of household types in South Africa today.

Giving attention to the household helps to clear some space between intimacy and the narratives of “family decline” or “family degeneration” that particularly surround the lives of black South Africans. Households are not sites of morality that simply “break down” but dynamic institutions formed in relation to the labor market, kinship, racial segregation, the state, and much more. Historicizing the contingent relationships between race, the household, and intimacy is especially important when stereotypes of “African promiscuity” are still common.⁵⁰ And this history helps to bring to light the socio-spatial dynamics that underpin the fact that “African” South Africans are most likely to be infected with HIV today.⁵¹

Indeed, hardly mentioned today, but with uncanny parallels to the present moment, is the migration of thousands of poor white women to towns from rural areas in the first half of the century who, facing meager industrial wages, were pushed into “prostitution.” This trend is described in great detail in psychiatrist Louis Freed’s book *The Problem of European Prostitution in Johannesburg*, published in 1949. As Freed showed, sexually transmitted infections were, in fact, prevalent among all “races” in South Africa prior to the introduction of penicillin in the 1940s and 1950s.

Certainly, it took a series of labor and welfare laws aimed at promoting poor white families and the state’s massive employment of Afrikaners (propelled by the election of the apartheid government in 1948) to pull many poor white women out of this sexual economy. Here, we must note, “education” took the form not of the “safe-sex” campaigns aimed at individuals that are common today, but of massive state investment in schooling for whites that underpinned their preferential position in the labor market during the apartheid era.

Today, the racial structuring of households finds expression in the fact that unemployment is at 4.6 percent among whites and 42.5 percent among Africans; 59 percent of the white population is married, whereas the figure among Africans is only half that (30 percent).⁵² Of course, there are fundamental differences between the challenges faced by a government answerable

to only a white minority and those faced by one elected by the greater population. Yet, as we shall see, the state's interventions after apartheid were relatively modest, and gender was only peripherally important in areas, such as housing, where it had been significant.

Indeed, just as the country faced the massive new threat of AIDS, the state argued that laissez-faire economic policies were necessary in the era of "globalization." Its generally technocratic interventions failed to conceptualize work with housing, production with social reproduction, and economy with health. Nor did AIDS intervention campaigns—often funded from overseas—typically address these connections. Yet, as AIDS programs came and went, the disease's structural roots arguably worsened: in the first ten years of democracy unemployment rose by 7 percentage points to 47 percent among women and by an equal amount to 31 percent among men.⁵³ And one recent United Nations study found that South African cities have the most unequal distribution of income in the world.⁵⁴

LOVE IN THE TIME OF AIDS? ROMANTIC LOVE AND PROVIDER LOVE

Over the last several years a rich literature on love has emerged, in part in response to the AIDS pandemic.⁵⁵ Yet Africa is still often thought of, and written about, as loveless.⁵⁶ More than a century ago, (male) settlers in Natal claimed that they had a moral mission to liberate love from the supposedly restrictive clutches of patriarchal African society. In 1878 Bishop Colenso, compiling his Zulu dictionary, illustrated his definition of the word *uthando* (love) with the phrase "the Government says that girls should choose through love, and not be compelled to husbands" (*uHulemente ute izintombi azitshaye ngotando, zingabotshelwa emadodeni*).⁵⁷ This promotion of love, while presented in moral terms, dovetailed with settlers' economic interests: facing stark labor shortages, many imagined that African men were living idly in homesteads, "buying" wives who were entrapped in polygamous marriages.

Generations later, the anthropological literature on African kinship and *ilobolo* tended to present marriage as a mechanical exchange of women between kinship groups. The famous structural-functionalist anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown wrote in 1962 that "the African does not think of marriage as a union based on romantic love." Affection, he argued, "is the product of the marriage itself."⁵⁸ Also grounding their work on the belief that love was absent in "traditional" society, the small number of writers who did study love in Africa tended to see it as a quintessentially modern force fighting against restrictive traditions; they saw individualistic practices, such as the modern companionate marriage, and new communication forms, such as the love let-

ter, as undermining the dense kinship bonds that characterized traditional African society.⁵⁹

This sense of love as a liberatory force is, in fact, common in many settings. Pioneering historians of romantic love in the West traced a centuries-long shift toward individuals' greater marital choice (as opposed to kin's influence) and growing companionship within marriage. Lawrence Stone, who coined the term "affective individualism," afforded probably the most well-known account.⁶⁰ While this work typically concentrated on the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, writers on the twentieth century have pointed to the centrality of consumption to a commercialized form of romantic love that gained enormous popularity.⁶¹ Celebrating a further shift at the end of the century—a kind of extreme version of romantic love's individualism—sociologist Anthony Giddens posited the emergence of "confluent love," a contingent "rolling contract" whereby women and not just men could leave "relationships" at any time.⁶²

This rich literature on love clearly has relevance in South Africa. The remarkable spread of Christianity in particular helped to promote monogamy over polygamy and provide, in missions, a place of refuge for the relatively small number of women forced into marriages they explicitly opposed. Quite a lot of historical sources exist to show how a version of romantic love took shape in the twentieth century: these include church documents, magazines read by a new Christian elite, and love letters.

The critical study of romantic love also brings into sharp relief how social change can reconstitute selfhood—the very notion of individualism that permeates the concept of marital "choice." Indeed, as an increasing number of Christians in South Africa took their wedding vows the "I" of their voices differed from the "I" in a pre-Christian world. Studying romantic love therefore helps to problematize ahistorical notions of "agency."

Yet romantic love has important analytical limits. As critics of the Western literature on romantic love argue, studies' reliance on written sources such as diaries and love letters can bias them in two ways. First, it tends to skew attention toward the literate middle classes. Second, it tends to promote a teleological framework whereby modern societies become progressively more loving—a framing especially problematic in the case of "Africa," a space long seen as backward. These biases, in turn, serve to downplay love's expression in practical acts of cooperation and mutual assistance that predate literacy.⁶³ In other words, the dazzling light of romantic love can blind us to more mundane but nevertheless vital forms of connection.

The importance of recognizing practical acts of love in a colonial context leads me to put forward a second type of love, what I call *provider love*. This

book argues that expressions of love enacted through cooperation and mutual assistance—practices that are simultaneously material and meaningful, even if they are not articulated in writing—are crucial to the intertwined histories of love and exchange in twentieth-century South Africa. Provider love is enmeshed in a set of profoundly important gender expectations that came to hinge on men’s rapidly growing dependence on wage labor at a time of racial rule. A man fostered provider love by paying ilobolo and subsequently supporting a wife (or wives); in turn a woman contributed love by maintaining the marital home.

Today, the existence of sex-money exchanges often leads to claims that sex has become “transactional” or “commodified.” Yet the concept of provider love allows us to take more seriously young South Africans’ assertions that their intimate relationships are, at some level, about love without dismissing the material realities of life. It helps, for instance, to address the following questions: why do gift exchanges that encompass sex take place mostly between “boyfriends” and “girlfriends” and not “prostitutes” and “clients”? Why do many people divide multiple concurrent partners into a “main” lover and plural “secondary” lovers? And why in many instances do lovers not use condoms to protect themselves from potential HIV infection?

Moving beyond the idea of love “coming to Africa,” this book therefore focuses on two forms of love that, as I will show, are deeply interwoven: romantic love and provider love. Attention to the former foregrounds more individualized patterns of courting and marriage. It also shows how love became a dynamic force in the remaking of selves even if marital choice was common before colonialism. Attention to the latter allows us to see the changing ways in which men have provided love in South Africa as love became embroiled with vastly different forms of male assistance: from a position where men were the providers in marital households to one today where men can support multiple unmarried girlfriends.

About the Book

It is necessary to give several caveats. Although I try to deconstruct racialized notions of sexuality, I am aware of the difficulties of doing so. In Mandeni, my research site, South Africans classified as African under apartheid make up about 95 percent of the population. At one time, I considered broadening my scope to include studying intimacy in the nearby white, Indian, and coloured areas to prevent this project from being simply focused on “African sexuality.” In the end such a project, with so few secondary sources to launch it from, was

so daunting as to be unfeasible. Instead, I tried to unravel connections between “races,” and pushed deeper historically when I felt uneasy at the politics of writing a contemporary ethnography of intimacy. I also undertook research outside of Mandeni, working with a research group in rural Hlabisa, an area from which many residents of Mandeni had migrated. This provided invaluable insights into the lives of rural migrants. In fact, on a day-to-day basis, many residents have much closer links with the KwaZulu hinterland than areas a few miles to the east or south.

More generally, as some writers have powerfully argued, AIDS and sex are not the same thing: racialized assumptions can exaggerate the importance of sex (and heterosexual sex especially) to the spread of AIDS.⁶⁴ In addressing intimacy, I leave open, and largely unexamined, vital questions around the importance of co-factors in the AIDS pandemic. Particularly, poor nutrition and the prevalence of other sexually transmitted infections connected to poverty undoubtedly play a role: an HIV-positive person with another STI, for instance, has a three to five times higher chance of infecting a sexual partner with HIV.⁶⁵ Tremendous inequalities in health services also affect the disease’s progression: 15 percent of the population has access to private health care facilities while the remainder, most of whom are black, depend on an overburdened public health service.⁶⁶

Writing about terrible social conditions faced by millions of shack dwellers today, Sbu Zikode, the leader of *Abahlali baseMjondolo* (the Durban-based shack dwellers movement), said in 2006, “Our bodies itch every day because of the insects. . . . You must see how big the rats are that will run across the small babies in the night.”⁶⁷ Zikode’s testimony stands as a vital reminder of the need to understand the spatiality of multiple causes of AIDS. These matters are under-researched and I look, therefore, at only one dimension of AIDS—intimacy.

The book is divided into three parts: Revisiting Intimacy and Apartheid; Intimacy after Democracy; and Interventions. Key arguments are contained in this structure. We must not understand apartheid as a “degeneration” of family life but explore how racial capitalism intersected with and worked through the male-led home. Then we need to consider how AIDS coincided with the emergence of a democratic South Africa which, in turn, collided with the global ascendancy of free-market economics. Finally, we must consider interventions and politics in the context of both the first and second sets of findings.

The next chapter will introduce my primary research site, Mandeni. Chapter 3 traces how male migrancy and Christianity transformed ideas of

intimate “traditions” in the early twentieth century. Here, I stress the emergence of new connections between wage labor, men’s roles as providers, and emotions. Chapter 4 moves to an urban setting and explores ideas of respectability in Sundumbili township and the importance of state-granted housing to the male provider identity. As chapter 5 shows, from the 1970s women increasingly challenged men’s role as head of household; many moved into the informal/shack settlement surrounding Isithebe Industrial Park and carved out a living as “industrial women.” But women’s independence was relatively short-lived as unemployment rose. Moving into the post-apartheid period, chapter 6 foregrounds social and spatial shifts that “left behind” the majority of South Africans both literally and figuratively.

The next four chapters elucidate the contemporary cultural politics of intimacy. I look at how women draw on rights in unanticipated ways (chapter 7), the reworking of masculinities (chapter 8), and connections between money, sex, and love (chapter 9). The conclusion (chapter 10) explores the politics of AIDS interventions through two different AIDS organizations that emerged in Mandeni, the activist group Treatment Action Campaign and the youth-AIDS NGO loveLife.

Several aims of this book have already been described, but an overarching one derives directly from the people who tolerated my many intrusions into their lives. I was often asked at the end of interviews what I was doing about the AIDS situation in Mandeni. The short answer was, very little—or perhaps that I was working with the Treatment Action Campaign or helping a local gender violence NGO to raise funds, both of which I did at varying times. My longer answer, however, was that I would try and write a dissertation and possibly a book that linked the poor economic conditions, especially the devastatingly high unemployment rates, to the prevalence of AIDS. Massive unemployment was the explanation for the pandemic overwhelmingly given to me by residents. The connection between AIDS and unemployment turned out to be fraught with complexities I never anticipated, but it is one that none of my informants ever doubted exists—and neither do I.

All You Need Is Love? The Materiality of Everyday Sex and Love

When I began living in Mandeni in 2000 I was struck by an apparent paradox: everybody I knew discussed the close connection between money and sex, and yet they said that few “prostitutes” lived in the area. In my attempt to explore the materiality of everyday sex, I talked to factory managers and unions about job losses and declining wages. I looked at how rents had increased relative to wages and how migration to the area had increased despite job losses. I probed census data and found that only 14 percent of “Africans” living in the municipality were married. I searched for a way to describe the material relationships I saw, and found that scholars called them “transactional sex.”

But there was something missing. I became frustrated with the inertia of the concept of “sex” and the way it framed my emerging questions, such as, how had sex become “commodified”? And how had “sexual culture” changed? Over time I began to think that a better set of questions emerged from stepping back and exploring how resource flows, embodied emotions, and social meanings transformed in a shifting political economy. Doing so yielded insight into how the gendered labor market coincided with, and influenced, far-reaching demographic shifts, including rising population mobility and falling marriage rates—but it also took me into the realm of love. Indeed, in everyday conversations, narratives of sex’s materiality coexisted with the widespread celebration of love. In turn, love’s normative value as “good” made it a powerful symbolic anchor for a cultural politics of intimacy.

Recognizing the particular interweavings of money and love, I argue, can help to explain the most intimate moments between young people, including condom use—a very effective protection against HIV infection. Love in South Africa, as everywhere, has many historical strands, but for analytical clarity I have stressed two forms of love: provider love, rooted in men’s payment of *ilobolo* and support of a wife, and romantic love, which represents, in Lawrence Stone’s words, a historical shift toward “affective individualism.”¹ Today, key to understanding the materiality of everyday sex is not love’s

absence from relationships but how money and love have come together in new ways.

Promiscuous Capital and the Materiality of Everyday Sex

Residents' most common explanation for why money and sex are linked in Mandeni is that "factories have closed," rendering women more dependent on men. Intimacy, these testimonies reveal, is firmly encased in today's foot-loose capitalism that creates inequalities wherever it goes—and whenever it leaves. There is, according to Cindi Katz, "a threat at the heart of capitalism's vagrancy," namely that "an increasingly global capitalist production can shuck many of its particular commitments to place, most centrally those associated with social reproduction, which is almost always less mobile than production."² Mandeni's very history reveals capital's promiscuity in the era of "globalization." In the 1960s, the SAPPI paper mill helped found Sundumbili township and promoted plans to build tennis courts and a swimming pool for residents. By the early 2000s, however, most employers in the area were Taiwanese garment factories that hired women at very low salaries and threatened to leave if workers joined unions; when workers did unionize and win pay increases, many firms followed through on their threats and relocated to lower-cost sites.

In a climate where some men earn ten times the wages of women, sex has an immediate materiality. I collected dozens of stories that graphically revealed how the closure of factories and constant in-migration fueled a pattern of men providing gifts to girlfriends. And, as I noted earlier, across the country the materiality of sex is widely recorded: labor market inequalities may be particularly pronounced in Mandeni, but unemployment, gender inequalities, and a virtual absence of marriage among the young are widespread in South Africa, as well as in some of its neighbors.

One long-term resident of the informal settlement, Mrs. Ndlela, explained to me in November 2000 the difficulties women face. In doing so, she evoked (with a hint of romanticism) the independent "industrial women" who came to the area in the 1980s in more favorable economic circumstances:

Before, people didn't rely on anyone, they were having money; now they have to rely on other people. . . . Some see this man today, this man tomorrow, and that man the following day. . . . Some men are working in factories, some outside, like taxi drivers. . . . Today the situation [*isimo*] pushes them to this thing. . . . They are scared [of

AIDS] but sometimes they just say that there is no such thing, they just ignore it.

Yet, however unrelenting capitalist enterprises are in their pursuit of profit, however ruthless they are in exploiting gender inequalities, penetrative sex is not traded like a commodity. Residents are adamant that a man who gives gifts to a woman is a “boyfriend” (denoted by terms like *iqonda*) and his lover a “girlfriend” (*intombi*). Women, I was told, *qoma* (choose) a lover, whereas a prostitute will *dayisa umzimba* (sell her body). Though the word “isifebe” can mean both a prostitute and a woman who has an excessive number of boyfriends, there are a number of distinct words for a prostitute, such as *umdayisi* (a seller) and *umqwayizi* (a winker). Such women, I was constantly told, were active mainly in large towns like Durban. Sex has not become commodified in the sense that it is traded impersonally for money; instead it is enmeshed in new forms of emotion and reciprocity—exchanges more akin to gift relations, marked by mutual, if uneven, obligations that extend over time.³

I opted to use the word “prostitute” rather than “sex worker” above because it better reflects the disparaging comments aimed at women who overtly sell sex. In contrast, gifts given by “boyfriends” to “girlfriends” are more commonly talked about as a form of “help.” Lindiwe, a young woman living in the township, explained that men’s “help” can take many forms, including clothing and cosmetics.

MH: Why do women have many partners?

Lindiwe: Some, they tell themselves that they are going to get money; women who don’t work, they tell themselves that they are going to be helped by men that they love.

MH: What do the men give the women, then?

Lindiwe: Some, they buy them anything, like clothes, or give a woman some money so that she can buy cosmetics.

I spoke with Mrs. Buthelezi in her house in Sundumbili, where she was drinking beer with two other women. She is fifty years old and extremely hostile toward men, saying that boyfriends had let her down many times. She described the difference between the materiality of everyday sex and prostitution and gave a sense of the power relations that underpin gifts:

MH: Did those people see themselves as prostitutes?

Mrs. B: It’s different; let me say here, at the township, the level of unemployment is high. The girl comes from Nongoma [in northern KwaZulu-Natal] looking for work, she can’t find

work and she gets a boyfriend who will pay her rent, another to buy her food, another one who is going to give her money, and the other will help her for transport. . . . The situation forces her.

MH: Do women cheat more now than in the past, or did they always cheat?

Mrs. B: Now they cheat more.

MH: Why?

Mrs. B: Because we want money.

Another township resident, a woman in her fifties, described how some women have multiple “boyfriends” as a kind of “business.” She went on to explain that women provide men not only with sex but with other “comforts of home”:⁴

MH: How is it like a business?

INT: If I’m staying in my umjondolo I know I have five boyfriends; maybe one is going to come in the morning and sleep with me because he is working the night shift. When his payday comes I will demand some money from him: “Do you think I got food for *mahhala* [free] here in this umjondolo; in this house you have to pay for the food you are eating here. I need two hundred rand.” One boyfriend again who’s doing, like, the day shift, he is sleeping here the whole night. “How come you are sleeping here for the whole night, five days, and you don’t want to pay anything here, do you think there’s anything for *mahhala*?” I also demand something from him. . . . One is night shift, one is day shift.

The stereotype of naïve rural women leaving home and being forced to sell their bodies is a strong one, sometimes played on by informants, but many accounts show that rural-born women are aware of the kind of relationships that they are likely to have to embark on in Mandeni. Indeed, both people and information have flowed steadily between Isithebe and rural KwaZulu-Natal over the last three decades. One young lady in her early twenties from Hlabisa district, Kheti, told me, “They hear that there are people [in Isithebe] who stay with their boyfriends and that it is nice to do so. They too want to stay well. They tell their parents that they want to find work, but they know that they want a man.”

Gift exchanges between men and women are patterned by geography in other ways. Though, as Mrs. Buthelezi indicated above, Sundumbili township

hosts some rural-born migrants, most residents were born in the township's family houses. In this formally planned urban space, young women tend to have boyfriends less as a means to gain access to accommodation and more for access to consumer goods. The distinction between subsistence and consumption is, of course, a hazy one, but Sundumbili township does have higher average levels of income and a less mobile population than the surrounding informal areas. The most immediate requirements of life are therefore more accessible.

Isithebe jondolo settlement, by contrast, is a place where rural-born migrants are in more urgent need of accommodation and subsistence. Women might stay with a relative in a tiny umjondolo when they first arrive, but rarely do so for long. Moreover, virtually all jondolo settlement residents maintain close contact with rural kin who typically expect remittances, especially when they are looking after a resident's child.

Love in the Time of AIDS

AIDS policy documents are replete with categories such as “transactional sex,” “sex work,” and “sugar daddies.” And, at one level, intimate relationships are certainly marked by their materiality and by great distrust. Is love in South Africa, then, just a façade, a romantic utopia in a country where links between sex and money are common?⁵

Love certainly seems to have sped up in recent years. Text (SMS) messages, with their quick beeps upon arrival, have emerged as the quintessential way of communicating love in South Africa. In 2005 around 120 million text messages were sent during the Christmas and New Year period alone (almost three per person).⁶ When they concern intimate matters, as they frequently do, text messages suggest the fleeting nature of love: that love proposals can be quick, replies brash, and unwanted contacts immediately deleted. In a clever marketing move, cell phone service providers offer free “please call me” messages for those who want to communicate but have no airtime; receiving calls is free. Anybody with a cell phone can communicate for nothing—but only with a richer friend; it is tempting to see here an analogy for democracy's uneven reach across the different classes.

Bongi, my friend from the jondolo settlement, often received text messages from male suitors. She has an elegant demeanor, a youthful smile, and an infectious laugh. Often upon meeting a man of status—such as, for instance, when we were once stopped by a traffic cop—she is told “*Ngicela inombolo yakho*” (I am asking for your number). Sometimes a text message follows, one or two lines asking for a meeting or telephone conversation.

The enormous popularity of text messaging today makes older forms of communication seem almost antique—and for this reason highly valued. One day I was sitting on a bench in Bongi’s workplace. She is a self-employed seamstress and sews clothes, especially school uniforms. A young man entered quietly and delivered a letter from his friend, her suitor. The letter was handwritten, mostly in isiZulu, on light green writing paper. Its author, whom Bongi knew, was employed by a well-paying factory. His invitation to her to help build an umuzi was a clear reference to marriage; the letter’s style—elegant and poetic—contradicted common stereotypes of Zulu men as masculine and violent.

Since I started to see you I could feel my stomach boil because of the trepidation I had. But I trust that you will feel sorry for me, my mother’s child. . . . I have deep emotion in my heart because of you, my lady as white as the sand from the sea. My heart is beating like a fire if I think about you. My hands are soft like a banana [“My heart is beating like a fire *uma ngicabanga* about you. *Izandla zam zisoft* like banana”]. . . . I want a woman to build up my family’s home.

Bongi eventually dismissed the poetic letter, saying that she didn’t find the man attractive, but I asked if she would help my research by collecting other love letters in the jondolo settlement. The shack where she conducted her business was located at a busy taxi stop, and thousands of people passed by it each day. Sitting on the wooden bench inside this small room for hours at a time over many years gave me a revealing window into the social networks in which women were immersed. I often wondered how Bongi herself managed to work with so many people dropping by, so much laughter, so many phone conversations, and such frequent text messaging. I began to realize that making a living for Bongi required constant “emotional labor”: managing emotions to make or foster connections between people.⁷ I patched together her life story from observations as well as numerous conversations with her and with mutual friends.

Bongi was born in Isithebe in 1970, only one year before Isithebe Industrial Park was established. Since her parents were poor, Bongi’s aunt volunteered to raise her in a rural area about an hour’s drive north of Isithebe. In her final year of secondary school, she became pregnant. Soon after her daughter Busi’s birth, however, she split up with her lover, who moved to Durban and eventually married another woman. Nevertheless, he took responsibility for their child, eventually sending her to a former white Model C school in Durban.

Bongi talks with pride about her daughter. Once she told me that she had *hlola*’d (tested) her virginity, and she was reassured that it was still intact. When

I visited Bongi's rural home in 2000 I met the girl, then aged ten. She appeared quiet and averted her eyes from adults, a sign of deference. But the next time I saw her, some nine years later, she had a quite different demeanor: revealing the way that privileged schooling inscribed itself on the body, she conversed confidently in English with a tell-tale Model C accent that signaled prestige.

When Bongi moved back to Isithebe in the early 1990s, she began a long relationship with a well-known taxi owner. This boyfriend paid for her to live in Durban for a year and study to become a seamstress. They parented two children together, a boy and a girl. Bongi and many mutual friends have noted that she wanted to marry this man and was very distressed when he persisted in having other girlfriends. Although they broke up because of his infidelity, I have often seen her show great respect to him when talking on the phone. She told me many times that she hopes he will eventually send their two children to a former white model C school.

One reason Bongi felt especially strongly about the importance of education was because their son appeared to be following in his father's footsteps—already, at a very young age, showing a liking for guns and cars. Indeed, Bongi's former lover had a fearsome standing as an enforcer of a local “community policing forum”; he was said to have once tied a local thief to his car with a rope and dragged him through the jondolo settlement. I always felt a bit scared when I met him—making an enemy of such a person could swiftly end my fieldwork—but he seemed to approve of a white person living in the area and I got the sense that he saw my safety as part of his responsibility. I felt that, by publicly showing respect to him and his family (he now lived with another woman and their children), I added to his authority rather than challenging it.

For women arriving at Isithebe and knowing perhaps only one or two relatives in the area, Bongi was a superlative guide to the harsh environment. By the 1990s, jobs in the nearby factories were becoming rare and surviving through the informal economy was extremely difficult. As a consequence of the growth of large retailers, many women fought over unprofitable informal trading opportunities, selling items such as fruits, onions, tomatoes, and boiled ummbila (corn) on the streets. The most lucrative informal trading niches in which women gained dominance were illegal; these included trading *dagga* (marijuana) and brewing isiqatha (a notoriously potent spirit described in chapter 6). To navigate this hostile world, relationships of various kinds with men were necessary, and no one was a better source of information about the status and attributes of the area's men than Bongi.

Bongi was widely described as *hlankaniphile* (clever), and her streetwise intelligence was demonstrated by her encyclopedic knowledge of local people, institutions, and rumors. While much of her wisdom came from living for

many years in the area, I watched her quickly master the newer domain of local politics. Especially after local municipal elections in 1996, she became acutely aware of the opportunities provided by “development” and built connections with members of the Inkatha Freedom Party, the African National Congress, and the Democratic Alliance, the three main local political parties. We sometimes joked that she was IFP Monday, ANC Tuesday, and DA Wednesday, and at various times I accompanied her to visit high-profile members of all three parties. In 2004 this effort bore fruit when a development project granted her five industrial sewing machines. These were meant to be used to train women to enter the trade, but she also used them to hire subcontractors, expanding her own business.

Bongi’s gregarious personality and expert sewing skills ensured her financial independence, but only because of her location in Mandeni. Formal schooling provided credentials such as matriculation certificates and English-language skills that were valuable anywhere. In contrast, Bongi’s knowledge was more spatially grounded, and this created problems as well as opportunities. Invariably, when the social networks she confronted in Mandeni extended upward in power and wealth, it was men she asked for various kinds of help.

When Bongi interacted with richer men in the community, she typically adopted a kind of friendly deference. Her own status as an *isakhamuzi* (local resident) and a businesswoman allowed her a certain informality. At the same time, she drew on idioms of *hlonipha* (respect), to which her image as a dignified woman gave credence. Entering webs of patronage was an unpredictable business, and being a woman allowed her to play on men’s sense of self-worth through flattery—but it also disadvantaged her at times.

In 2000, the owner of a shop from whom she rented a workspace rather abruptly told her he needed it for another purpose. She went to talk respectfully to a man of high status and wealth who owned another nearby shop and had a spare room; that I gave her a lift to the meeting marked me as a silent party to the negotiations. The man agreed to rent the room to her, and she began to mobilize friends to break open the wall and put in a new door to the outside. However, as the hole grew, the landlord increased the rent significantly and, in disgust, Bongi promptly bought a pile of concrete blocks and paid someone to fill the hole back up. Although she was furious, her actions toward this man were kept in the idioms of *hlonipha* (respect). Mobilizing other connections, she then moved her business into the small shack I described earlier.

My interest in Bongi’s “emotional labor” was especially pertinent because ethnography is itself an emotional exercise; the fostering of friendships is inseparable from the work of collecting “data.” Although I had a number

of good male friends in the township and the jondolo settlement, most men either worked for many hours a day in formal employment or were unemployed. I knew no men in circumstances like Bongi's: with a lot of time to socialize, a safe and sociable place to hang out, and financial independence. These circumstances, as well as our similar ages, seemed to narrow the social gaps between Bongi and me: we sometimes jokingly referred to one another as *mpintshi* (mate). Bongi never asked me to loan her money, whereas unemployed men occasionally did, or at least asked me to share a beer with them.

As we became closer friends, Bongi did ask me for favors, especially lifts. At times I became irritated when she would ask me to drive her halfway across the often muddy informal settlement on an errand. I usually said yes, though; I was so grateful for the way that she aided my research. In any case, as in the relationships I studied, it was hard to separate material expectations from feelings of friendship, trust, and guilt that had their own momentum and bodily gravity. More generally, I believe that residents like Bongi were well aware that they held a certain power over me because I required their support for my research project and especially for my safety. She knew that while violence could uphold social hierarchies, bullets and knives did not discriminate: many powerful and wealthy men, usually taxi owners or politicians, have been killed in the area by rivals. With power comes vulnerability, and I was always grateful when Bongi told anyone who listened that I was a student who was not rich like other whites. "Look at his *iskorokoro* [beaten-up car]," she would say.

Since Bongi and I spent so much time together, rumors occasionally surfaced that we were having an affair. At first I was worried about these and wanted to rebuff them, scared that I would be seen as a rich white man exploiting a poorer black woman. However, I soon came to realize that they were repeated with more amusement than venom, and I was sometimes asked about them in quite a matter-of-fact way rather than judgmentally: "Oh, you mean that Bongi [or any other women I knew] is not your girlfriend? But I always see you together."

Any resentment of my apparent ability to enter into relationships with women was more likely to come from men, who were painfully aware that money was a gatekeeper for their intimate encounters. On one occasion, driving Bongi home through the muddy shack settlement, I saw an unemployed man I knew clutching a beer bottle and heard him mutter, "*Sawubona mkhwenyana*" ("Hello, fiancé") as we drove past. *Umkhwenyana* is a respectful term for a man who is lobola-ing a woman; its ironic use here drew attention to the connection between my wealth and my ability to attract girlfriends in ways that could raise my status. The stark differences between my life and the lives of the

poorest male residents were highly visible to them because I represented, not only white privilege, but also male privilege they should have enjoyed.

Love Letters and Changing Connections

The archetypal love letter from South Africa's era of male migrancy can be found in Isaac Schapera's 1940 ethnography *Married Life in an African Tribe*. The touching note was penned by a migrant man in Johannesburg and addressed to his rural-based girlfriend. Describing the pain of separation, he writes, "I still think of how we loved each other; I think of how you behaved to me my wife."⁸ But while similar romantic notes are found in Isithebe today, their context is quite different. They reflect women's own movement out of rural areas, the rise of unemployment, and the rarity of marriage.

One letter Bongi collected for me was written by a man to Themba, a woman in her late twenties. Themba had arrived in the area with hardly any money or contacts, and Bongi had helped her as a kind of patron, giving her a place to stay in her family home in Isithebe. Bongi's family were longstanding residents and therefore had access to a small plot of land on which were built three mud, wood, and stone structures, two for her mother and brother and one for her; Themba stayed in Bongi's house.

Outwardly at least, Bongi and Themba's relationship appeared to be somewhere between that of an elder and younger sister and that of a husband and wife. When I dropped Bongi at her home, Themba would sometimes emerge to greet her with Bongi's two children, as if she were a loyal wife waiting for her husband. Once I asked Bongi whether Themba and she were lovers; Bongi laughed in apparent shock, saying candidly that she desired a man's penis and not a woman's body. Themba was a kind of social wife in an arrangement that reflected growing economic gaps between women in the area as well as between men and women. She diligently undertook domestic duties while Bongi supported the household financially, as a man had done previously.

Themba's poverty typified the dismal economic circumstances of newer migrants to the area in the recent period of industrial decline. Nevertheless, her intimate encounters with men represented more than the narrow exchange of money for sex. One day a man in his fifties shela'd (proposed love to) Themba in a letter written in isiZulu. He began by informing her about the death of his children's mother. He then tried to allay any fears that because of his age he might be sexually impotent, an embarrassing topic that a letter could most easily address. His mention of sexual performance suggests that even

relationships that crossed very large age differences can be built in part on sexual satisfaction or procreation and not simply on gifts from men to women:

I am happy if you are still alive. I am not well, and you know my problem: that the mother of my children left me. I tried to tell you everything but you ignore me. I do not intend to play with you but I love you with all of my heart. . . . Don't worry, as my penis is still working, I am not that old. Your food, you'll find it still full, it is yours only, I don't give it to anyone.

Themba was very ill when she received this letter. A few months later, as her health worsened, she went to stay with her brother in Inanda, an informal settlement close to Durban; returning to stay with one's relatives is usually a sign that someone is close to death. On my way to Durban one day, I visited her in the mud and stick umjondolo that hugged the crooked hills of Inanda's informal settlement. Her thin body lay limply on the bed, and on the bedside table sat a bottle of powerful *umuthi* (medicine) from a famous *inyanga* (traditional healer) in Umlazi township. As I said goodbye, her brother, mistaking me for a medical doctor, showed me the painful-looking shingles blisters on his own back (shingles is an opportunistic infection often associated with the early stages of AIDS).

Themba eventually recovered and returned to Mandeni, putting on weight and beginning to look healthier. Such slumps in health followed by a quick improvement were not uncommon. One day, however, Bonggi told me that Themba had fallen ill briefly and had been tested for HIV and found to be infected. When I heard this news I tried to introduce her to the Treatment Action Campaign, the organization at the center of treatment activism in the area. It was 2004 and antiretroviral drugs were about to become available. Themba, however, argued that her health was getting better and refused to take medication.

A year later, while I was in the United States, I phoned Bonggi one day and she told me that Themba had passed away. She had become pregnant by the suitor who sent her the letter, who also gave her significant financial support. However, she had not wanted to risk giving birth to an HIV positive child (although clinics by then provided drugs that reduced the chance of mother-to-child transmission, it could not be eliminated). In an attempt to abort the baby, she had drunk a large amount of *Jik* (bleach), which had caused her death. Themba's story represented a tragic case of someone who came to the area and formed social and sexual connections from a position of weakness. She also fell ill before the government had fully implemented its program to provide antiretroviral drugs to HIV positive people.

During 2004, Bonggi collected three more letters, this time from Mr. Mathe, thirty-six, a neighbor and friend of hers who had a quite high-paying factory job. (In rural areas, where gender and generational boundaries are more policed, it would be less common for a man and woman of similar ages to discuss love affairs.) Mr. Mathe sent the first letter to a woman in her thirties whom Bonggi knew. The second was intended for another woman, and the third was received by Mr. Mathe from a third woman. Taken together, these three letters (all sent within a short period) indicate that multiple forms of relationships can exist, all with different requirements, expectations, and emotional characteristics.

In the first letter, Mr. Mathe proposed love to a woman living in the jondolo settlement: "Please be specific from now on, please accept me and you know that I love you, your heart knows that I worship you, my lady." He wrote the second to end a relationship with a woman in very direct terms, saying that she was *isifebe*, a slut. "I am tired of you, can we please break up because you are a slut that gets around using her vagina on the floor. Indians, Coloureds and Blacks it's you being a slut, you slut. There is already a girl that I am involved with so stay away with your slutness. I don't need an answer." He showed this letter to Bonggi, and she persuaded him not to send it. The third was from a woman with whom he had a child, informing him that she wanted to end the relationship because she was marrying another man.

I write this letter and I have tried many times to reach you but didn't succeed, I tried calling you on the phone and there was no response. The bad news as you know that I go to the Nazareth church and I have told you before that I want to get married. I have found someone to marry me, in other words I don't want you anymore. No one is allowed to do anything to me, the other family is coming the next Monday [to begin marriage proceedings].

The reference to the Nazareth (or Shembe) Church is significant because the church allows polygamous marriages.

Love and Money

In Mandeni the famous Beatles lyric "Money can't buy me love" is far from true. In fact, it is a global falsehood, because marriage and dating are always mediated by class, status, and many other factors. One day in 2003, I had a conversation with three young women, Dumazile, Qondeni, and Hlengiwe, who were in their early twenties and lived in Sundumbili township. This discussion, held at my research assistant's house, captures the way that gifts can

sometimes foster feelings of love, but at other times signify lovelessness. At one point, Dumazile appears to approach men through a crude instrumentalism, categorizing them by what they give her, and showing the power of money in determining love.

MH: Do women sometimes have more than one boyfriend so that they can get lots of things?

Dumazile: There are some that say this one will buy me clothes, this one will buy me cosmetics, and this one will give me money.

MH: But it never works like that though, does it? They say that, but really men give them money, don't they?

Dumazile: Yes, this one gives her money and she will go and buy the things by herself. Some women do these things because they have no money. She loves the one who is already her boyfriend, but the problem is that he does not do anything for her. Then another man will shela her and she discovers that this one has money, so she will love him too.

What does Dumazile mean by saying that when a man has money, a woman will love him? Despite the importance of gifts to relationships, I believe that she uses the verb “ukuthanda” to indicate an emotional bond. The nature of intimate connections varies from relationship to relationship, but sex is not simply exchanged instrumentally: the two lovers are “boyfriend” and “girlfriend,” not “prostitute” and “client.”

To understand the coming together of money, sex, and emotion today requires returning to the concept of provider love I outlined earlier. Historically, provider love developed because a man paid ilobolo for and then married and supported a woman. But marriage is rare today, and great mistrust ensnares many relationships. Consequently, a diminished form of provider love can be seen in gifts from a man to a woman, such as cosmetics or money. To put these recent changes in a different way, men have moved from being “providers within marriage” to less reliable and less esteemed “providers outside of marriage.”

Certainly, ilobolo and marriage still cast long symbolic shadows over relationships. If sex were simply commodified, women and men would have equally uncommitted relations with different partners. But in fact, people in multiple concurrent relationships typically differentiate between a main lover and secondary lovers. This ranking structures these sexual networks

both emotionally and materially. A woman's main lover, described by various terms—*istraight* or *iqonda* (straight), “number one,” or *umkhwenyana* (fiancé, if he has begun to pay *ilobolo*)—is the one with whom the relationship is most serious and might one day lead to marriage. In the rare cases when *ilobolo* payments have been initiated, the status of a woman's main lover is raised substantially. Such payments are the most decisive symbol of commitment and, most residents would say, obligate a woman to be faithful to that man.

Secondary lovers—that is, lovers who are not “*istraight*”—can, at times, be casual partners with whom relationships are brief. Yet although surveys of sexual behavior commonly distinguish between “main lovers” and “casual lovers”—the latter term resonating with a number of English concepts such as “fling” and “one-night stand”—secondary lovers are rarely the same thing as casual lovers; relationships with them can persist for some time. To understand why, we must conceptualize relationships as reciprocal—as “gift relations,” in anthropological language. A relationship's secondary status is typically determined not by how long it is expected to last, but by the lesser obligations and expectations it creates and by its more secret nature; for instance, a secondary lover can be called an *ishende* (secret lover) or *umakhwapheni* (under the armpit). The primary determinant of a relationship's status is not its duration, but the nature of its bond.

Such differentiation, as we have seen, was apparent earlier in the century, too, when rural-based women distinguished between their *ibhodwe* (pot, or main lover) and *isidikiselo* (top of a pot, or secondary lover). These secondary relationships were often entered into during a husband's absence. Yet they were not casual, but could persist for many years. Indeed the word “*isidikiselo*” is still in circulation and typically provokes laughter as well as disputes over its meaning. If women can use it to justify having multiple partners, men are more likely to argue that doing so was exceptional in the past, and not due to desire for consumer goods.

Today, a good example of a secondary lover is a sugar daddy, and most young people would agree that there is little expectation that such relationships will lead to marriage. Sugar daddy relationships, then, are secondary because they are not likely to lead to marriage—and yet they are not simply “casual” in a temporal sense, because they can last for months and even years. Notably, sugar daddies today appear to be positioned quite differently from the *umathandezincane* (man who likes young women) of an earlier period, who might have married his younger girlfriend.

As we have seen, the structural distrust between many young people today, rooted in the painful dismantling of a patriarchal bargain, provides some

justification for young women's having a sugar daddy. Similarly, men's "failures" allow women to link different men to specific expenses (e.g., "one each for money, food, and rent" or "ministers of finance, transport, and entertainment"). The lack of a husband's support allows a woman to characterize her day-to-day dependence on men in ironic terms. Yet rather than being directly told that they are a provider of food or money, men are more likely to be made aware that they are a primary or secondary boyfriend, as Dumazile noted earlier. A linear ranking of boyfriends or an itemization of what each provides is less important than whether each is the main, generally public, lover or one of the secondary ones, more likely to be secret. Qondeni elaborates:

MH: But do the boys know what the girls say about them, namely, this one is for food, this one is for clothes; do the boys know that?

Qondeni: When he comes to me he will ask if I am involved. Then I will either tell him that I am single, or that there is someone I am involved with and that he will be the second one. Then to the third one I won't say that he is the third; I will say that he is number two.

As these examples make abundantly clear, monetary or other gifts often ensure a man's status as a lover. Yet material expressions of love are not always the most important. For a start, a man's financial situation can change; a young, poor boyfriend can find work and then repay his girlfriend's loyalty during tough times. Moreover, romantic love's claim that "love conquers all" creates its own emotional inertia. Hlengiwe expressed the romantic view when I asked her what would happen if a number-one boyfriend lost his job: "If you really love the number-one boyfriend truly, there is nothing that can change, because you love the others for their money only."

If women typically have a single main lover but sometimes other lovers, how do men approach multiple-partnered relationships? Young men I knew also discussed the intense love they felt for some women, especially their main lover. Like women, men may use the words "istraight" and "iqonda." But dominant masculinities exert less pressure on men to remain sexually faithful and therefore to have a single public lover. While a man gains status by lobola-ing a main lover, he—unlike most women—can also raise his status by having multiple sexual partners. Hence, men are more likely than women to brag about the number of partners that they have. As Simone de Beauvoir pointed out many years ago, "The word *love* has by no means the same sense for both sexes."⁹

Negotiating Love

In 2002 love came to South Africa with a bang in the form of the T.V. show *All You Need Is Love*, which depicted the delivery of messages of love and recorded the recipients' responses. "Lost love, long distance love, unrequited love, looking for love, fragile love, forgotten love, star crossed lovers . . . you name it, *All You Need Is Love* will find it and try to fix it," proclaimed its website.¹⁰ The show quickly attracted two million viewers, and soon after its launch friends of mine in Mandeni began to enthusiastically dissect its every episode. The question on everyone's mind was whether love can prevail. Would a touching message of love surmount the problems faced by the couple featured on the show? At times the answer was no, and the camera awkwardly dissected the reaction of a rejected suitor. But more often than not the audience was able to cheer—and the loudest applause was reserved for a public proposal of marriage.

Resting on the seeming universality of love, the popular T.V. show celebrated not only heterosexual sex but same-sex love (although only between men, in the episodes that I saw). Its success captures a certain optimism about love that emerged in the jet stream of democracy; indeed, the "better life for all" promised by the ANC in 1994 extended to all spheres, from the economic to the interpersonal. Especially in the early years of democracy, love became something of a metaphor for uneven new freedoms: just like the rapid social mobility enjoyed by a few South Africans, love is unpredictable but potentially life-changing. Yet, in turn, the program's cancelation several years later perhaps reveals the fickleness of love and, by association, social mobility after apartheid.

The high regard for love, evident in programs like *All You Need Is Love*, means that one way Mandeni's residents mark inappropriate behavior is by presenting it as loveless, or as corrupted by the wrong kind of love. Both men and women declare adamantly at times that "love no longer exists" (*alusekho uthando*). The claim echoes longstanding contestations of love in the country. Accounts going back to the 1930s reveal a sense that a new and passionate force of love was appearing that could, for instance, lead to premarital pregnancy.¹¹ A truer love, from this perspective, rested on a man lobola-ing and then supporting a woman. In similar ways today—although in the new context of unemployment and the scarcity of marriage—women can complain that men are only interested in love that results in immediate sex. And men can equally often claim that women will only love boyfriends with money.

A good example of today's nostalgia for a purer, more moral love is the popularity of Mafikizolo's 2003 hit "Emlanjeni" (At the River). The song depicts a woman waiting for her absent boyfriend, who, we might presume, works as a migrant laborer and is saving money for ilobolo. The lyrics begin, "*Yandlula iminyaka ngingakuboni, yandlula iminyaka ngingakuboni, isoka lam*" (Years have passed and I haven't seen you, my boyfriend).¹²

Mafikizolo's tune, a rewriting of an older song, evokes nostalgia for "meeting at the river," where rural men and women used to court, and suggests the integrity of past relationships, when a man would patiently save to pay ilobolo and marry his girlfriend and a woman would not trade sex for gifts. In the slow swaying of people dancing to this song, which I have witnessed at many shebeens and other venues, this melodic and emotional tune reifies a past genuine love: both provider love and romantic love. Yet what is important to listeners is not so much the specificity of past forms of love as the song's regret at the absence of love today—and its hint that love may nonetheless suddenly appear.

In such an uncertain world, how do you know that you are in love? The verb "ukuthanda" (to like or to love) is widely and ambiguously used in everyday conversations. Bodily sensations are difficult to read, and relationships unfold in unpredictable ways. Love can come from the heart, but can also be promoted by money. So too can love potions stimulate love, as they did in the past. A Sundumbili woman in her twenties whom I knew well swore that her father had been bewitched by his lover, who, she said, was milking him for money. How else could he not see what a manipulative woman she was? Just as biomedical and spiritual explanations of health coexist, so too can romantic love jostle and yet overlap with accounts of love as stemming from umuthi (traditional medicine).

The most genuine expression of a man's love for a woman, I have argued, is his payment of ilobolo. But this payment is rare today. Ilobolo is very costly, and women's families typically require a large initial payment. As noted earlier, residents do debate the high cost of ilobolo, and families sometimes accept smaller amounts. I have also come across churches sanctioning reduced payments. But reducing ilobolo inevitably invites suspicion that the man is not really in love with the woman. On one occasion I heard residents gossip, somewhat maliciously, that a female teacher had given her unemployed lover the money with which to pay ilobolo for her.

Feelings of love can nevertheless be manifested in everyday acts of reciprocity, affection, and desire, which help to cement intimate relationships. My

female research assistant collected text messages from friends in reasonably long-term relationships, and these messages capture how love is expressed in sometimes mundane, sometimes sensual acts of intimacy and support. They also bear traces of negotiation, as couples chart out a path that is simultaneously material and emotional.

Sthandwa sami anginayo imali yokugibela this week *emsebenzini* pls help I love you (my lover I don't have money for transport to get to work this week pls help I love you) [woman, 24, to man, 24, 11-month relationship].

I'm all alone in bed hoping you will join me, naked I'm dying to have sex with u. Reply pls. [woman, 26, to man, 27, 1½-year relationship]

Sthandwa ngilambile ngicela uzopheka ukhiye kwanextdoor see you after work I love u. (my love I am hungry please can you cook the key is next door see you after work I love u.) [man, 30, to woman, 26, 2-year relationship]

Baby *ngithi angikwazise ukuthi ngiyakuthanda, ngicela uziphathe kahle*. (Baby I want you to know that I love you, please behave yourself.) [woman, 23, to man, 24, 6-month relationship]

Love and Care

The final message above suggests a fundamental tension within relationships: "I want you to know that I love you," the woman says, suggesting unconditional caring, and then she ends with "behave yourself," which implies his potential for wrongdoing, especially sexual. How much does love, here and in other relationships, involve caretaking? An enormous amount of caretaking takes place in the midst of an AIDS pandemic, often in private and through kinship networks. South Africa, in short, is a very caring society. But boyfriend-girlfriend relationships are often not characterized by care "no matter what." This is graphically shown in the case of a man who fell ill and died of AIDS in Sundumbili township.

I had known Dave, a mechanic, in passing for five years. My friends always gossiped about his *isoka* activities; he owned a car and was rumored to have a host of girlfriends. But in 2006, when I entered his house to visit his father, I saw him lying in pain on a makeshift bed on the lounge floor. His two sisters, who lived there as well, chatted to me and did not even mention the person dying in their midst. Dave yelled for me to help him, but one sister ushered

me away. They were irritated because he had not provided any support for the family when he was earning money, preferring to travel around as a philandering *isoka*; now they were expected to look after him.

Once surrounded by female admirers, Dave was now dying in a state of ignominy, his shame worsened by his constant dirtying of his clothes through diarrhea. “Where are all his girlfriends now?” one sister asked. “Not one has called. It is us, the family, who are left to take care of him.” It was as if his choice to concentrate on sexual escapades rather than long-term relationships had become realized in his humiliating illness.

One day his constant screams for help led him to be admitted to the hospital, but Dave was too much for the nurses and was quickly discharged. He refused to take ARVs despite their availability. I have no idea how he experienced his illness, but it is not uncommon for understandings of the cause of AIDS to jostle between the biomedical (a virus) and the social (witchcraft), and in the latter case the disease is typically seen as deliberately caused by malice, often jealousy.¹³ His frequently soiled body, looked after by unenthusiastic relatives, did not give him grounds to believe that relationships of any kind could be easily mended; he was too ill, physically and socially. In agony, he was taken again to the hospital and eventually died a painful death.

Dave’s experience reveals that none of his relationships with his girlfriends created an obligation of care on their part. Once he became ill they abandoned him; his family had to provide care. (It is possible, of course, that some of Dave’s former girlfriends were also ill or had died.) But his kin were not enthusiastic about doing so, because he had never helped them, though they didn’t deny their obligation. Thus, while gifts and sex are very much an accepted part of non-marital relationships, care tends to be organized in the first instance by kin, and also by friends, perhaps constituted in groups such as churches.¹⁴ This has important implications, as we see below.

To Condom or Not to Condom

Condoms are extensively advocated in global AIDS campaigns and are given away free by Sundumbili’s clinic and other institutions in Mandeni. The “ABC” campaigns preach three ways of preventing AIDS: abstain from sex, be faithful, or use a condom—the latter especially with casual lovers. Condoms were increasingly used by young people in the 2000s, and there are many reasons for this, as well as for their non-use. Indeed, diverse meanings attach themselves to condoms, including whether their “fat” (lubricant) itself infects

people with HIV. Here, I only explore connections between love, money, and condom use.

One common reason given for the non-use of condoms in South Africa—as elsewhere—is that dominant masculinities promote risk-taking and pleasure at all costs. This is readily displayed in the phrases men use to celebrate “flesh-to-flesh sex,” such as “you can’t eat a sweetie with its wrapper on.” Foregrounding the power relations that underpin these comments, gender activists have fought a long and important battle to make female condoms more available.

Yet men’s opposition to the use of male condoms, while certainly important, does not fully explain why women themselves sometimes advocate not using them. Most men I spoke with were adamant that women as well as men opposed condom use at times. Moreover, while gendered poverty certainly affects a woman’s ability to “negotiate” condom use, women often explained that they did not use condoms because they were “in love.”

Since fertility is still highly valued, one reason why some women may be reluctant to use condoms is that they prefer to chance “falling pregnant or falling positive.”¹⁵ Parenting a child creates material and emotional links between the parents, and when marriage rates are so low, these permanent links can signify love. But this cannot entirely explain why condoms are not more widely used. As we have seen, from the 1970s contraceptive use accelerated in South Africa, although the most common form, until very recently, was Depo-Provera injections. Clearly, then, condoms have not been the most typical means by which women avoided childbirth. So we return to the question, why are many young women and men not using condoms?

To go further in addressing this question, we must conceive of relationships as characterized not by a narrow commodification of sex but by reciprocal bonds based on exchanges and affection. That poverty and “unprotected sex” play out through the medium of love was made clear to me one day by Thandi, twenty-one. An attractive lady with a gap in her front teeth from a fight with a former boyfriend, Thandi related at my research assistant’s house the harsh social conditions that she, like many young South African women, face—she had recently lost a parent and had a child to support. Yet unlike other young women, who depended on local boyfriends, Thandi maintained that she preferred to “sell her body” (*dayisa umzimba*) as a prostitute or sex worker in Durban. Boyfriends, she said, wouldn’t wear condoms, but she could insist that clients oblige. For much of our discussion, she appeared quite positive about selling sex in Durban; however, at one moment tears came to her eyes,

betraying her vulnerability, especially when her earnings from sex were low. Thandi said that payments were not fixed, but ranged between R30 and R100 (US\$3.75–12.5) for sexual intercourse.

This somewhat counterintuitive fact—that the most instrumental sex-money exchanges are most likely to lead to condom use—has been noted elsewhere.¹⁶ For “boyfriends” and “girlfriends,” in contrast, condomless sex can signal and be felt as love. It can differentiate main from secondary lovers, open up a relationship to the prospect of permanence, provide greater intimacy and pleasure, and increase the man’s obligation to support his girlfriend. Sex without condoms is not, therefore, a simple expression of “male power” in the sense that men don’t want to use condoms and women do, but is motivated more subtly, through embodied sets of obligations and flows of material resources. This has important implications. Condom campaigns typically target “casual” relationships, and by this they mean short-term, “loveless” encounters. The reality, however, is that partners are usually distinguished by the obligations that each relationship creates, rather than by its duration. If varied but definite feelings of love permeate most relationships and yet condoms are constructed as signaling casualness (and thus a lack of love), is it any surprise that lovers don’t use them?

. . . and Then There Is Care

Still, these explanations leave unanswered questions concerning risk and care—ones with resonances in many geographies. Why does a lover, especially a “main” lover, take the risk of infecting his or her partner, and perhaps a child, with HIV?

We can turn for possible answers to some recent accounts of what love is or is said to be becoming. For British sociologist Anthony Giddens, modern relationships are becoming characterized by a kind of “rolling contract,” according to which individuals can enter and leave them more freely.¹⁷ This he sees as driving a more egalitarian form of “confluent love”: less hindered by the male-dominated institutions of marriage and the constant threat of pregnancy, relationships can yield always-contingent pleasures.

Giddens’s model rests on a particular vision of an autonomous body able to defend itself from undesirable expectations and obligations. And his modern subjects bear many similarities to the rights-bearing individuals that AIDS campaigns sometimes try and promote in a bid to empower women in poorer countries. Here, too, women’s right to choose can be championed through advocating a kind of “confluent love.” Yet Giddens’s vision of inti-

mate equality in the West rests, crucially, on women's growing access to work and contraception. In contrast, many relationships in South Africa embody stark inequalities in power and resources, although there are exceptions (perhaps best symbolized by the "It girls").

Let's look at this point again in a slightly different way. Some AIDS interventions champion, in Giddens's term, a kind of "pure relationship"—in which relationships can be ended at will—as capable of fighting the disease. The reality, however, is that in settings of great poverty, love can rarely be severed from a world of dependences: when money and sex are closely connected, love is often more embedded within relationships, not less.

A second—and in my view more useful—approach to love rebels against the shallow and consumer-driven notions of romantic love that particularly emanate from Western capitalism. Feminist writer Mary Evans argues that "the proposal is not that we abandon love in the sense of care and commitment, but we abandon it in its romanticized and commercialized form."¹⁸ For Evans, "care" is not intrinsic to most modern ideas of love and yet should be its guiding tenet. As we noted, in South Africa most non-marital intimate relations today are not premised on care, although they are always emotional and often involve a sense of care. Intimate relations between men and women are structured by great conflict: key to this is the sense of betrayal caused by the unmooring of gendered assumptions based on the "patriarchal bargain" of men working and supporting women.

With these points in mind, we can extend the already stated critique of much AIDS policy. When campaigns do talk about love, they tend to present it as a way to promote individualistic notions of choice. The youth AIDS NGO loveLife, which I discuss in the next chapter, uses romantic love to celebrate individuals' ability to move in and out of relationships at will and to choose a partner regardless of race, religion, and sex. The very fact that loveLife discusses love sets it apart from many AIDS campaigns. But the love it presents is more viable for the sassy middle-class people who frequently appear in its advertisements.

In contrast, many young people in places like Mandeni enter relationships structured by reciprocity and yet great inequality. The fact that they often involve gifts does not mean that they are not also loving: these relationships entangle love with gifts and sometimes, as we have seen, with violence. It is tempting to see highly material relationships as simply loveless; I did at first. But we must take more seriously the way people often understand their lives as simultaneously material and emotional despite, or perhaps precisely because of, the existence of profound inequalities.

Furthermore, the idea of love as care—protecting others as well as oneself—is rarely promoted by AIDS campaigns or popular culture. The latter is particularly influenced by images of romantic love on T.V. and in magazines. With so many people falling ill in society, an enormous amount of care is carried out; but this is typically organized within kin relationships rather than boyfriend-girlfriend ones.

Bringing love into tension with its apparent opposite—material exchanges linked to sex—reveals how love structures relationships, is a site of struggle, and therefore must be taken more seriously. Material and emotional practices are always intertwined; sex and love are always material—worldwide, at all times. What is unique to South Africa today is the shockingly high levels of inequality and unemployment; this results in everyday intimate relations being highly material, very much a part of “making a living,” or social reproduction. By presenting “main” relationships as safe, loving, and long-term, AIDS campaigns frequently ignore the fact that relationships, including those where people have more than one sexual partner, are typically marked by very fluid obligations, some material and some emotional. It is within ever-shifting relationships partly based on love, and especially in those between “main” lovers, that condoms are often least likely to be used.

To the extent that care is promoted in South Africa, the state has typically reiterated its association with kin, for instance by promoting “home-based care” as a way to reduce government spending. This is a problematic approach when the country has widening gaps between the rich and the poor; at worst, it essentially amounts to telling the poor to look after themselves.¹⁹ Yet other models of care draw deeply on South African history. Bishop Desmond Tutu, anti-apartheid activist and former chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, is a passionate advocate of connecting care to love—and attaches both of them firmly to questions of social justice and social struggle. Tutu has been a consistent spokesman on a range of moral issues, from the existence of poverty amid riches to homophobia. He draws on the tremendous moral authority of the anti-apartheid struggle, focusing conceptions of “freedom” less on consumption and more on equity, care, love, and justice. In Tutu’s words, “Evil, injustice, oppression, all of those awful things, they are not going to have the last word. Goodness, laughter, joy, caring, compassion, the things that you do and you help others do, those are going to prevail.”²⁰

South Africa’s unique history of social struggle is embodied in figures like Tutu, and provides important, often forgotten, lessons. Images of love tend to flow from Hollywood to Soweto, from New York to Durban, getting reworked

along the way, but nevertheless portraying love as firmly embedded in individualism and consumption. But Tutu argues that care and love must be attached to a more equitable political economy. Moreover, the notion of personhood to which he subscribes draws from *ubuntu*, an ethical philosophy holding that individuals are not autonomous beings but are formed through relationships with others. Of course, ideas of personhood in the West and Africa are never static, and the search for an authentic African (or Euro-American) personhood is fraught with difficulties.²¹ But Tutu's South African use of love decenters love's attachment to individualism and choice. And perhaps his notion of a love that combines political economy, care, and social justice could be exported from South Africa and help to recast key concepts of intimacy circulating in the AIDS world.

NOTES

1. Gender and AIDS in an Unequal World

1. Robinson, Tabane, and Haffajee, "23 Days That Shook Our World."

2. On the trial and Zuma's resonances with dominant masculinities, see Ratele, "Ruling Masculinity and Sexuality"; for a critique of traditional/modern binaries often used to understand the trial, see Robins, "Sexual Politics and the Zuma Rape Trial." Jacob Zuma was South Africa's deputy president from 1999 to 2005 and president from 2009; he was sacked in 2005 by then-president Thabo Mbeki after Zuma's financial advisor Schabir Shaik was convicted of fraud and corruption. Formal charges of corruption against Zuma have so far failed in the courts. Zuma's supporters claimed that the rape and corruption charges were an attempt by Mbeki's allies to prevent Zuma from winning the ANC presidential elections at the national conference in 2007.

3. Robinson, Tabane and Haffajee, "23 Days That Shook Our World."

4. Controversy, however, surrounds statistics on both rape and HIV prevalence.

According to police figures, there were 55,000 cases of rape reported between April 2005 and April 2006. For these figures and a helpful discussion see Vetten, "Violence against Women in South Africa." On HIV infections, until July 2007 India was estimated to have the highest number of HIV positive people of any country in the world; in that month officials revised India's estimate from 5.7 million to 2.5 million. This left South Africa as the country with the estimated highest number of HIV positive people, around 5.5 million in 2006. See Cohen, "HIV/AIDS: India Slashes Estimate of HIV-Infected People."

5. Even before Zuma's resounding victory in the 2009 election, other evidence suggested that he enjoyed considerable appeal among South African women. For instance, the "Friends of Zuma" website set up to support Zuma became filled with literally thousands of positive comments, many of them from African women (<http://www.friendsofz.co.za>, accessed January 10, 2007). Demonstrating Zuma's support in urban as well as rural areas, roughly as many women as men indicated their approval of the leader in a 2007 survey conducted in Soweto township. The survey was reported in Terreblanche, "Poor Love Zuma, Study Finds."

6. For instance, *Isolezwe*, "Ngangingenankinga Ngelobolo: JZ" (I Didn't Have Any Problem with Ilobolo: JZ).

7. The song is performed by Kwaito star Arthur and banned by the national broadcaster.

8. Annual HIV prevalence figures are calculated from anonymous tests on pregnant women's blood taken during their antenatal visits. In 2008 such tests found an average countrywide HIV prevalence of 29%. More detailed trends are calculated from wider surveys of the country's population, the largest of which in South Africa is a household study conducted three times thus far by the Human Science Research Council. In 2002 this found that 12.8% of South African women and 9.5% of men over age two were HIV positive; the 2005 study found that 13.3% of women over two were infected and 8.2% of men; the 2008 study found a rate of 10.9% for the population over two (initial data was not disaggregated by sex). Unlike antenatal surveys, these household studies include men, the elderly, and the young. See Republic of South Africa, Department of

Health, *2008 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV and Syphilis Prevalence Survey, South Africa*; HSRC, *Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study of HIV/AIDS: South African National HIV Prevalence, Behavioural Risks and Mass Media, Household Survey 2002*; HSRC, *South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behavior and Communication Survey 2005*; HSRC, *South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey 2008: A Turning Tide among Teenagers?* For an insightful review of AIDS data in South Africa see Marais, *Buckling: The Impact of AIDS in South Africa*, 25–43.

9. The term “structural violence” was coined by Johan Galtung in the 1960s. See Farmer et al., “An Anthropology of Structural Violence”; Farmer, *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*; Schoepf, Schoepf, and Millen. “Theoretical Therapies, Remote Remedies: SAPs and the Political Ecology of Poverty and Health in Africa.”

10. Comment in Farmer et al., “An Anthropology of Structural Violence,” 318.

11. As geographer David Harvey argued, the body must be considered as a “relational ‘thing’” that requires for its understanding a framework combining social and spatial relations and the production of the self as historically and geographically contingent. Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*, 97–116. More generally, feminist writers have pioneered studies of the body within geography. For a summary of some of this literature see McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*.

12. When discussing approaches to or the history of HIV/AIDS I use the term “AIDS”—for instance, AIDS’ social roots, AIDS policy makers, or AIDS campaigns. AIDS is the acronym for acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Antiretroviral medication means that HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus) no longer automatically leads to AIDS, and I use “HIV” to speak of the virus, for instance, HIV prevalence.

13. Republic of South Africa, Department of Health, *2008 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV and Syphilis Prevalence Survey, South Africa*, 6.

14. HSRC, *Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study of AIDS 2002*; HSRC, *South African National HIV Survey 2005*; Pettifor, Rees, Steffenson, et al., *HIV and Sexual Behaviour among Young South Africans: A National Survey of 15–24-Year-Olds*. The 2002 HSRC study found a prevalence of 21.3% in urban informal areas as compared to 12.1% in urban formal areas, 8.7% in tribal areas, and 7.9% on farms (over age two). The 2005 HSRC study found a prevalence of 17.6% in urban informal areas, 11.6% in rural informal areas, 9.9% in rural formal areas, and 9.1% in urban formal areas (over age two). The 2008 HSRC study found a prevalence of 20.6% in urban informal areas, 11.1% in rural informal areas, 11.1% in rural formal areas, and 9% in urban formal areas (over age two). I am grateful to Professor Thomas Rehle for providing me with the unpublished 2008 figures. Pettifor, Rees, Steffenson, et al. found a prevalence of 17.4% in urban informal areas, 13.5% in rural formal areas, 9.8% in urban formal areas, and 8.7% in rural informal areas in a 2004 study undertaken for the Reproductive Health Research Unit. It should be noted that spatial data is fraught with difficulties. For instance, informal shacks are often located next to, and sometimes within, formal urban areas. The HSRC and RHRU studies use spatial classifications developed by Statistics South Africa for the census.

15. Katz, “Vagabond Capitalism and the Necessity of Social Reproduction,” 711.

16. Only 6.6 million people today are in “core” work, around 3.1 million are in out-sourced work, 2.2 million are in informal work, and 8.4 million are unemployed. See Von Holdt and Webster, “Work Restructuring and the Crisis of Reproduction,” 28. I use different sources on the labor force at times within this book; although estimates vary slightly, all are in agreement about the high level of unemployment.

17. I follow Von Holdt and Webster in distinguishing between “earning a living” (having regular paid employment) and “making a living” (creating one’s own income-

generating or subsistence activities). Von Holdt and Webster, “Work Restructuring and the Crisis of Reproduction,” 4.

18. The phrase “the comforts of home” is taken from Luise White’s landmark work on “prostitution” and social reproduction in colonial Nairobi, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi*. For a review of the large literature on the marital home and social reproduction, see Laslett and Brenner, “Gender and Social Reproduction: Historical Perspectives.” On sex work more generally see, for instance, Kempadoo and Doezema, *Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance, and Redefinition*. Standing provides an excellent anthropological review of how narrow notions of “prostitution” can be inappropriately applied to Africa. Standing, “AIDS: Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Researching Sexual Behaviour in Sub-Saharan Africa.” Other references on “prostitution” are given in chapter 3.

19. Bakker and Silvey, *Beyond States and Markets: The Challenges of Social Reproduction*; Bezanson, *Gender, the State, and Social Reproduction: Household Insecurity in Neo-liberal Times*; Bezuidenhout and Fakier, “Maria’s Burden: Contract Cleaning and the Crisis of Social Reproduction in Post-apartheid South Africa”; Katz, “Vagabond Capitalism”; Mitchell, Marston, and Katz, “Introduction: Life’s Work: An Introduction, Review and Critique.”

20. Republic of South Africa, Department of Labour, *Women in the South African Labour Market, 1995–2005*, 18.

21. Kandiyoti, “Bargaining with Patriarchy.”

22. See, for instance, Nattrass, “Poverty, Sex, and HIV.”

23. The literature on “transactional sex” in South Africa includes Dunkle et al., “Transactional Sex among Women in Soweto, South Africa: Prevalence, Risk Factors and Association with HIV Infection”; Hunter, “The Materiality of Everyday Sex: Thinking beyond Prostitution”; Kaufman and Stavrou, “‘Bus Fare Please’: The Economics of Sex and Gifts among Young People in Urban South Africa”; LeClerc-Madlala, “Transactional Sex and the Pursuit of Modernity”; Selikow, Zulu, and Cedras, “The Ingagara, the Regte and the Cherry: HIV/AIDS and Youth Culture in Contemporary Urban Townships”; Zembe et al. “Transactional Sex amongst Young Women at High Risk of HIV in the Western Cape.” On transactional sex in Madagascar see Cole, “Fresh Contact in Tamatave, Madagascar: Sex, Money, and Intergenerational Transformation”; for Mali, see Castle and Konate, “The Context and Consequences of Economic Transactions Associated with Sexual Relations among Malian Adolescents”; for Malawi, see Swidler and Watkins, “Ties of Dependence: AIDS and Transactional Sex in Rural Malawi.” Since sex-money exchanges are saturated with questions of morality, in-depth qualitative research has been much better than quantitative research in picking up the extent of exchanges that link money and sex—although see Zembe et al., “Transactional Sex,” a study of more than 250 young women in Cape Town, which found that 76% of respondents (chosen for having multiple partners) said that they would not engage in a sexual relationship with a man if they knew they would not get any money or material goods.

24. UNAIDS, *AIDS Epidemic Update, December 2009*, 6, 21, 22.

25. On young women’s susceptibility to HIV see Pettifor, Hudgens, et al., “Highly Efficient HIV Transmission to Young Women in South Africa.”

26. See particularly Susser, *AIDS, Sex, and Culture: Global Politics and Survival in Southern Africa*, chapter 2.

27. Brown, “Suffering Rights as Paradoxes.” For further critical discussions of rights see Cornwall and Molyneux, *The Politics of Rights: Dilemmas for Feminist Praxis*; Mamdani, *Beyond Rights Talk and Culture Talk: Comparative Essays on the Politics of Rights and Culture*; Petchesky, *Global Prescriptions: Gendering Health and Human Rights*.

28. Hassim, *Women's Organizations and Democracy in South Africa: Contesting Authority*.

29. Manicom, "Constituting 'Women' as Citizens: Ambiguities in the Making of Gendered Political Subjects in Post-apartheid South Africa," 32, 34 (emphasis in original).

30. Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, "Criminal Justice, Cultural Justice: The Limits of Liberalism and the Pragmatics of Difference in the New South Africa," 189.

31. Doke et al., *English-Zulu, Zulu-English Dictionary*, s.v. *ukulunga*. (See my comment in the glossary on dictionary citations.)

32. On the colonial government's upholding of certain rights within "traditional" institutions see John Comaroff, "The Discourse of Rights in Colonial South Africa: Subjectivity, Sovereignty, Modernity."

33. Burawoy and Verdery, introduction to *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist World*, 2. Ethnography, however, has been a relatively neglected methodology among scholars drawing on Foucault's concept of "governmentality" to emphasize the discourses through which subjects are governed in liberal societies. To date, writings on "governmentality" have perhaps been most influentially elaborated in the work of Nikolas Rose; see for instance Miller and Rose, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social, and Personal Life*. For a detailed study of rights in Malawi that does utilize ethnography see Englund, *Prisoners of Freedom: Human Rights and the African Poor*. For a fascinating ethnography of "development" in Indonesia that brings together Gramsci and Foucault see Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. For an ethnographic account that focuses on rights' contestability in Bolivia see Postero, *Now We Are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Postmulticultural Bolivia*.

34. See particularly Petchesky, *Global Prescriptions*; Cornwall and Molyneux, *The Politics of Rights*.

35. On constructions and representations of "African AIDS," see Treichler, "AIDS, Africa, and Cultural Theory."

36. Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse." Influential criticisms of the relevance of Western feminism to Africa include Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*; Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. For an example of collaborative research in India that yielded a fascinating critique of "gender and development," see Sangtin Writers and Richa Nagar, *Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought and Activism through Seven Lives in India*.

37. Mama, "Demythologising Gender in Development: Feminist Studies in African Contexts," 121.

38. Brown, "Suffering Rights as Paradoxes," 239.

39. UNAIDS, *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*, 67–76.

40. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, 4.

41. For instance, Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*; Connell, *Masculinities*; Connell, *The Men and the Boys*; Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." As writers on "female masculinity" have shown, these masculinities are not simply fixed to male bodies. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*.

42. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, chapter 23.

43. On the need to better integrate studies of masculinities and femininities see Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity."

44. David Valentine puts this well: "Age, race, class, and so on don't merely inflect or intersect with those experiences we call gender and sexuality but rather *shift the very*

boundaries of what ‘gender’ and ‘sexuality’ can mean in particular contexts.” Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*, 100 (emphasis in original).

45. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, 154.

46. The best historical work on sexuality is, of course, premised on decentering “sex” and showing its entanglement in changing discourses and subjectivities. Although the introductory volume of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* is the most widely quoted book in this series, his two subsequent volumes (*The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*) give more attention to the themes of this book, including marriage, love, and masculinities. Other landmark work on sexuality, for instance by sociologist Jeffrey Weeks, is premised on exploring diverse constructions of sex; Weeks also usefully outlines how Foucault himself built on existing studies of the social construction of sexuality. See Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800*. Despite this (and more) rich work on sexuality, I still feel that the term “intimacy” can best capture questions around fertility, love, masculinities, and femininities, at least for the topic I study. For an excellent and relevant account of how notions of “sex” and linear narratives of “development” come together in problematic ways see Adams and Pigg, *Sex in Development: Science, Sexuality, and Morality in Global Perspective*. Neville Hoad’s *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization* sets out particularly well the arguments in favor of using “intimacy.”

47. See particularly Hyslop, “White Working Class Women and the Invention of Apartheid: ‘Purified’ Afrikaner Nationalist Agitation for Legislation against ‘Mixed’ Marriages, 1934–9.”

48. On AIDS and “heterosexual Africa,” see especially Epprecht, *Heterosexual Africa: The History of an Idea from the Age of Exploration to the Age of AIDS*.

49. Much has been written on the household in African studies, but see particularly Guyer, “Household and Community in African Studies”; Guyer and Peters, “Conceptualizing the Household: Issues of Theory and Policy in Africa.”

50. On Africans as “promiscuous” see McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest*. On the construction of “Africa” see Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*; Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*; Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*.

51. The 2008 HSRC household study found infection rates of 14% for Africans, 1.7% for coloureds, 0.3% for Indians, and 0.3% for whites. HSRC, *South African National HIV Survey 2008*, 79.

52. Republic of South Africa, Statistics South Africa, *Census 2001: Primary Tables South Africa Census ’96 and 2001 compared*, 61, 31.

53. These figures use the broad definition of unemployment, which includes people deterred from actively seeking employment. Republic of South Africa, Department of Labor, *Women in the South African Labour Market 1995–2005*, 4–5.

54. UNHABITAT, *State of the World’s Cities 2008/2009: Harmonious Cities*, 72.

55. Studies of love framed particularly in the context of AIDS include Hirsch and Wardlow, *Modern Loves: The Anthropology of Romantic Courtship and Companionate Marriage*; Padilla et al., *Love and Globalization: Transformations of Intimacy in the Contemporary World*; Parikh, “The Political Economy of Marriage and HIV: The ABC Approach, ‘Safe’ Infidelity, and Managing Moral Risk in Uganda”; Smith, “Love and the Risk of HIV: Courtship, Marriage, and Infidelity in Southeastern Nigeria.” In addition, see Cornwall, “Spending Power: Love, Money, and the Reconfiguration of Gender Relations in Ado-Odo, Southwestern Nigeria,” and Rebhun, *The Heart Is Unknown Country: Love in the Changing Economy of Northeast Brazil*, for important attempts to go

beyond the love/money dichotomy in Nigeria and Brazil. See Lipset, “Modernity without Romance?” for a fascinating account of how modernity did not lead to romance in Papua New Guinea. On transnational links and love see especially Hirsch, *A Courtship after Marriage: Sexuality and Love in Mexican Transnational Families*. In the West, the false dichotomy between love and money has also faced increased questioning in recent years. See for instance Swidler, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters*; Zelizer, *The Purchase of Intimacy*. On geography’s “emotional turn” see Davidson, Bondi, and Smith, *Emotional Geographies*. This is just a summary of recent literature on love and emotion; more references are given throughout the book.

56. In addition to work mentioned above, one recent attempt to challenge love’s absence in writings on Africa is Cole and Thomas, *Love in Africa*.

57. Colenso, *Zulu-English Dictionary*, s.v. *uthando*. This definition of *uthando* was given in the second edition of the dictionary (1878), but not the first (1861). Between those dates, the Natal government legislated that women had to explicitly confirm at their wedding that the marriage was one of choice (see chapter 3). It should be noted that on matters of marriage, as on most others, the colonial voice was by no means unitary: Bishop Colenso himself rebelled against many elements of mainstream settler thinking, particularly the view that Africans should not be allowed to convert to Christianity unless they withdrew from polygamous marriages. On the extraordinary life of Colenso see Guy, *The Heretic: A Study of the Life of John William Colenso, 1814–1883*; on colonial conflicts over marriage and *ilobolo* see Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845–1910*.

58. Radcliffe-Brown, introduction to *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, 46. Of course, social anthropology did not hold by any means a united view on love. The classic structural-functionalist account of “the Zulu,” Eileen Krige’s *Social System of the Zulus*, noted elaborate courting rituals. Among the best sources on love and social change in the early colonial period are Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* and Schapera, *Married Life in an African Tribe*. For a discussion of how Schapera and Wilson engaged with matters of love see Thomas, “Love, Sex, and the Modern Girl in 1930s Southern Africa.”

59. For instance, Little and Price, “Some Trends in Modern Marriage among West Africans”; Vandewiele and Philbrick, “Attitudes of Senegalese Students toward Love”; and Stones and Philbrick, “Attitudes toward Love among Xhosa University Students in South Africa.”

60. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800*. Other historians draw somewhat different timelines but still posit a general shift toward individualistic notions of love. See Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family*; Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840*. From a slightly different angle, one question anthropologists have considered is whether there exists a universal form of *romantic passion*, a kind of intense passion with an erotic dimension—the answer, in general, is yes. See Jankowiak, *Romantic Passion: A Universal Experience?*

61. Illouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia*.

62. Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies*.

63. Gillis, “From Ritual to Romance: Toward an Alternative History of Love,” especially p. 88. Gillis draws on the work of Francesca Cancian to make these points.

64. See Packard and Epstein, “Epidemiologists, Social Scientists, and the Structure of Medical Research on AIDS in Africa.” More recently, Stillwaggon argued for the sig-

nificance of nutrition, parasites, and other co-factors to the spread of AIDS in Africa. Stillwaggon, *AIDS and the Ecology of Poverty*.

65. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “The Role of STD Prevention and Treatment in HIV Prevention.”

66. These and other inequalities are well documented in publications by the Health Systems Trust. See, for instance, Health Systems Trust, *South African Health Review, 2003/4*. The ANC has supported, in principle, the establishment of a national health insurance program for many years. Such a program is intended to close the health gap between the relatively small number of privately insured people and the rest of the population. In the late 2000s the proposal gained traction although, at the time of writing, a plan has not yet been implemented.

67. Zikode, “The Third Force,” 1.

2. Mandeni

1. Mitchell, “Death City,” 8. The story pertained mainly to Sundumbili township, although it made references to other parts of Mandeni.

2. Republic of South Africa, Department of Health, *2008 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV and Syphilis Prevalence Survey, South Africa*, 10.

3. Republic of South Africa, Statistics South Africa, *Stages in the Lifestyle of South Africans*, 1.

4. In 1996, following the ANC’s victory in the local government elections, the name of the municipality was changed from Mandini to Mandeni. In 2000 municipal boundaries were extended to incorporate previously rural homeland areas. When the Inkatha Freedom Party won the local elections in 2000, the Zulu Nationalist party renamed the municipality eNdongakusuka, after a hill on the eastern side of the municipality that was the site of the famous battle in 1856 in which Cetshwayo defeated Mbulazi to gain dominion over the Zulu Kingdom. The ANC regained control of the council in 2004 and in September 2006 changed the name back to Mandeni. I use “Mandeni” throughout to refer to the present-day municipality, and “Mandini” to refer to the former white town in present-day Mandeni.

5. Residents of the former Zululand “went to the [sugar] farms as employers of the last resort.” Jeeves, “Migrant Workers and Epidemic Malaria on the South African Sugar Estates, 1906–1948,” 117.

6. This and other statistics relating to Mandeni municipality are calculated using online interactive tools applied to the 2001 census data. See Statistics South Africa, “Interactive and Electronic Products,” *Census 2001*, <http://www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/C2001Interactive.asp> (accessed February 10, 2008). Hereafter, I will simply reference these statistics as “Census 2001 Mandeni data” and refer to the website.

7. As apartheid segregation heightened in the 1970s, the state removed African people living on the Mangete land and relocated them to nearby homeland territory. Since 1993 some former residents of the “coloured” Dunn land have mounted land invasions to reclaim parts of this land; these incursions were instigated, it is usually said, by the chief who oversees the land to which former residents of Mangete were moved.

8. I employed one full-time research assistant, whom I call Nonhlanhla, a woman who was in her early twenties when I first worked with her in 2000. Seven people from different parts of Mandeni helped us find people with whom to talk. When we had more formal discussions with groups or interviews of single people, Nonhlanhla actively

Homonormativity in Neoliberal South Africa: Recognition, Redistribution, and the Equality Project.”

20. Hunter, “Beneath the ‘Zunami’: Jacob Zuma and the Gendered Politics of Social Reproduction in South Africa.”

21. Zuma was forced to qualify his comments in the face of criticism. See de Lange, “Zuma’s Demons Remain for Him to Bury.”

22. We must be aware of the pitfalls of looking for a singular “indigenous” same-sex intimacy. Pointing to differences in the use of the word “isitabane,” Ronald Louw notes that it was a derogatory term used in Cato Manor to mean an effeminate man who may or may not prefer sexual relations with other men; it could also be used to mean a hermaphrodite. Louw, “Mkhumbane and New Traditions,” 292. In contemporary Soweto township, Donham notes that “isitabane” can mean “hermaphrodite”; see Donham, “Freeing South Africa.”

23. See especially Boellstorff, *The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia*. This ethnography of Indonesia’s “gay archipelago” shows that *gay* and *lesbi* people frequently married and, while influenced by the Western gay rights movement, were reluctant to seek identity-based recognition for same-sex relations.

24. In addition to the groundbreaking work of D. Donham, M. Epprecht, N. Hoad, G. Reid, N. Oswin, and A. Swarr cited earlier, see Reddy, Sandfort, and Rispel, *From Social Silence to Social Science: Same-Sex Sexuality, HIV and AIDS, and Gender in South Africa*.

9. All You Need Is Love?

1. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*.

2. Katz, “Vagabond Capitalism,” 709–710.

3. Though I find the concept of the “gift” useful, it can, without care, focus too much attention on the moment of “exchange”; see the introduction for how I lay out a historical dialectical approach to intimacy. The reciprocal nature of gifts (as opposed to the single act of commodity exchange) is an analysis rooted in the work of Marcel Mauss, especially *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. For useful discussions see Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities: Studies in Political Economy*; Parry and Bloch, *Money and the Morality of Exchange*; Piot, *Remotely Global*. The importance of love to creating and maintaining bonds is especially well described by Linda Rebhun in her work in Brazil. She describes how women evoke idioms of *amor* (love) to oblige men to help them; in exchange, women offer affection and sometimes sex. Rebhun, *The Heart Is Unknown Country*.

4. L. White, *The Comforts of Home*.

5. The term “romantic utopia” is taken from Illouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia*.

6. Groenewald, “Cell Firms Brace for SMS Frenzy.”

7. Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Hochschild’s term describes employees selling their “emotional labor” in the growing service sector. Although most women in Mandeni are unemployed or working in factories, I believe that the term is still useful because gendered forms of emotional management are closely connected to men’s advantaged position in the labor market. See also Brennan’s use of the concept to understand sex tourism in the Dominican Republic. Brennan, *What’s Love Got to Do with It? Transnational Desires and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic*.

8. Schapera, *Married Life in an African Tribe*, 46.

9. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 642.

10. The South African version of the show's website (now defunct) was at <http://www.allyouneedislove.co.za> (accessed June 10, 2003). Different versions of the show have been broadcast in more than fifteen countries.

11. See Thomas, "Love, Sex, and the Modern Girl."

12. Mafikizolo, "Emlanjeni," *Kwela*, Columbia Europe CD (B0002W108M), 2003.

13. See Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*; Niehaus, "Death before Dying: Understanding AIDS Stigma in the South African Lowveld."

14. As Deborah Durham notes, among kinship groups the obligation to provide care is taken for granted, whereas caring for neighbors and friends can be constituted more explicitly as being motivated by love. Durham, "Love and Jealousy in the Space of Death."

15. Rutenberg et al., "Falling Pregnant or Falling Positive: Adolescent Pregnancy and HIV Infection in South Africa."

16. A study of sexual exchanges in three areas of Durban—Point Road (where Thandi worked as a prostitute), near a truck stop (where men frequently return to the same partner), and in a township (where male partners are usually positioned as "boyfriends")—showed that condom use was inversely related to the commodification (and "lovelessness") of the relationship. Preston-Whyte et al., "Survival Sex and HIV/AIDS in an African City."

17. Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy*.

18. Evans, *Love: An Unromantic Discussion*, 143.

19. See Marais, *Buckling*, 64–70.

20. World Council of Churches, "Desmond Tutu: 'Caring and compassion will prevail over evil and injustice.'"

21. After the change in government in 1994 and with the need for reconciliation, ubuntu was especially lauded as a kind of innate "African generosity." In contrast to this static description of African personhood, Comaroff and Comaroff show how both Tswana and Western conceptions of personhood are fluid. John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, "On Personhood: An Anthropological Perspective from Africa." For an analysis of personhood in the context of AIDS in Tanzania see Setel, *A Plague of Paradoxes*. On personhood and morality in Botswana see Livingston, *Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana*.

10. The Politics of Gender, Intimacy, and AIDS

1. Republic of South Africa, Office of the Presidency, "Address by Deputy President Zuma at the Launch of the Public-Private Partnership in Support of loveLife."

2. LoveLife, *LoveLife 2002: Report on Activities and Progress*, inside cover.

3. Pettifor, Rees, Kleinschmidt, et al., "Young People's Sexual Health in South Africa: HIV Prevalence and Sexual Behaviors from a Nationally Representative Household Survey," 1527. The study also found that among men, HIV prevalence was 2–3% between ages 15 and 19 and then steadily increased to 11–12% by ages 23–24 (1527).

4. LoveLife, *LoveLife 2002*, 53.

5. For these criticisms of loveLife see Parker, "Re-appraising Youth Prevention in South Africa: The Case of loveLife." In 2005 the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria withdrew its support for loveLife because of concerns about the organization's effectiveness in reducing HIV infection. In response, loveLife argued that its emphasis on positive sexuality, including its endorsement of condoms, upset "US-led right-wing ideology." See *Business Day*, "Fund Hits Back at loveLife's Charges."