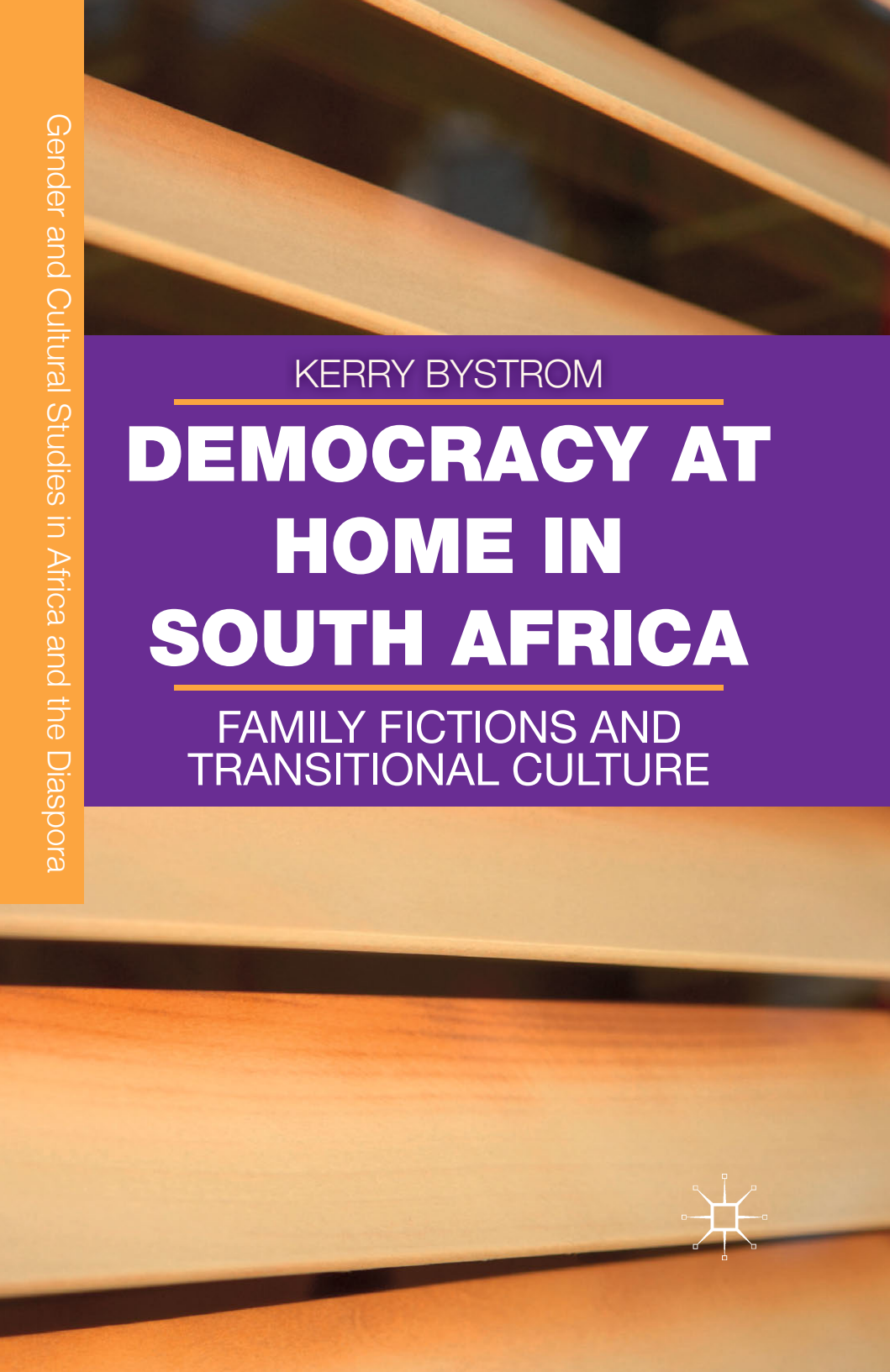
Gender and Cultural Studies in Africa and the Diaspora
KERRY BYSTROM
DEMOCRACY AT HOME IN SOUTH AFRICA
FAMILY FICTIONS AND TRANSITIONAL CULTURE

DEMOCRACY AT HOME IN SOUTH AFRICA

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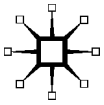

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For Florian, Lucia, and William

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CONTENTS

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FIGURES

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PREFACE

Apartheid in South Africa was understood globally as an epic battle of good versus evil, a grand narrative calling for grand approaches to understand and combat it. Common questions included whether Pretoria's policies should be understood primarily through the prism of race or class, and in exactly what sense white South Africa could be analyzed as a colonial state. This habit of the grand approach often remains visible in studies of the postapartheid period. There has been an outpouring of interest in the collective trauma associated with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings and the large questions of transitional justice and memory they opened; the shamefully unresolved struggle for land redistribution and other forms of redress necessary to complete a fundamental structural transformation; the scourge of HIV that largely coincided with the coming of democracy; and the troubling shift of the African National Congress from a liberation movement with social justice at its core to a ruling party firmly embracing global capitalism, harboring corruption on a massive scale and, with events like the Marikana mine massacre in 2012, itself becoming an armed and repressive state. Such "major" themes (and there are many more not listed here) moved scholars as well as public intellectuals, writers, and artists to celebrate South Africa's "miracle" and then forced them to question it-juxtaposing the idealistic visions of the "rainbow nation" or the "new" South Africa held out to the world in the early 1990s and the darker realities of "freedom" in the neoliberal global order.

Taking such a broad view is of course necessary, as I return to below. However this book does something else, or rather proposes a different route into the critical questions of the first 15 years of democracy. It looks at the micro- rather than the macro-level, focusing attention on how individuals navigate the transition to democracy in their home spaces, and in their relationships with those they consider to be family members, lovers, and close friends. It works from there to wider frames of social relation such as the nation or state. By shifting from the grand to the intimate

scale, I hope to draw attention to sites of possibility for the future as well as to show where the promise of democracy has not yet been fulfilled. Since this book is primarily about literature and art and the role of the imagination in South Africa's democratic transition, I focus on aesthetic figuration—in novels, performance, photography, and visual art installations—of home spaces, domestic life, and family histories; and I argue that writers and artists depicting the first 15 years of democracy from this perspective present compelling portraits of the intimate, emotional, and "everyday" aspects of change that can be drowned out by an inordinate focus on structural concerns, but which offer new ways of thinking and feeling. As they parse what Nadine Gordimer calls "the homeground of the present" (*None to Accompany Me*, 321), writers and artists present us with a diverse and often compelling set of options for working through the past and making demands on the future—temporalities tied together in knots impossible to undo. They also position private life at the heart of public culture.

This shift in tone, from an analysis of "major" to seemingly "minor" concerns, was inspired in the first instance by the works of art that I examine. When I as an American researcher began studying South African literature and culture in the early 2000s, from the comfort of the library in Princeton, New Jersey, and then on a graduate fellowship from the Social Science Research Council in Cape Town, I was struck by the interest shown by postapartheid writers and artists in private, personal, and family life. Especially fascinating was the seeming obsession in the mid-1990s with family trees, be they carved in words by André Brink with *Imaginings of Sand* (1995) and Achmat Dangor with *Kafka's Curse* (1997) or in wood by Claudette Schreuders with the simply titled "Family Tree" (1997). A wider look at intimate and domestic life was obvious in the celebrated technicolor portraits of township interiors by Zwelethu Mthethwa, which from the first days of democracy brought spectators inside home spaces often imagined during the apartheid period as sites of pure loss and deprivation. The same obtains in Penny Siopis' visual depictions of domestic work in "Maids" (1992–93) and in her use of found family video footage in pieces like "My Lovely Day" (1997). Over ten years of subsequent scholarship on and sometimes from South Africa, and the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg specifically, confirmed a strengthening of this trend and has reiterated the questions that early postapartheid imaginative practice raised for me: Why did the transition unlock such a profound investment in things that seem so concretely personal, at a moment when the challenges of national transformation loomed so large? How is an exploration of private spaces and feelings connected to the massive public changes taking place with

the turn to majority rule, and what can it offer the democratic project? Further, to what extent can older models of reading culture illuminate these questions, or what alternative models are called for?

This book is an attempt to answer these questions. It also aims to think more widely about what is at stake in aesthetically representing private life in moments of political upheaval or change. If the personal is political, as feminists have long and convincingly claimed, what exact kinds of politics animate the imaginative portrayal of private life, home space, and family in transitional periods? How do these imaginative politics weave together the rational and the emotional registers to unfold for their various publics new visions of the past, present, and future? To what extent can the labor of exposing personal vulnerabilities and interiors create new kinds of publics, or articulate public spaces less masculinist and more attentive to a politics of care, as writer and public intellectual Njabulo Ndebele ("Afterword") has advocated? Closely analyzing the works of some of the canonized authors and artists already noted above, and engaging with emerging voices less widely recognized outside the country, *Democracy at Home in South Africa* tries to make sense of the striking outpouring of "private" art seen in the postapartheid period on the concretely local and more global theoretical levels, as it moves toward a practice of reading contemporary culture more finely attuned to the affective micro-politics that guide our everyday lives and both limit and expand our future horizons.

South African writer and scholar Rob Nixon has argued in the different context of our current global environmental catastrophe: "[t]o shirk solutions to the private and small is evasive, even if it does constructively enhance one's sense of agency. Planetary problems—and transnational, national, and regional ones—cannot simply be resolved by the aggregated actions of responsible individuals" (39). Real democracy, in the sense described by Achille Mbembe of a political, social, and economic life fundamentally restructured on the basis of radical equality, and through a rejection of practices of "waste" and a concomitant investment in "human mutuality" to become "a community of life" ("Democracy" 10), similarly cannot be entirely made at home, in South Africa or elsewhere. It depends on the existence and enforcement of local, national, and international laws, the (re)distribution of hoarded global economic power and resources, and state capacity for building and sustaining institutions such as schools and hospitals. Yet structures cannot be entirely disentangled from the people who shape, inhabit and contest them. The pages that follow take as their point of departure the beliefs that "turn[ing] to the private or small" is not always a way of "shirk[ing]" or "evad[ing]" complex structural problems and that enhancing the "sense of agency"

and the imaginative repertoire of individuals is a crucial part of transformative social change. Indeed (and here there might be less distance from Nixon's position than is immediately apparent) critical examinations and reconstructions of home life, whether our own or those of others we peer into through the lenses of art, may through their very smallness be sites where problems and potential solutions become most obviously visible or "apprehended" in Nixon's sense (14–15). It is my hope and contention that such examinations and reconstructions can help the democracy signaled in this book's title—democracy understood as the historical period of formal democratic or one-person, one-vote rule that began in South Africa in 1994—become the much more radical and robust kind of democracy we hoped this period might bring.

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As is appropriate, a book about home and family benefits the most from those who make up my own: Florian Becker and little Lucia and William. My deepest gratitude also goes to my parents, William and Tilda Bystrom, and my parents-in-law, Volker and Margarete Becker, for their unfailing support.

★ ★ ★

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I have also been privileged to include a number of images in this book. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 are slide projections drawn from Santu Mofokeng's installation *The Black Photo Album* and appear courtesy of Lunetta Bartz, MAKER, Johannesburg. Figure 3.1, "'Massa' and Minah 2," makes up part of Zanele Muholi's photographic series *'Massa' and Mina(h)* and appears courtesy Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Figure 3.2 is an image of Mary Sibande's installation "Sophie-Ntombikayise" from the exhibition *Long Live the Dead Queen* and appears courtesy of Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg. Figure 4.1, which documents the *Home Affairs*

exhibition initiated by Mark Gevisser, designed by Clive van den Berg and curated by Sharon Cort as a collaboration between TRACE media company and Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action, appears courtesy of TRACE. Figures 4.2 and 4.3, which document the *Hotel Yeoville* public photography project created by Terry Kurgan, appear courtesy of Terry Kurgan. Finally, Figure 5.1 shows Usha Seejarim's sculpture "Three Sisters in Law" and appears courtesy of the artist.

INTRODUCTION

In the immediate aftermath of apartheid, stories of family and home and other intimate forms of memory came to flood the public sphere. This was perhaps most dramatically evident in the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 1996–2002), an institution set up to help construct a democratic society through the documentation of gross human rights violations and the public acknowledgment of victims. The testimony of Nombuyiselo Mhlawuli provides a harrowing example. After describing the experience and ongoing effects on her family of having her husband, the activist Sicelo Mhlawuli, kidnapped and murdered by apartheid agents, she requested to be given back his missing hand. This was said to have been cut off by the police and kept in a bottle.[1] While extreme in its depiction of actually severed limbs, Mhlawuli's tale is common in its depiction of a family dismembered—and I use this harsh word deliberately—by the acute or structural violence of apartheid. These stories spilled beyond the TRC hearings to be echoed and expanded on television and radio, at political rallies and community meetings, in novels and memoirs, in museums and art galleries, and in street corners, taxi cabs, and living rooms.

Such stories point to the urgent need to repair families shattered through apartheid and its historical precursors as well as to shape new homes free from the deformations of the past. This is a profoundly personal task. At the same time, sharing narratives and images of diverse kinds of families, homes, and domestic lives also became part of the wider and complexly layered work of shaping visions of the democratic South Africa and understandings of the relationships that should join people together within its frame. The public stakes of the private memories and experiences revealed in the TRC, such as Mhlawuli's testimony, have been carefully examined, both by those who criticize the way the stories of wives and mothers were mobilized as part of a nation-building exercise and by those who hold them up as exemplary sites of ethical renewal.[2] But these stakes also exist for other kinds of intimate narratives and images entering into public culture, especially in a period when

elites and members of a new government seized on discourses and iconographies of home and family with long colonial histories in Southern Africa in their efforts to shape a democratic nationalism. The early years of democracy commonly saw the freedom fighter–turned president Nelson Mandela and his then wife Winnie Madikizela-Mandela called "father" and "mother of the nation," while Desmond Tutu figured South Africa as the "rainbow family of God."[3] Such resonances remained in play, though in forms that shifted to encompass the African National Congress (ANC) government's increasing emphasis on "traditional" African family values, across the period I examine in this book: from the first democratic election in 1994 to the handover of power to Jacob Zuma in 2009. These years constitute South Africa's first 15 years of democracy or what I term its *extended democratic transition*, marked by a dual commitment to rewriting national identity in inclusive terms and addressing historical injustices.[4]

Democracy at Home in South Africa shifts the spotlight to interventions less commonly considered as part of the democratization process. Specifically, I examine imaginative engagements with home and family, looking at a series of novels, plays, and photographic or visual art projects that explore personal losses and family secrets, represent domestic spaces and the relationships that populate them, and render the desires and frustrations generated by living "too close for comfort." These family fictions—a term I use broadly to gather together projects with some basic or minimal narrative element, either in their status as writing or drama or as images or objects that create a story across a set of linked works—include works by writers and artists from André Brink and John Kani to Marlene van Niekerk and Zanele Muholi. They focus on how to rethink family history, domestic service, and the kinds of homes that are acceptable in the "new" South Africa. I argue that this seemingly private artwork engages in multiple ways with the task of national transformation at the heart of the extended transition.

Beginning in the early 1990s, private life, family, and home became central preoccupations of aesthetic production across different media as well as across the boundaries of race, gender, and generation (Bystrom and Nuttall). This is in part due to a new freedom from the demands of "engaged writing," "struggle photography," and "resistance art." Yet it is also, I suggest, because these topics are bound up with so many of the most pressing questions that faced transitional culture and society, from how to confront the traumas of the past to how to imagine new forms of daily life. Such questions are both individual and collective in nature, and often revolve around dilemmas that can be gathered under the term "relation." In what ways might shattered relationships within families

and homes be repaired or rehabilitated? What can be done with the social relations left over from colonialism, slavery, and apartheid? What does it mean to be related, through the framework of a democratic state, to those previously defined as radically other?

Relation, understood in opposition to the manifold forms of separation perpetrated by the apartheid state, is here a flexible signifier meant to draw attention to the threads—emotional and rational, real and imagined—that link us to other people. It directs our gaze to family matters and asks us to consider carefully the way we live with relatives and others with whom we share domestic space, without losing sight of how these intimate relationships connect to wider social ones. While distinct from Eduoard Glissant's influential concept of the same name, and indeed from any kind of master theory, my use of the term shares with Glissant's notion of "Relation" an emphasis on unpredictable points of contact between people and the creative forces unleashed through such encounters. Further, thinking about relation allows me to loop between public and private and unsettles any strict metaphorical correlation between family or home and nation or polity. I do not argue that artwork about family and home is "really" about some broader community (as crude readings of Fredric Jameson's "national allegory" argument would have it), but rather that precisely in the process of exploring the ties that bind us to those in our households or those we consider kin, writers and artists have created a profoundly engaged critical dialogue on the challenges of the South African transition.[5] Depicting the historical period of South Africa's extended democratic transition *at home* in a very literal sense emerges as a powerful way of *working through* the past and *working toward* alternative futures; and it functions on multiform levels that range across and tack together what, following Sara Ahmed, I understand as affectively saturated or "sticky" interpersonal encounters and less concrete though often equally emotive conceptions of the "imagined community" of the nation.[6]

Few studies of the postapartheid period have as of yet drawn the question of private life and its representation to the center of investigation. The special issue of *Cultural Studies* on "Private Lives and Public Cultures in South Africa," which I coedited with Sarah Nuttall, serves as a companion to this book in its attempt to initiate a dialogue across the realms of popular culture and high art about the social and political resonances of artwork on intimate topics. This in turn drew inspiration from Nuttall's previous work with Liz McGregor on micro-narratives and personal voices (*At Risk*), her call to reread the social in *Entanglement: Literary and Cultural Reflections on Postapartheid,* and Achille Mbembe's reflections on democracy and mutuality ("Democracy").

Touchstones of literary analysis include Meg Samuelson's *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women: Stories of the South African Transition,* one of the only books to date to center on ideologies of home and family in the South African transition, and her short essay "Walking through the Door and Inhabiting the House: South African Literary Culture and Criticism after the Transition," which intersects with many of the concerns here, as well as Rita Barnard's reflections on home and domesticity in South African literature in *Apartheid and Beyond: South Africa and the Politics of Place.* Neville Hoad's *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, Globalization* and Brenna Munro's *South Africa and the Dream of Love to Come: Queer Sexuality and the Struggle for Freedom* bring questions of intimacy, family, and home to the fore through the lens of queer studies in particular, and offer wider lessons for the extended transition. Further, Njabulo Ndebele's writing in *Fine Lines from the Box* and elsewhere creates an important bridge from academia to public culture. Thinking with these interlocutors and others, I use relation as a reading frame in *Democracy at Home in South Africa* to destabilize common conceptions of the boundaries of public and private, drawing attention both to the importance of what Susan Andrade calls "micro-politics" in the transition and to the potential power of imaginative worlds in reconfiguring social realities.[7]

In the course of this Introduction, I discuss in greater detail the different family fictions produced by writers and artists during the extended transition. I also explore more fully what I mean by relation and the openings created by reading transitional culture through this lens. However, because so much of what was produced in the extended transition is a response to the past, both as past and as a living-on in the present, I first offer a brief overview of some of the earlier historical dimensions of family and home in South Africa. This gloss is intended to give readers less steeped in the South African context a sense of the development and impact of apartheid policies and to show why the restoration of families and homes was so crucial especially (though not only) for writers and artists designated "non-white" in apartheid nomenclature. It also serves as a reminder of the way ideologies, iconographies, and experiences of family and home were pressed into supporting multiple and overlapping exclusions—not only on the grounds of race, but also on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation. This history complicates the work of representing private life in the democratic transition. It suggests that it is not enough to restore lost homes and family ties, and calls instead for an unsettling of notions of home and family themselves to prevent new forms of exclusion from taking root. Underscoring this problem, Samuelson asks the important question of how to create new individual and national homes

free from the oppressive logics of the past (*Remembering* 198; see also "Walking"). This is a recurring dilemma throughout this study.

Family and the Making of Apartheid

Within Western cultures, a set of layered beliefs, habits, and forms of intuition thread family together with broader social communities and present it as a site for recognizing connection or sameness. Such connection can be mobilized to generate a sense of universality, feeding the notion that all humans make up a common family, as evidenced by the forms of living and feeling they share.[8] But family is also a verbal and visual language used to sanction narrower political ties. As many scholars have argued, the family is a long-standing metaphor for the nation, beginning with its very linguistic root. Nation comes from *natio*, or family (Brennan 45). Related expressions such as motherland, fatherland, and homeland as well as the concept of a national bloodline all point to this interweaving. Anne McClintock shows how the language of the patriarchal family in particular has been used to justify as "natural" certain dispersions of power within imperial nationalisms, and charts the genealogy of this language in the Southern African context. As she argues, the Dutch and then the British colonizers represented the act of colonization as a sexual encounter, in which the white servant of Empire "penetrated" the "virgin lands" of Africa (30, 369). From this penetration sprang a curiously raced and gendered family known as the "white family of man." Here, women are dispensed with altogether as white men assume a paternal authority over the "child-like" natives they encounter (McClintock 38–39).

Beyond its use as metaphor, the family as an institution played a crucial role in constructing and reproducing normative visions of white European culture and socializing colonial subjects into certain forms of public life (ibid. 357). Jean and John Comaroff argue that British hegemony was "homemade" (68). A. C. Jordan's novel *The Wrath of the Ancestors* (1940) and Noni Jabavu's memoir *The Ochre People* (1963) show how, particularly in the mission stations responsible for shepherding new Christian flocks, black people were taught to reject their own indigenous traditions and to embrace as linked symbols of "progress" the model of the patriarchal nuclear family, the English language, and Christianity (see also Comaroff and Comaroff). The Afrikaner nationalism formed in response to British colonialism—and historically responsible for apartheid if not for the colonial policies of slavery and segregation that were its precursor—was also a movement forged through the family. Scholars including Isabel Hofmeyr ("Building" 113–14), Deborah Gaitskill and Elaine Unterhalter, and McClintock have shown that

Afrikaner nationalism developed in part by privileging the domestic realm. It venerated the *volksmoeder*, the mother of the nation, who presided over the home where the values of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Afrikaans language could be passed on to children. The mission of the Afrikaner as husband, father, and leader was to secure this home. This could be done individually, for instance by tending farmland wedded to and destined to support generations of one "*familie*" or lineage.[9] It also needed to be done collectively through the creation of a state to house the Afrikaner nation. It is no coincidence that the "first full draft of apartheid ideology" was Geoffrey Cronjé's famous pamphlet from 1945, "A Home for Posterity" (Blair 586).

After the Afrikaner National Party (NP) came to power in 1948 and institutionalized apartheid, this Afrikaner home slowly if unevenly opened its doors to other white ethnicities, here too relying on the domestic as a site for reshaping social values and practices and on family as a metaphor for a united white South Africa. Former Prime Minister and "architect of apartheid" Hendrik Verwoerd once sought to ensure a happy political marriage between Afrikaners and English-speaking South Africans by advertising genealogical research meant to show how literal intermarriage of these two white ethnic groups was creating a shared bloodline ("Preface"). The flip side of moving closer to accepting as kin other Europeans bitterly hated as imperial aggressors was renewed hysteria about separating people of different races. A whole legal edifice was put in place to ensure "separate development." Newly made apartheid education laws closed down the few avenues for advancement available to people of color in the previous order, such as mission schools (Campbell). The NP also showed particular enthusiasm and persistence in amending and expanding the colonial Immorality Act legislation, passed in 1927 to ban interracial marriage—addressing it no less than five times and coming eventually to outlaw all sexual contact between people designated to be of different racial categories before finally repealing the legislation in 1985 (Hoad "Introduction" 18).

In this context, being "Coloured," the legal category assigned by the white regime to individuals judged to be neither black nor white (Wicomb "Shame" 101, Kossew "Repositioning" 198), was particularly problematic.[10] Coloured people often did have white along with Khoi, San, Asian, or black African ancestors (most commonly white male settlers who made often unwilling indigenous and enslaved women into sexual partners[11]) and could sometimes "pass" into white society. This made those classified as "Coloured" the actual relatives of white South Africans and led to their rejection as undesirable contaminators of the white bloodline (Coetzee *White Writing*). The racial category reflected historical silences

and anxiety about policing racial boundaries among the white population, while the entwined discourses of contamination and "miscegenation" attached to it generated a register of "shame" internalized to various degrees by coloured communities (Wicomb "Shame" 100).

If "Coloured" people faced some unique challenges, then they also faced many in common with the other groups designated as "non-white" under the 1950 Population Registration Act and its successors: "Asians" or "Indians" and "Bantus" or "blacks."[12] The obsession in Afrikaner nationalism with the purity of the white family and Western family values produced among these other race groups what Nancy Bentley, in the context of American slavery, calls "kinlessness." Apartheid—with its pass laws, labor policies, forced removal, socially engineered poverty, police brutality, and tactics of "disappearance"—tore apart black, coloured, and Indian families. Mhlawuli's testimony before the TRC shows how husbands, children, or sisters involved in or suspected of activism were detained and murdered by the police state or, on threat of such punishments, went into exile (see also Reynolds). On a more mundane but no less painful level, as seen in apartheid-era classics like Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona's play *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (1972) and Sindiwe Magona's short story collection *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night* (1991), economic necessity meant that husbands and fathers were forced to work in far-off mines and live in slum areas or single-sex hostels, while wives and mothers often needed to leave behind their own families to care for children of the middle and upper classes as domestic workers. On top of such disruptions within families, the divide-and-rule methods employed by the state created tension between families with different racial classifications, by according coloured and Indian people a higher status than blacks. Families constituted across these racial lines not only risked being legally separated, but also had to fight against the psychic damage done by such insidious racial hierarchies.

A different kind of kinlessness was experienced by gay and lesbian South Africans. Like sexual intimacies across racial boundaries, same-sex sexuality and sexual acts were posed by Pretoria as immoral and threatening to both the normative patriarchal white nuclear family and the nation it symbolized, and were accordingly outlawed. Neville Hoad traces the origins of apartheid's legal ban on queer sexuality to the 1957 Amendment of the very Immorality Act cited above, noting that this law "laid the cornerstone for the legislative extension of interracial sexual interdictions to what we now recognize as gay men" ("Introduction" 16; see also Munro xii and xxiii). Legal prohibitions on homosexuality, which ironically only became stronger as strictures against interracial

sex lessened in the mid-1980s (Hoad "Introduction" 18), deprived queer individuals of the opportunity to forge more traditional families or alternative kinships in any public way.

The House of Bondage

Home, like family, is a rich and contradictory term that folds together lived experience with fantasy and metaphor, and concrete local spaces with vast geographical and imaginative terrains such as the nation (Mallet). The notion of home is most often associated with the house in which one is born or resides, but (and again like family) it is also inescapably connected to feeling, "what we feel or what we fail to feel" (Ahmed "Home" 340–41). Traditional and patriarchal Western notions of home, which Stephanie Mallet categorizes as "home as haven" visions, typically define home as a refuge from the wider world, a space ruled by men but defined by female care and comfort, and a place where individuals experience a sense of belonging and can be their most authentic selves (71–73, 75). Such a vision is strongly linked to the gendered development of European bourgeois modernity, with the architecture of houses themselves "safely" marking off private, indoor, and reproductive space as the realm of women while defining the hazardous but politically and economically productive outside as the realm of men (Comaroff and Comaroff 52–53). As implied above, this vision also had strong racial outlines from its earliest importation to Southern Africa: Domestic space, along with the body of the white woman, was set up as the nest of white civilization that needed to be protected from the supposed dangers of "darkest" Africa (McClintock). These views would come together to underwrite the NP's vision of what family should be, and which it tried to replicate among its subjects.

While the "home as haven" model must be criticized from many angles, from its historical racism to the forms of patriarchal violence it fosters across racial divides, a home that was something like a haven was also the fierce desire of many blacks, Indians, and coloureds. As documented in important works like the testimonial novel *The Long Journey of Poppie Nongena* (1978), a collaboration between Afrikaner journalist Elsa Joubert and a Xhosa domestic worker who took on the pseudonym of Nongena, families of color struggled to maintain caring and inclusive spaces for themselves and their kin in the face of systematic oppression. Despite schisms between indigenous and Western visions of home and family life, with people being forced to navigate between the "modern" world of the township and rural ancestral traditions, many black subjects saw "home" as a place where one could nurture an alternative world to

the one starkly etched in segregationist law and embrace a truly African identity based on concepts like *ubuntu*—loosely translated as *a person is a person through other people* (Mda "Justify"; Gikandi). According to Simon Gikandi, "home . . . was symbolized as the counterpoint to the discredited apartheid public sphere" (493).

In other ways, though, apartheid made it nearly impossible for home to be a stable place of protection and belonging. Two linked and iconic reversals show how "home" often became something quite *other*: a site of estrangement and abjection. The first is the act of forced removal, enabled by the 1950 Group Areas Act and symbolized in the image of a bulldozer waiting to destroy carefully constructed huts or shacks for the ends of "slum clearance" or the removal of "black spots" from zones declared to be "white areas." The keenly lamented destruction of multiracial areas like District Six and Sophiatown, seen in the writings of Richard Rive and Bloke Modisane, is only the most famous version of such happenings. The second reversal, following from the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, is the construction and forced relocation of individuals from their native ground to the euphemistically labeled "homelands," sham Bantustans on which many of the people sentenced had never before laid eyes, again to the ends of clearing out space for white South Africans and maintaining cultural and biological separation. While both the township and the "homeland" allowed for the development of strong attachments to land and nurturing communities (see Dlamini), they were founded on forms of physical, structural, and ideological violence that could not help but to profoundly impact their inhabitants.

Apartheid's "home for posterity" was, thus, for many blacks, Indians, and coloureds, what the black photographer Ernest Cole, in a now famous collection of images depicting the daily life under white minority rule and which Cole was able to smuggle out of apartheid South Africa to New York, poignantly termed a "house of bondage." Writer and critic Njabulo Ndebele has described the way in which the destruction of private homes forced people of color to throw their energy into dreaming of a different national home. In his 1996 essay, "A Home for Intimacy," he writes that South Africa's black population in particular was forced to sunder their attachment to individual places or houses and came instead to see home as "some concept of belonging to some historic process; some sense of historic justice, assuming, on the day of liberation, the physical space of a country." As Ndebele also notes in this essay, though, the transfer of energies from the private home to the national struggle often damaged the households in question—with the situation of those who left their families behind to go into political exile forming a case in point. The fragmentation created in this process has wider social implications.

"Can there be any society without private lives," Ndebele asks, "without homes where individuals can flourish through histories of intimacy?"

Some of these complexities were experienced by white families who chose to align themselves with the ANC, the Communist Party, or other resistance movements. But even centrist white families of both English and Afrikaner origin, those who saw themselves as staying out of politics or who supported NP rule, were subject to "deformations" as they attempted to live up to apartheid's idealized vision of white, patriarchal, and heterosexual home life.[13] This is spectacularly evident in the pamphlet *Women Our Silent Soldiers*, produced by the wives of prominent NP officials to show housewives how to defend the white, conservative and middle-class home against the Communist onslaught. "Make a study of Marxism in your own family, social or political circles," it notes, "and you will be shocked to learn under what guises the enemy works in the circles in which you move" (cited in Norval 203). The ideal of constant vigilance underscored in this pamphlet speaks not only to hysteria about threats to white domestic life coming from outside but also and just as importantly to paranoia about changes coming from *within*—a paranoia Aletta Norval calls "security psychosis" (203), and which renders the white home *unheimlich,* a place of threat and danger. Certainly the trope of the uncanny in the Freudian sense marks apartheid literary culture, as Lars Engle noted early on in relation to Nadine Gordimer. Canonized novels like Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1977) are fundamentally about family and land as the site of the return of the repressed, whether this means the black presence shoved aside by white settlers or forms of sexual identity and practice such as homosexuality labeled as alien to hegemonic norms (Engle 109–10; see also Clingman 211–12; Barnard *Apartheid*).

Beyond Truth-Telling: Working through and Working toward in the Extended Transition

As the preceding sections describe, the violence of apartheid was often felt most keenly *at home*, at the level of personal experience and daily life. This could mean the acute violence of having houses and families destroyed; the everyday violence of living in cramped township or Bantustan conditions or of being forced in other ways to conform to racist and heteronormative law; or the more abstract violence that crippled people's ability to imagine other lives and the lives of others. Under such conditions, and while "committed" writers and artists during apartheid and particularly in the 1970s and 1980s with the States of Emergency were often expected to foreground what in 1984 Ndebele called the "spectacular" dimensions

of life (*Rediscovery*), people did take the opportunity to represent family and home—as demonstrated by the examples used above—and mobilized such domestic representation through various logics. One such logic was to construct a dream refuge from apartheid's harsh reality. Another was to draw attention to the damage perpetrated by the state and to claim sympathy for victims. Here writers and artists employed an "ethics of recognition" (Schaffer and Smith), presenting strong emotive stories or images meant to appeal universally and provoke an activist response. A third register was that of deconstructing what Gordimer called "the house of the white race," with its harmful ideological and practical exclusions. "First you leave your mother's house," Gordimer once claimed in an interview, "and then you leave the house of the white race" (cited in Barnard *Apartheid* 10, 48). The last logic I mention is that of preparing for a democracy to come by creating imaginative transit between spaces and lives. As Barnard has argued, the apartheid state desired to separate even people's imaginations and to take away the capacity to understand the "dwelling places" of others, and the work of undoing apartheid was also about undoing this kind of separation ("Speaking Places" 157).

One could say that the challenges of the democratic transition were also felt most keenly at home, for it is here that people had to attend to the wounds and legacies of the past and to devise new forms of daily life for the present and the future. I argue throughout this book that depicting complex negotiations taking place around family and home spaces—in the cases tracked here, by revisiting family histories, exploring the dynamics of domestic work, and detailing the struggles and triumphs of trying to shape alternative homes in the "new" South Africa—allowed writers and artists to gain new perspectives on the past and to paint clearly the promises and failures of freedom. They could then offer these insights outward to various publics. Of course, different writers and artists did this in different ways. The logics of domestic representation noted in the last paragraph all continued to operate in the extended transition, with added pressure on attending to the dual necessities of mourning or rebuilding homes and families, on the one hand, and unsettling exclusionary visions of these same concepts and institutions, on the other. From this dense weave, I draw out two strands: working through and working toward.

Perhaps most obviously, many representations of family and home from the extended transition stage a kind of working through diverse traumas. The concept of "working through," originally developed by Sigmund Freud (1914), speaks to the intellectual, emotional, and embodied labor of memory necessary for psychic repair. Dominick LaCapra, the concept's most influential contemporary theorist, defines it as the "work of memory and mourning that can never fully overcome the extremely

destabilizing or radically fragmenting effects of trauma" but which "may nonetheless more or less effectively engage [problems] and enable [. . .] a limited renewal of life" (199). As LaCapra notes, working through is connected to mourning, often located at the epicenter of postapartheid culture.[14] However, because it is not so tightly bound to specific events of loss like actual death, and because LaCapra insists on connecting psychological, political, and material conditions, working through may better address the "insidious trauma" or "chronic psychic suffering" generated by racism and colonial oppression.[15] It may also be more easily adapted to questions of guilt and complicity experienced by perpetrators and "beneficiaries" of apartheid and segregation.[16] Speaking to the need of victims and perpetrators to gain control over their trauma and its "intrusive memories," Chris van der Merwe and Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela pose working through as a key narrative project facing South Africans in the democratic transition (vii–viii).

Imaginative writing, performance art, and visual art become useful in the task of working through not only by multiplying the forums for engaging in this activity but also by detaching these forums from the strict demands of "truth-telling" seen, for instance, in the TRC. Many of the works I discuss are rooted in personal experience. Particularly for semi-autobiographical pieces, the fractured indexicality of art, its ability to touch and retreat from the real world, means that the aesthetic becomes a space where writers and artists step away from personal trauma to re-present and reconfigure it (van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela ix). This reconfiguration may involve making memory "flexible," and reshaping narratives and images of history in ways that dull their edge and promote repair. Alternatively, it may crystallize a sense of inconsolable pain and underscore the ethical demands made by it.[17] It may foster a kind of reckoning with past deeds that alters present actions, or enable a forgetting that allows those who benefited from the pain of others to carry on as usual. In all cases, the aesthetic turn creates a useful distance that opens up the possibility of formal experimentation. It further creates opportunities for needed forms of secondary witnessing or recognition stemming from the public presentation or circulation of artworks, and from there ripple effects may impact readers or spectators. As van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela argue, aesthetic representations can aid the process of "working through" by helping audiences to "confront [their] traumas, to bring to light what has been suppressed and also to imagine new possibilities of living meaningfully in a changed world" (ix).

However, transitional artwork about home and family was not only about working through apartheid-era personal traumas. As much as

there is a need to acknowledge the importance of trauma as a dominant logic in this period, there is also a need to move beyond it. I thus point to the way artworks address larger experiences and meanings of family and home, and exploit the ability of these terms to speak to the major questions facing South Africans and South Africa as a nation-state as it attempted to transform itself in the first 15 years of democracy. The years I consider, stretching from the first democratic elections in 1994 through the presidencies of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki to roughly the assumption of power by Jacob Zuma in 2009, were years in which politicians, intellectuals, and artists were actively trying to shape a new understanding of what South Africa is and what it means to be South African. These were the years of both the idealistic image of the "rainbow nation" introduced in the early 1990s by Mandela and former Archbishop and TRC chairperson Desmond Tutu and its progressive deconstruction. The same period was marked by the recognition of South Africa's inescapable immersion in the AIDS pandemic and in global environmental crises, political struggles, and human flows. Such recognition promoted remarkable visions of hospitality and yet also, and in spite of Mbeki's notion of the "African Renaissance," enabled the xenophobic riots of 2008 aimed at black Africans from other countries eager to share in the South African "miracle" yet stigmatized as threatening to a "new" South African national family. In general, we might say that this period is marked by struggles to create and live up to what Mbembe ("Democracy" 6) calls an "affirmative politics" capable of overcoming historical injustice through policies and visions of equality and being-in-common or "human mutuality."

These struggles suggest another kind of working through, in which people wrestle in registers not fully encapsulated by the notion of trauma with the imaginative, emotional, and material forms of separation and inequality that structured apartheid life and imagine what it means to live together with people previously defined as resolutely other. As Cobi Labuscagne argues, this involves shifting through layers of anger, fear, and hope, and through both connection and alienation (369; see also Bystrom and Nuttall 325). It is about what changes and what stays the same in everyday existence as well as wider feelings of national belonging. Constituted through acts of speech, image making, and movement, by practical decisions about where and how to live, in affective investments and withdrawals, and through the ghosts of history and in dreams or fantasies for other lives, such efforts can be more or less successful but aim at overcoming past blockages and achieving greater flourishing. This kind of working though can also be described as working toward a different future.

It is here that writers and artists have done something like what Ndebele (*Rediscovery*) describes as "rediscover[ing] the ordinary," by revalorizing spaces and lived experiences of intimacy and by reassessing and transforming highly charged discourses and iconographies of family and home. Simon Gikandi notes that "[b]eginning with the interregnum and continuing into the twenty-first century, the task of South African art was to defamiliarize older symbolic economies of home and identity" (494). Similarly, Meg Samuelson underscores the centrality of engagements with family and home in contemporary South African literature and poses "walking through the door and inhabiting the house" as one of the most important tasks of the transition ("Walking"). While this act can entail inadvertently rebuilding the exclusionary homes of the past, Samuelson calls rather for constructing new visions more suitable to democracy. Challenging traditionally gendered ideas of home as a zone of comfort and safety, and "tack[ing] back and forth between 'home' as figuration and home as physical space" as well as between public and private, she asks us to imagine "habitations that are unhomely, and commitments that are not centered on a comforting sense of belonging; . . . homes with open doors and gaping windows; . . . homes that are risky but habitable" (ibid. 130–32, 135).

Such an opening up of family and home resonates with wider postcolonial, feminist, and queer rereadings. Sara Ahmed, for instance, compellingly posits both individual and national homes not as spaces of closure and comfort but as spaces open to the world, porous, consisting of "strangeness and movement" ("Home and Away" 340).[18] Samuelson, through her reference to the "unhomely" above and more widely, calls attention to Homi Bhabha's critically important revaluation of the Freudian uncanny (*Remembering* 195–201). Pointing to the way politics insistently invade private spaces and indeed cannot be separate from them, Bhabha defines the uncanny as "the shock of recognition of 'the-home-in-the-world, the-world-in-the-home'" and suggests that artists use the alternative space and time of the aesthetic realm to mark the unhomely, to make it recognizable ("The World" 141; see also Samuelson *Remembering* and "Walking"; van der Vlies "The People" 504). In part because of its ability to step outside or bracket off certain aspects from the flow of daily experience, aesthetic reconfiguration of domestic life can draw attention to such moments of contact with the outside and otherness. In the process, it may not only interrupt what Marianne Hirsch (*Family Frames* 116–17) calls the "unconscious optics" that tend to structure our family lives but also unsettle still influential discursive and visual economies of national belonging tied to these conservative optics of home and family.

Cracking open the private and creating cognitive space for defamiliarization can be important facets of working toward.

The turn to art may have a further benefit in the context of South Africa's extended transition and the project of working toward meaningful (rather than merely formal) democracy. Carolyn Hamilton argues that despite the active construction in the mid-1990s of institutions such as the TRC meant to enable public deliberation, the ANC ultimately engaged in "a corralling of public deliberation and the attempted silencing of critical voices," with debate consequently taking "a far more capillaried form" in and around "articles, books, films, performances, artworks, speeches, advertising and so on" (Hamilton 365–70; see also Bystrom and Nuttall 16–17). Imaginative artwork became a space where voices and subjects shut out of official public discussions could be explored, and in turn convoke their own publics of readers and spectators. The aesthetic depiction of private lives and home spaces—which I have elsewhere termed the "risky" act of "intimate exposure"—may be particularly conducive in this regard.[19] Ahmed describes texts (be they word, image, or social texts like performance) as conductors of emotion, shaping the way people respond to objects and others (*Cultural* 13). Rather than containing feelings in them, texts can instruct or influence the way feelings get attached to people, activating layers of history that manifest as a seemingly intuitive "stickiness," be it of a good or bad variety (ibid. 14).[20] Because, as discussed above, family and home are so often understood as emotive sites laden with both personal and political meanings, representations of them tend to invite the affective responses that generate social stickiness, sometimes even sticking people together in new ways. While not always positive, such stickiness can change the texture of public life (or at least the life of certain publics) in ways that Ndebele has argued is crucial to democracy—helping in the move beyond the "spectacular" or surface culture that he sees as typical of the apartheid years to a richer sharing of vulnerabilities and interior landscapes from which social solidarities may grow ("Afterword"; see also Bystrom and Nuttall 18).

Reading for Relation

Repairing or reshaping individual families and reframing senses of "sticking with" others further removed from the self, at the level of community or nation, are obviously not the same thing. Yet they also, in the context of South Africa's democratic transition, touch each other, are implicated in each other. They have what Bhabha calls an "interstitial intimacy" ("The World" 148). Generally speaking, the authors and artists I explore

here do not explicitly build national allegories in which the family "stands for" the nation (though this paradigm is clearly invoked in one or two cases). They nevertheless are able to draw on this deeply ingrained metaphorical connection while focusing attention more squarely on the concrete, intensely personal relationships of family and home and their wider social implications. Speaking to the way "public and private are obviously interpenetrated, and the domestic and national realms are inseparable from each other," Andrade suggests vis-à-vis an earlier set of feminist African texts a reading practice attentive to the modes in which the domestic refuses to "dissolve into a symbol" but "reasserts itself in literal terms and interferes with the normative expectation that it give rise to a 'higher truth' about national life," and which thus highlights the "quality of interchange between the literal and the figural" (35, 39). It is to capture this kind of nexus—to explore works about family and home as engagements with the past and with others at multiple and changing levels and situated at the interstices between private and public life—that I turn to the term "relation," described previously as a flexible signifier and as a reading frame meant to draw attention to family matters and their social embeddedness.

Relation refers most immediately to the "sticky" ties that bind people who consider themselves to be relatives or kin or who otherwise share the space of a home; those affective ties forged by the supposed claims of blood or marriage, and those shaped by living in close quarters and sharing daily routines or tasks, by innumerable moments of care and betrayal. It is here that some of the most difficult questions of how to live in the aftermath of loss and violence, with and against others who may have caused that loss or violence, come to the fore. It is also here that some of the most potent contacts with strangers and strangeness occur, and cause us to rethink our boundaries and identities. As writers and artists explore and represent such close encounters, meditating on how to navigate, sustain, or repair the relationships that shape our families and homes, they may then also reconfigure our links to more distant others who nevertheless have a claim to our attention, with whom we share something, have something in common—perhaps, extending "common" to the commonwealth, even our citizenship (van der Vlies "The People" 497). Relation is about a certain *familiarity* denied in previous regimes. Against apartheid's delusional goal of separation, it asks how to live with, next door to, in the same city as, those previously defined as other but now sharing one country and one future; and what that one country and one future should mean.

Using relation as a reading frame does not mean to read for coziness or comfort. Comfort does not characterize most of family or domestic

life, nor does it speak to a society as riven with fault lines as postapartheid South Africa. Relation points rather to what Sarah Nuttall theorizes as "entanglement":

> a condition of being twisted together or entwined, involved with; it speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted, or ignored or uninvited. It is a term which may gesture towards a set of social relationships that is complicated, ensnaring, in a tangle, but which also implies a human foldedness. It works with difference and sameness but also with their limits, their predicaments, their moments of complication. (*Entanglement* 1)

Relation, like "entanglement," points to complicated bonds built on sometimes unwanted intimacy, and to problems as much as to potential solutions.

I should also make explicit that my understanding of relation, with its attention to working through traumas facing individual families and working toward a different kind of present and future, does not exhaust the use of discourses, repertoires, and iconographies of family and home in the first 15 years of democracy. Some artists create family fictions in order to turn away from questions of politics and country altogether. At the other end of the scale, home and family are also signs that have been reappropriated toward exclusionary political and social ends. As already suggested above, they have long been sites of enforced heteronormativity and of male privilege, where "tradition" and its allied versions of masculinity collude to exclude possibilities of queer kinship and enable practices like the "corrective rape" of lesbians in the townships. They have also been sites where notions of privacy and separation from the public realm enable the victimization of women and children.[21] In her poignant memoir *Never Been at Home*, Zazah Khuzwayo, abused as a child by her father, describes her father's house in the following terms: "I looked round and it was supposed to feel like home, but it didn't. It was a strange place; it felt like a cave. As we entered it I felt like I was walking on the skulls and bones of dead people" (65; see also Samuelson "Walking" 131). Replacing the model of the white patriarchal family ascendant during apartheid with that of the black patriarchal family prized by current President Zuma addresses issues of racial equality while leaving gendered oppression untouched.[22] It further perpetuates the idea of a normative family that stands for the nation and must be protected from "dirty" or "threatening" migrants from the rest of Africa, enabling the violation of those considered "foreign."[23] Yet for these very reasons paying attention to the micro-politics of family life and home spaces, to the openings and closures of freedom registered in the substance and affective textures of

our interactions there, is crucial. As what Andrade calls an "ac[t] of strong reading" (39),[24] focusing our gaze on the historical period of democracy as experienced at home can be a first step to making home and homeland more democratic in a deep and ethical sense.

Intimate Conversations

Each of the chapters that follow in *Democracy at Home in South Africa* convenes an intimate conversation about a crisis of relation—a puzzle of how to come to terms with family and home spaces as well as their wider implications—provoked by the demands of the democratic transition. These conversations spill outward in various ways, reaching from the concrete circumstances depicted in the artworks to appeal to or create new publics and engage in wider debates. To capture this dynamic, I juxtapose close reading in the chapters with readings of the political and social contexts in which the artwork circulates, and what I take to be its social ambitions. I also move between various forms of media, tracking the shifting sites of energy of transitional culture as it flows across and perhaps from literature to visual culture. Speaking to the uneven time-escape of the extended transition, the pieces examined in the chapters move between past, present, and future as they create a similarly textured affective landscape bridging the individual and collective. Together, they reveal a changing society characterized both by blockages and openings to unexpected vistas—suggesting much in need of change and also offering social imaginaries that may help this change to occur.

Chapter 1, "A 'New' South African Family Romance," raises the question of whether and how recognizing new blood relatives can lead to meaningful senses of relation on a wider scale. It examines a practice popular in the early transition where white South Africans and particularly Afrikaners publically "discover" blood ties to indigenous or slave forbearers (see C. Coetzee; Samuelson *Remembering*; Gqola). I begin with the optimistic scenario posed by André Brink in *Imaginings of Sand* (Afrikaans 1995, trans. into English by the author in 1996), a novel that models how learning about unexpected family members can lead to more democratic forms of daily life and to a commitment to the "new" South African democracy. It reveals the impact that acknowledging blood ties historically suppressed by apartheid can have on individuals and their visions of a national community. Yet this celebratory approach also glosses over certain difficulties, which I approach through two works that rewrite Brink's family romance from the point of view of young coloured or multiracial women—Zoe Wicomb's novel *Playing in the Light* (2006) and Phillippa Yaa de Villiers' performance piece *Original Skin*

(prem. 2008/ pub. 2010). I argue that these artworks pose the challenging process of working through the traumas, betrayals, and estrangements that mark our relationships to those we consider kin, especially across the racial lines set out by the apartheid state, as a better starting point than the family romance for reformulating individual and national homes.

Chapter 2, "Remembering the Lost: On Family Members and Domestic Life," continues the conversation about how family history gets mobilized in the extended transition, but it focuses on the crises or complications this history can provoke specifically from the perspective of black South African writers and artists. I explore a series of artworks invested in remembering aslant, and challenging the above-mentioned tradition of "spectacular" representation that dominated black writing during the apartheid years. These are Santu Mofokeng's photography installation *The Black Photo Album* (1997), John Kani's play *Nothing But the Truth* (prem. 2002/ pub. 2002), and Njabulo Ndebele's novel *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* (2003). These works all recover uncomfortable (and for this reason repressed) aspects of domestic life in order to unsettle heroic narratives of struggle, sacrifice, and redemption. They also pose this memory work as key to repairing relationships and forging more equitable and satisfying futures. Their focus on sharing "ordinary" stories of family and home with various publics allows me to track how strategies of intimate exposure get tied to the task of working through trauma within black communities. Yet if the previous chapter speaks to the need for white South Africans to seriously engage with the traumas of others, this chapter suggests the need for discourse by and about black South Africans to move beyond the tropes of trauma and mourning.

In chapter 3, "Keeping House," I move from family histories to a conversation about the difficulties of sharing home spaces during the extended transition. I look specifically at the "sticky" relationships between madams and maids, often described in (white, middle-class) South Africa as being "like family" (Cock; Ally). Domestic service is an institution that always bound together that which apartheid tried to keep apart and where many of the pernicious effects of apartheid get reproduced in the present, if across more scrambled racial lines. This is a space of difficulty that must be faced; but as a key site of encounter, I argue, it may also be a space where new understandings of relation can be negotiated. The chapter begins with Craig Higginson's play *Dream of the Dog* (prem. 2007/ pub. 2009) and Marlene van Niekerk's novel *Agaat* (Afrikaans 2004, trans. into English by Michiel Heyns 2006), which explore the blinkered psychology of "madams" and the possibilities of undoing this concrete relation of mastery. It then turns to two projects where artists pay tribute to their domestic worker mothers: Zanele Muholi's photography series *'Massa'*

and Mina(h) (2008–) and Mary Sibande's exhibition *Long Live the Dead Queen* (2009). These pieces "queer" and attempt to transcend the legacy of the ties forged through domestic service.

Finally, in chapter 4, "Queer Homes and Migrant Homes," the conversation is one on the possibilities of creating homes for two groups ambivalently incorporated into the "new" South Africa—gay and lesbian South Africans, and black African "foreigners" or immigrants. While these two groups are not generally considered jointly, I draw on Neville Hoad's (*African* 81) suggestion that the common slur used to describe "foreigners," *makwerekwere*, contains an echo of "queer" in it to explore how these two groups are used to define inclusion and exclusion from the developing democratic national identity, often in contrast to an imagined "traditional" South African family. I then trace how, in this context, activist writers and artists have foregrounded both the traumas and the triumphs of making families and homes of their choosing to broaden understandings of relation and claim a place in the nation. The chapter focuses on depictions of "ordinary" domesticity and acts of hospitality in writing by David Medalie (1998) and Simão Kikamba (2005), images from Jean Brundrit's photographic series *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* (1998), the exhibition *Home Affairs* (2008) created by Mark Gevisser, Clive van den Berg, and Sharon Cort, and Terry Kurgan's public photography project *Hotel Yeoville* (2010). Considering these works together allows me to develop earlier analyses of intimate exposure and to suggest how sharing personal experiences can both aid and impede members of these groups in the search for safety and belonging.

★ ★ ★

These chapters present only some of the very many intimate conversations provoked by the democratic transition, opening the door for further analysis rather than pretending to comprehensiveness or completion. They thread between an emphasis on the trauma of the past and the possibility that attention to the past may open up different presents and futures; between recognition of the divisions that continue to structure South African society and insistence on forms of intimacy that may disrupt such division. My theoretical approach maps such divergent tendencies within the works I study, as it turns both to psychoanalysis, trauma theory, and memory studies and to the language of care, affect, and intimacy currently employed by feminist, queer, and postcolonial cultural theorists.[25] Putting such approaches into dialogue allows us to move across and between registers that often seem to fully and on their own encapsulate questions about family and domestic life—to tease out the

public importance of personal reflections while keeping a grasp on the centrality of attending to individual, embodied experience when using the language and iconographies of home and family in more symbolic ways. It reveals the work of cultural production during the extended transition to deconstruct the boundary between public and private zones, and locates intimate life at the heart of national reinvention.

In some sense, reading for relation is about attention to the micro-level, to the everyday, to the registers that don't always *register* as a form of political discussion. This book is a call to think through the importance of imaginative engagements with intimate life and the ways in which these engagements affect the publics they address. For most of *Democracy at Home in South Africa*, I broach these questions specifically within the time period of the extended democratic transition, with its palpable desire to rewrite the boundaries of the South African community in ways that, perhaps with less and less intensity, reflect the preoccupations of the immediate transition: the need to redefine South Africa to reflect the spirit of inclusion and nonracialism embodied by Mandela and embedded in the Constitution, while at the same time being attentive to historical injustice and the continuing poverty facing the black majority. I close the bracket of analysis in 2009, with the assumption of power by Zuma serving as a convenient way to indicate the recession of the national project, a turn to ethnic nationalisms, a deep sense of the failure of democracy, and the desire for radical alternatives to the politics of the earlier postapartheid moment. Such feelings crystallized in the ANC's 2012 call for a "second transition," one focused less on formal democratization than on social and economic transformation.[26] Mbembe's response to the ANC policy draft characterizes only too well the sense of "stalemate" that many had come to associate with the democratic transition, even as he argues that the ANC's proposed vision failed to fundamentally alter an underlying "extractive economy" and continued to sacrifice meaningful democracy for market gain ("Rule").

This is not to say that 2009 presents a clean break. In line with the scrambled time frames explored here, aspects of the extended transition stretch past this mark—indeed, the last work I consider in the chapters dates from 2010 and the second transition statements were issued in 2012—while many of the trends that define the next phase emerge much earlier.[27] Such slippages allow me to suggest that the end of the extended transition does not end the need to read for relation, drawing out the politics of the personal, the intimate, home and family as they circulate in the public realm. In a short conclusion, I both revisit my broader theoretical framing and explore some ways of taking the arguments here forward in time.

CHAPTER 1

A "NEW" SOUTH AFRICAN FAMILY ROMANCE

Former President F. W. De Klerk's autobiography *The Last Trek: A New Beginning*, published in 1999, begins with some intriguing revelations about the family history of the figure who presided over the dismantling of apartheid (somewhat ambivalently, it must be stated) and took on the task of leading the National Party (NP) into democracy. These revelations included that of his blood ties to an enslaved Indian woman. The author takes pains to show that "the story of the De Klerks was the story of the Afrikaner nation," an argument he bolsters with the fact that "Hendrik Bibault, the half-brother of one of our ancestors, Susanna, was the first to call himself an Afrikaner—or an African" (De Klerk 3). The famous cry "*Ik ben een Afrikaander*" has often been claimed as the founding moment for "the white tribe of Africa." De Klerk, however, takes this claim in what may be a surprising direction, given the infamous Afrikaner obsession with racial purity. Susana, he proceeds to reveal, was the daughter of a Dutch settler named Detlef Bibault and an enslaved woman named Diana of Bengal. Susana's daughter Engela in turn married De Klerk's "direct ancestor" Barend De Klerk in 1737 (De Klerk 4). The story of the De Klerk family and the Afrikaner nation can, in this version, only be multiracial from its very beginnings. Of course, he hastens to add: "This was part of my genealogy of which we did not speak—and of which I did not know—when I was a child" (De Klerk 4).

De Klerk was not alone in making this kind of pronouncement. Rewriting family history became a widespread and repeated narrative project as South Africa's democratic transition began in 1994. Scholars such as Carli Coetzee, Meg Samuelson (*Remembering*), and Pumla Gqola all point to the tendency of white South Africans and particularly Afrikaners in the 1990s to "discover" that they had Asian, African, Khoi

or San ancestors.[1] One particularly popular figure for recuperation was Krotoa-Eva, the Khoi woman who was forced to serve the van Riebeeck household and became the first figure in recorded South African history to have a biracial child after her marriage to the Danish surgeon Pieter van Meerhof in 1664. In 1995, the performer Antoinette Pienaar, building on a slightly earlier volume of poetry and a children's book by Karen Press, crafted a one-woman show that positions Krotoa as a metaphorical "mother" of the Afrikaners (C. Coetzee 114–15, 117–18). Almost a decade later, well-known journalist Max du Preez claims Krotoa quite literally as a foremother in his memoir *Pale Native* (30, also cited in Samuelson *Remembering* 48). Alongside the statements of NP politicians, journalists, and artists, online discussions, articles, and letters in local newspapers encouraging the practice of amateur genealogy and testifying to the benefits of recovering a multiracial family history imply that such thinking gained currency in the broader public.[2]

These examples reveal the outlines of what I call a "new" South African family romance, with the quotation marks around *new* meant both to refer to the common designation of the democratic state as the "new South Africa" and to suggest that, as in the case of the state, the new family romance may not be so entirely different from the old. [3] In "Family Romances," Sigmund Freud identifies a childhood desire that remains, according to critic Marthe Robert, "a forgotten fragment of our archaeology" (160): the desire for an alternative family. Freud's "family romance" runs as follows. At a certain point, every child realizes that his parents are not the only possible—and not the most desirable—parents in the world. There may indeed be "better" parents available to him. At this point, "the child's imagination becomes engaged in the task of getting free from the parents of whom he now has such a low opinion and of replacing them with others, occupying, as a rule, a higher social station" (Freud "Family Romances" 157). The child imagines himself to be an orphan. And not just any orphan. As Robert points out, it is a "Foundling, to whom his true parents—royal, needless to say, or at least noble and influential—will eventually reveal themselves and restore him to his rightful status" (162). In the context of a white South African public constituted through multiple forms of repression and facing a potential moment of maturation, this particular theory seems peculiarly appropriate.[4] Substitute a generic child dreaming that he is a Foundling of noble birth with a white South African dreaming that he has ancestors of different races, and we have a resonant model for understanding the behavior of De Klerk and others cited here. As we will see, it is a model generative in both positive and negative ways throughout the extended democratic transition.

In the 1990s and 2000s in South Africa, this investigation into and rewriting of family history offered some clear benefits. As noted already in the Introduction, apartheid South Africa held dear the vision of a white family unsullied by congress with other races. Colonialism, slavery, and apartheid created a peculiar poetics of blood in which black blood was thought inferior to white blood, while "Coloured" blood—a category seen to originally result from and referring to a mixture between the two—was considered both "better" than black blood and "less pure" because of its adulteration (a term which links it to adultery and other forms of transgressive or nonnormative sexuality).[5] In part because of what celebrated coloured critic and author Zoë Wicomb identifies as the "shame" attached to these associations ("Shame" 92), which supported the general proscription on any kind of relation across the "colour bar," white South Africans tended to deny the coloured relatives many of them nonetheless had. Afrikaner novelist Etienne van Heerden makes this attitude visible when he names one such family branch the "Shame-family" (Wicomb "Five" 170).[6] Given this history, the appearance of white South Africans clamoring to recognize their "non-white" ancestry—in Freudian terms, turning people of color into the "noble or influential" parents—signified a positive opening. Most importantly, it valorized coloured, Indian, and black African heritage as a source of pride, strength, and cultural capital in the "new" nation. It also allowed white individuals to shed their manufactured separateness and embrace the biological ties that may have existed between them and their ancestors of different races. As they came to feel a kinship with people of color, they may in turn have found a way to imagine themselves into South Africa's emergent multiracial democracy (see also Bystrom "The DNA" 228).[7]

Such a reading of the family romance resonates with the work of feminist social geographer Catherine Nash, who argues—against an older critical tradition that simplistically dismisses genealogy as a vehicle for upholding exclusionary social formations and conceptions of identity—that the popular practice of writing family trees is a way of not only "describing" but also "producing" relations that may have transformative effects (16–18). Notions of blood ties and feelings of kinship play a profound role in shaping senses of self and place in society; the idea that "my ancestors made me who I am" in cultural and physical terms is a common mantra (Nash 17). Sharing family ties with others often strengthens our emotional connections with them and indicates a kind of thickness (as in the expression "blood is thicker than water") or "stickiness" in Sara Ahmed's sense (*Cultural*). Altering family histories by making imaginative and affective investments in certain among the multitude of branches that make up any individual's family tree may

therefore allow that person to alter his or her identity and, since identity is not a singular object but a relational process, the cluster of social relationships interwoven with it (Nash).[8] In transitional South Africa, the act of confronting the diversity kept "in the closet" of many families offered the possibility of shaking up sedimented racial identities and making room for something new. The feeling of being connected to a Khoi or Indian slave ancestor also presented the possibility of extending outward, allowing people to acknowledge sites of collaboration and exchange with individuals of other races in the present even as it transfigured the definition of whiteness itself. In other words, claiming new *relatives* had the potential to open up new understandings of *relation* in a more expansive sense.

Of course, while engaging in what cultural theorist Sarah Nuttall (*Entanglement*) calls reinventing "subjectivities of whiteness"—and concurrently celebrating nonwhite cultures and traditions—is clearly necessary, this particular form of doing so also ran certain risks. "Melanising" (to borrow a term from Wicomb in "Five Afrikaner texts and the rehabilitation of whiteness" [171]) whiteness by claiming ancestors of color can be seen to repress participation in oppression designed to guarantee white privilege, and to overwrite the experiences of coloured communities, who, as noted above, were far from celebrated because of their position "in between" black and white.[9] As Gqola puts it, in addition to being "a denial of privilege and complicity," using "the register of 'mixed ancestry'" in such a fashion "exoticises this position and trivializes the memory of three and a half centuries of racial terror and pain" (130). It can ultimately become a way to justify identity as a "white African" without attending to the damage done in the historical formulation of this identity (Gqola 112). Further, as it defines relation through biological ties, the family romance outlined here can be seen to reassert the damaging tropes of blood and genes as the basis for belonging in the democratic South Africa at exactly the same moment when different visions were possible (Samuelson *Remembering* 20). On these points, we might recall that what Freud initially labeled "the family romance of the neurotic" is in almost every case a fantasy and that the psychological impulse guiding this fantasy is for the child to be restored to what he feels is his "rightful" place in society—that is, at the top of it. While not the inevitable outcome of the "new" South African version, the ending of Freud's fable is telling: The irony of the desire of individuals to rewrite their origins, inscribing themselves within genealogies that alter their family histories and thus open up new trajectories in their lives, is that the child ends up imagining his new father or set of parents as almost exactly the same as his old ones. "These new and aristocratic parents," Freud writes, "are

equipped with attributes that are derived entirely from real recollections of the actual and humble ones; so that in fact the child is not getting rid of his father but exalting him" (158).

The meaning of the "new" South African family romance, then, is something of a puzzle. To what extent could and can the process of reinventing family history and discovering new relatives open up space in which to transform whiteness, crafting new understandings of being and belonging, home and community? Can it, to echo Rita Barnard's appropriation of Nadine Gordimer's compelling phrase, help people "leave the house of the white race" (10)? Furthermore, and as South African intellectuals like Adam Habib and Himla Soodyall have suggested, can the benefits of rewriting genealogies in a multiracial fashion extend beyond whiteness to colouredness, Indianness, blackness, and other formerly repressed identities, productively unsettling these categories?[10] Or is the family romance better understood as a neurotic fantasy that functions mainly to insulate whites from fears about the transition (for instance, fears of the forcible redistribution of land seen in neighboring Zimbabwe) and to divert attention from the pressing work of enacting material change and finding alternative modes of living together that faced all of South Africa's inhabitants?

This chapter addresses these questions through a close analysis of three family fictions that participate in or critique the family romance outlined above: *Imaginings of Sand* (Afrikaans 1995, translated into English by the author in 1996), a novel by the prolific dissident white Afrikaner author André Brink; *Original Skin* (prem. 2008; pub. 2010), the first play written by the biracial performance poet Phillippa Yaa de Villiers; and *Playing in the Light* (2006), the second novel written by Wicomb, already mentioned above. These works, written at different moments in the extended transition and by authors from different generations and backgrounds, all focus on young women who believe themselves to be white, and, in part for this reason, are struggling to find a "home" in the "new" South Africa—captured in a symbolic time-frame spanning the first democratic elections in 1994 and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Human Rights Violation hearings in 1996–98. In each case, the protagonist addresses her crisis through the trope of the "new" family romance. She "discovers" her "non-white" ancestors and is forced to come to terms with this previously repressed family history—and living family members—in the present. This shared narrative has contradictory implications in the different texts. What begins as a story intended to help whites and particularly Afrikaners to think and feel their way into democracy is progressively deconstructed to show the dangers of "melanising" fantasies and to highlight instead coloured experiences. At the same time,

the very critiques I ultimately trace show how crucial exploring family pasts and presents can be for whites coloureds and beyond.

Living Like Family

Imaginings of Sand is set in the edgy and confusing weeks before the first democratic elections in 1994. The protagonist Kristien Müller, an Afrikaner woman who at the start of the novel lives in exile in London, describes the situation in South Africa: "At the very moment, 'democratic' elections in sight, when one would be expecting to see the unresolved rage of centuries temporarily settling, however uneasily, into the tense calm of anticipation, wave upon wave of violence was racking the place" (14). The turmoil in South Africa, reported on the British nightly news, causes Kristien to feel "relief…more than ever before, not to be in that country" (14). But in spite of her vows never to go back, she does return to South Africa when she learns that "terrorists" have bombed her family homestead and seriously injured her 103-year-old grandmother Ouma Kristina.

The action in Brink's novel thus is precipitated by the attack on the protagonist's family farm, clearly set up in the text as a metaphor for South Africa. Brink's novel, indeed, is the most obvious example of national allegory considered in this book. The house is described as something that "resemble[s] nothing else on the planet":

> Three stories high, topped with turrets, minarets, fleches, campaniles, domes, what had started off as a High Victorian folly turned out as Boer Baroque. Sandstone and redbrick, delicate fluted iron pillars and broekie lace, interspersed with balustrades of finely turned Burmese teak, flashes of Doric and Corinthian inspiration and even a Cape–Dutch gable on the South facade, contributed by a homesick Malay team carted into the interior after a mixed gang of shady Italian and Austro-Hungarian bandits had had to be deported for wreaking havoc on the site. (7)

With its architectural aspirations and materials stemming from Europe, the Dutch colonies in the Indies, and South Africa itself, this "Boer Baroque" structure incorporates symbolic markers of almost all of the groups that went into the making of pre-apartheid South Africa, willingly or through violent coercion. The house also represents the sinister underside of the apartheid policy, in which different "ethnic" groups were forced to live in geographically distinct "homelands." These "homelands" functioned during apartheid as that repressed or excluded spatial configuration that gave the white world its definition. Continuing the architectural metaphor, the basement of Ouma Kristina's house "replicat[es]

with disconcerting exactness the plan of the ground floor . . . Each room and lobby and passage had its corresponding space down here, like a subconscious mind . . . in which each event and gesture, each coming and going from the official world could be echoed and mimed" (7–8). It is here in the basement, described as a "prison" (8), that the ghosts of those excluded from history linger.[11]

Given its incorporation of multiple and conflicting aspects of the history of South Africa up through the apartheid era, it is not surprising that the house appears to Kristien as "the wreck of a great ghost ship perched on a submerged rock or sandbank in a sea of petrified, undulating plains" (9). Yet, the question of who will become heir to this wreck is a major concern of the novel. Echoing Lionel Trilling's comment that the real issue in the inheritance of Howard's End in E. M. Forster's novel of the same name is the question of "who shall inherit England" (102), Brink constructs a situation in which the passing down of Ouma Kristina's farm both plays out and stands for the struggle over possession or control of the country itself. As we will see, the question of inheritance is inextricably tied to the family romance that gets constructed as Kristien revisits her family tree through her grandmother's stories and discovers in them a series of secrets about her ancestry—secrets that allow her to understand herself and her family differently and ultimately to find a "home" in South Africa, even if it is not the family farm.

Kristien's older sister Anna, married to the right-wing fanatic Casper Louw, is the first to lay a claim to the farm. This claim is based on traditional patriarchal genealogy and the property order established by it.[12] As Anna reminds Kristien, she is "the oldest . . . and it *is* the family farm" (19). Following this system of logic would allow the old Afrikaner order to be symbolically and physically maintained, since in the hands of Casper the farm would be harnessed to the biological, economic, and cultural reproduction of ethno-nationalist Afrikanerdom.[13] In his hands the white family would also remain separate from its "family of shame," whose fate would remain outlined—much as Brink does when he both ironizes and reinscribes a coloured lineage in his first novel *Looking on Darkness* (1974)—in terms of the "tragic mode" of predestined misery notably depicted in Sarah Gertrude Millin's *God's Step-children* (1924).[14] *Imaginings of Sand* suggests, however, that in postapartheid South Africa such ethno-nationalist purity and continuity are no longer possible. The bombing of the house creates a physical scar that marks a disruption in the desired transfer from one generation to the next. The physical effects of the bombing, represented as the "invasion of the house by outside space," makes visible a violence that "interrupts the very process of return" to old spaces and "identit[ies] suspended" in the past (31). The house and

the community that it represents can no longer be sealed, pushing underground what it fears or finds too close for comfort.

By coming to terms with a different kind of genealogy, Kristien is able to make a different kind of claim. Annette and Peter Horn call this a "female genealogy" (108) spun out in Ouma Kristina's fantastical stories about Kristien's female ancestors, which are interspersed in the text with Kristien's first-person account of her return. Ouma Kristina narrates in an unruly fashion, circling around and between the women's stories, telling each one at the moment she sees fit according to present demands, often revising her own earlier versions. Nevertheless, as her grandmother speaks, Kristien pieces together a lineage very different from the one invoked by Anna. She *comes to believe*—a formulation I return to later—that her family springs from the liaison between founding Dutch settler Adam Oosthuizen and Kamma-Maria, a young Khoi woman who becomes a translator for the Dutch in the early days of colonization, and whose character is modeled on Krotoa-Eva.[15] With the sexual encounter between Adam and Kamma-Maria posited as a provisional beginning for Kristien's bloodline, Kamma-Maria becomes what Samuelson calls a "rainbow mother" (*Remembering* 16) whose legacy continues in each successive ancestor named by Kristina: Lottie, Samuel, Wilhemina, Petronella, Rachel, Kristina, and finally Louisa, Kristien's own mother. Moving closer in time, Kristien also discovers that Ouma Kristina's own father was most likely the father of her servant and lifelong companion Lizzie—a coloured laborer named Salie, who rapes Kristina's mother Rachel after Rachel's father violates Salie's daughter. This would make Ouma Kristina herself coloured, though the novel does not address this possibility in exactly these terms. The new family history, in which generations are conceived through rape, trickery, incest, and adultery ranging across racial barriers, exposes the accepted white patriarchal version as a farce at the same time that it draws attention to the multiple sites of violence it repressed.

Ouma Kristina's stories do not just reveal new biological relatives, but also hold out for Kristien a new relation to history itself—one in which the past becomes a site of rupture, discontinuity, and fictionality rather than any secure truth. This discontinuity is manifested as a series of formal and thematic breaks in Ouma Kristina's narrative. The storyteller goes to great lengths to make clear that her versions of history are simply versions, which may or may not match up. Even when telling her own story, Ouma Kristina refuses to give one definitive "history." Instead, she gives one account in which she runs away with a lover to Persia and there conceives Kristien's mother Louisa, one in which the young couple get only as far as Cape Town, where Ouma Kristina becomes pregnant and

returns to the farm to have her child, and one in which all of her children belong to Ouma Kristina's husband Cornelius Bassoon after all. Further, in each woman's story, there is at least one moment that discards all trappings of verisimilitude: Petronella Wepener, Kristina's grandmother, swears that she traveled in an ark to Egypt, while Kamma-Maria is saved from the wrath of Adam Oosthuizen by turning herself into a tree. It is thus difficult to latch on to any secure connections between the different segments of Ouma Kristina's narrative. The life of each woman becomes a hinge that can open up in any number of directions. Kristien is linked to her female ancestors through a number of discontinuous joints, each drawing the past and present into a proximity that never quite touches.

It is tempting to dismiss the moments of magical realism in the novel as pure fantasy, as Kristien does when she first begins listening to Ouma Kristina's stories. Yet, it is significant that such moments tend to correspond with moments of physical or emotional trauma: rape, physical abuse, or abandonment. This kind of break in the text may then point to the previously silenced pain experienced by the women and signal the psychological strategies necessary for them to deal with their situations. Trauma theorists like Dominick LaCapra define trauma as "a shattering break or cesura in experience" (186). Cathy Caruth similarly suggests that traumatic experience is "an event that is itself constituted, in part, by its lack of integration into consciousness"—one that eludes normal processing in language and integration as part of our ongoing life story and instead is encoded in a something like a separate stream of memory that repeats compulsively (152–53; see also van der Kolk and van der Hart 176–77; van der Merwe and Gobodo-Madikizela vii). The possibility of bringing these two streams together is largely dependent on the victim's ability to construct narratives that alter the shape of the traumatic memories; Bessel van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart argue that recovery is a matter of encouraging the "flexibility of memory" through the generation of less-stressful versions of the past that help victims approach and integrate painful events (178–79). Are Ouma Kristina's stories flights of fancy, then, or attempts to reveal and come to terms with the traumas of her foremothers? The novel quite typically refuses to answer. Rather than making "truth" claims for one version of the past, it taps into ambiguities in historical narratives and exposes a series of gaps in what had been the "official story." In this way, it begins what Brink identifies as the crucial project of "excavating [the] silence" buried by previous versions of national history ("Stories" 33).

This process of narrative uncovering or excavation opens up possibilities for Kristien, since the breaks, ruptures, or flights of fancy in Ouma Kristina's stories become spaces in which new connections can be made.

It is up to Kristien to forge links between seemingly disconnected stories, to make decisions about what might have "really" happened or who the "real" father might be in any individual case, to "stick with" or become "stuck to" certain versions and the kin they entail. Her ability to know her own history, to reconstruct her own bloodline, becomes a matter of "belief" (42, 308)—or rather, and here I return to the question of choice and belief flagged above, of choosing which particular narrative to invest belief in, and then to live by. This takes us to the heart of the ethical project of the novel and, according to Brink, that of postapartheid fiction more generally. Brink understands life to be a collection of narratives. In this context, he muses, "if life itself is story-shaped, then the choices presented by story cannot be denied or avoided, as they coincide with the choices of life" ("Stories" 41). What is at stake then is not what is true, but what the consequences of the particular narrative that you choose to believe in are for your sense of self and actions. This point is underscored in Brink's 1996 essay "Reinventing a Continent," where he also explores how offering multiple stories of history to a reader whose own life and country are "a collection of narratives" presents him or her "with the need—and above all the responsibility—to choose" (246).[16]

Crucially, rather than simply fantasizing about her family history, Kristien is shown to act on the thickened feeling of relation to individuals and to history that she acquires through Ouma Kristina's stories. She does this in concrete ways that bring us back to the question of inheritance and the family homestead. Kristien's most important revelation—even more important than that of Kamma-Maria, which in some sense serves as a preparation for her later "discoveries"—is the aforementioned fact that her great-grandfather is most likely the grandfather of the coloured servant who keeps house, Trui, the daughter of Lizzie. Upon learning this, Kristien goes to Trui and asks her to try to begin "living like family" (170), which in this case means to interact on the basis of actual kinship rather than the servitude that Trui has been conditioned to accept (I will explore another and more sinister version of "living like family" in chapter 3). Part of what it means to live as family for Kristien is economic redistribution, and she herself asks her grandmother to bequeath the farm and farmhouse to Trui, her husband, and their son, rather than to Kristien. Through this act, the house returns to what many would consider its rightful ownership, as the country is politically returned to the hands of the majority. Kristien's expanded sense of her own family history thus allows her to connect to the coloured portion of her family, a connection that requires both recognition, as an affective shift, and redistribution, as a mode of action. While Trui's inheritance is surely not enough to allow them to "live like family" on

its own, it provides some kind of real, material foundation on which a new kind of relationship can be constructed.

What Kristien inherits then is not the farm (though, to be fair, she does receive "a good amount" of Ouma Kristina's wealth) but her grandmother's stories, which allow her to come to a new vision of her family history and her family in the present. Through this process, she also gains new feelings of attachment to people she is not "related" to in any sense other than through her citizenship. When Thando, an ANC leader who Kristien adopts as a "grandfather," addresses Kristien in the plural—because, as he explains, "you have all your ghosts with you" (267)—she realizes that her identity can only be constituted through the female ancestors who went before her. She comes to see herself as "a multitude," a subject that can no longer be "detached, apart . . . [from] those who have gone before" but one that both "needs" and "is needed by" her "past selves" (336). Self-consciously carrying the ghosts of the past, aware of the ways in which violence is perpetuated, and of the efforts to resist and to build solidarity, Kristien's "I" becomes a "we." On election day in 1994, when her whole town floods to the polls and Kristien decides to cast her lot with and "believe in . . . these people around me here, now, today, and those women behind me, all of us in search of our lost shadows" (308), this personal "we" gets semantically extended to the national community as a whole. It is through this slippage between the "we" of her family history and the "we" of the nation that Kristien ultimately finds a new place for herself in the "new" South Africa, when she chooses not to return to England in the wake of the elections (see also Kossew "Reinventing" 119).

In this reading, which I think largely reflects the spirit in which Brink wrote the novel, Kristien charts one way in which Afrikaners, and white South Africans more generally, might imagine and feel new modes of being and belonging in the democratic state. Readers, in part through the narrative structure and in part through the identification that they (or at least some of them) might feel with Kristien, are also asked to choose and to live out these choices. One might of course wish to be skeptical of the triumphal outcome of Brink's family romance, as critics have been of the novel as a whole. In an early and astute response to *Imaginings of Sand*, Sue Kossew ("Reinventing") raises a number of important questions. She suggests that Brink's theory of the political role of literature in the postapartheid period, and the novel share an "internal contradiction" in their attempt to radically deconstruct history while at the same time excavating alternative, "healthier" histories ("Reinventing 116) and further flags the lack of reflexiveness in Brink's assumption of a feminist perspective, particularly the novel's

seeming equation of white Afrikaner and "non-white" female experiences (ibid. 121–23). Samuelson further uses Brink's novel as an example of the damaging biological "melanisation" narrative sketched above. Stressing the blood ties posited between Kristien and Kamma-Maria, she claims that Brink reduces Kamma-Maria to a "womb" whose only real contribution to the "new" South Africa is that of genetic material (*Remembering* 19–20, 26). This reduction is dangerous, she argues, not only because it reinscribes biology and bloodlines as the language of citizenship in the democratic South Africa, but also because it—ironically in a novel meant to recover women's voices—silences women's speech including the traumatic stories of rape (among other violent events) on which the claims to "rainbow" bloodlines rest (*Remembering* 30). What I have suggested here has more affinity with Horn and Horn's argument that the vision of family constructed in *Imaginings of Sand* is not just about "biology" or "genes" but also about "stories" (113). This second strand holds out the possibility of moving beyond the simple reversal of a patriarchal discourse of belonging obsessed with purity in favor of a matriarchal discourse of belonging obsessed with hybridity, each understood in terms of blood, that Samuelson's description implies. It does this by posing ancestry as an imaginative affiliation or attachment with chosen narratives about forbearers rather than a fixed set of genetic links.[17] Yet, this possibility may remain unrealized in the actuality of the text.

Brink's text also raises unanswered questions about the relationship between Kristien's discovery of "non-white" ancestry and the historical construction of coloured identity in South Africa. The novel treats the biological "hybridity" or mixture that Kristien discovers in her family tree, and comes to embrace in herself, as a gateway to connection in the democratic state. However, this metaphorical usage exists in tension with the complex and painful history of colouredness that occupies the site of "hybridity" in the South African context, and which is largely, if not entirely, ignored in the novel. What does it mean for Afrikaners or other white South Africans to rewrite the meaning of multiracial identities in this fashion? Is it a troubling form of reverse racial "passing," aligned with what Yvette Christiansë identifies as the "passing" that took place during the TRC Amnesty hearings when white apartheid "agents of violence" claimed "vicitimization by history" (376)? Does it, as Gqola argues, justify a "white African" identity at the expense of any ethical engagement with history? Further, what are the implications of the family romance for coloured South Africans, who in this schema become the bearers of democratization and future prosperity? To take up these questions, I turn now from Brink's novel to de Villiers' *Original Skin*.

This play, written over a decade after *Imaginings of Sand*, recuperates the fantasy figure at the heart of the Freudian family romance—the adopted child needing to reconstruct his or her ancestry—to reflect on the "new" South African version. In addition to offering a quite different perspective on this theme, its status as a piece of theater helps to highlight the at once embodied and performative nature of racial identity that *Imaginings of Sand* seems to overlook.

A Rosetta Stone?

The one-woman play *Original Skin*, written and performed by de Villiers and directed by Robert Colman and later Vanessa Cooke, literalizes the "new" South African family romance. This semi-autobiographical piece, which premiered at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg in May 2008 and has since toured nationally and internationally, centers on the story of a young female character named Alexandra (Alex) Coetzee.[18] Alex grows up believing that she is the biological daughter of the white South African medical doctor Louise Coetzee and her similarly white husband Barry. She discovers at age 20 that she was in fact adopted by the Coetzees when she was a small baby, in 1966. In this same year, her biological mother, a white Australian teenager who became pregnant after a brief sexual encounter with a black African immigrant to Australia, made the curious decision to bring her biracial daughter to apartheid South Africa and place her in an orphanage there. Louise Coetzee was called in to the orphanage to examine Alex, and, after classifying her as white, adopted the girl herself. Replace the generic black African with a Ghanaian father, and you have all the outlines of de Villiers' own family history.

The play opens in a child's bedroom, described as a fluffy affair in pink and white with stenciled daisies on the walls, but evoked in the performance that I attended through a minimalist set with a small child's bench, some dolls and other toys and a large rucksack toward one corner of the stage and a basic chair toward the other. The lights come up on the narrator, the 40-year-old Alex, who reveals that she has returned to her bedroom in her childhood home after her father Barry and then her mother Louise have died, and in order to pack up her things, as presumably the house has been sold. While this task seems fraught enough, it quickly becomes clear that the pain entombed in the house goes far deeper than the recent deaths of her parents. Rather, it speaks of the complex and tense relationship they had throughout their lives, and for which the room stands as a metaphor. Her parents designed the room as a space of protection for their "cherished child" (6). Yet, Alex experienced

the room not as a haven but as a prison, "a tomb of silence where secrets lay/ undiscovered under pink and white covers" (6).

While the "secret" source of her discomfort has not yet been revealed to the spectators, the character's words clearly evoke the pain caused by a lack of fit with her parents' desires and her anger at their attempt to turn her into someone she was not. These feelings haunt her, making it impossible to inhabit a comfortable adult home or sense of self until she confronts the secret of her thorny childhood and adolescence. This is the task that awaits her in her childhood bedroom, and which she imagines taking on by shifting her fixed and rooted house to an oceanic register: "A child's room is a boat, a ship of dreams,/ our first transport./ Under starry skies we navigate/ our frail personalities into the ocean of life,/ our parents, two gods holding our course" (5). Even as this imagery underscores how parents shape the horizon of their children's lives, the move from land to ocean may also unfix official narratives and open up experience to fluidity and change, as Samuelson argues about broader South African culture ("Oceanic" 543–44).[19] This surely is the hope inherent in the lyrical stanza with which Alex's first monologue closes, where she returns to the metaphor of the room as a ship and subjunctively bids farewell to Louise and her childhood in terms that echo Anglo-Saxon funeral rites:

> If this room were a boat, I would lay her washed body in it
> and cover it with lilies; light incense and candles and place them
> around her head, and then I would pour petrol over it
> and set it on fire, and I would gently push it out to meet
> the setting sun. As the night advanced, I would watch
> my room of pink and white blazing in the dark water.
> And I would look up at the stars
> and I would plot a new direction. (6)

The questions raised here are then not only what the secret is, but also whether and how confronting it will allow Alex the ability to mourn and "plot a new direction."

The remainder of the performance enacts a circular a journey of imagination and memory, beginning from and threading back to the present moment and the room in which she stands, in which Alex grows up and discovers what turns out to be the double secret of her adoption and her black African ancestry. I say double secret because, de Villiers notes about the play, "the story of the adoption hid another story—the shame and prejudice of life under apartheid" ("Adopting Identity"). This journey entails immersing herself in the past and the experiences of key

figures in her life along with recalling her own feelings at different points in her childhood and adolescence. Slipping in and out of her own skin and those of people who shaped her, she acts out exchanges between her biological mother and herself as an infant and between her child welfare office and her adoptive mother that address the questions of why her biological mother chose to give her up for adoption (in South Africa of all places) and why her adoptive mother kept her history and her race a secret. She also articulates the pain and confusion of being told by her family that she was white but constantly judged as coloured by the outside world. Wrenching as it was to be thrown off of school buses and rejected by potential boyfriends because of suspicions that she was not white, it was in some sense worse to be refused access to the source of these allegations—to have her "original skin" and black identity be taken from her because of her adoptive mother's misguided desire to give her a "better" (i.e., white) life. Living as if she were white, she comes to lose herself: "when I looked into the mirror I became invisible . . . /because the person who looked back at me was/ blonde and fair-skinned" (12).

The internal tension created by her position as a girl who believes she is white but looked coloured becomes increasingly unbearable, leading her into confusion and depression. Her father's decision finally to tell Alex the truth about her past creates one opening for repair. He hands her a box of files about her adoption and reveals that, while her biological mother gave no indication on her official documents of the race of her biological father, he and Louise believe that she may be half Aboriginal. This action, however, does not provide the resolution Alex seeks. When her friend Sally responds to the news in a way that echoes the Freudian family romance—saying "you could be Italian, or Spanish, I mean,/ you could be anything! You're so lucky" (22)—Alex questions whether or not her freedom to imagine a different parentage is a mark of good fortune. Rather than seeing the blankness of her ancestry as a gift, she sees it as a keenly felt gap or absence. "Was I [lucky]? I wasn't sure. I turned to the box with its papers once more. It wasn't like discovering the Rosetta Stone" (22). The fact that her discovery of the secret of her adoption roughly coincides with the end of apartheid, and the recovery of black heritage that it entails, ironically increases her sense of isolation and displacement. If she remembers participating around this same time in the "final birth pangs" of the "new nation" by standing in line to vote on April 27, 1994, then she also remains at an oblique angle to the celebrations: "It started on the 27th of April, leaders saying: remember/ where you come from. Celebrate your culture! Respect your heritage . . . In the rain of pride I stood out in the cold:/ my ancestry was a big black hole. The box that I had didn't help at all" (22–23).

What eventually helps is the process of tracking down her biological father, still living in Australia, and discovering through him that Alex has black African ancestry. It is perhaps a sign of the deep importance of the moment that de Villiers sheds the fictional covering around many details in the performance and transcribes her first phone call to her father verbatim into the play (Kennedy 2010). Alex asks, "I hope you don't think I'm rude . . . but I've been wondering my whole life . . . Are you black?," to which her father answers, "Of course . . . I am an African" (23). The phone call is followed by a transoceanic voyage to Australia, which confirms his and thus her racial status and gives Alex a way to comfortably inhabit her skin. "The first time I saw my father it was like the whole continent was walking towards me. It was like his skin unzipped, opened up to let me in, and for the first time,/ I was able to see my black skin as a badge of courage" (23). While this vision raises questions that I return to later in the chapter, it is by taking strength from her new knowledge of her father and his pride in his identity as a black African that Alex is finally able to own the skin that she was born into and find a sense of self that she feels comfortable with—not in specifically South African terms but through an expansive pan-African and transnational view of blackness articulated throughout the performance and inscribed in its musical score, with Billie Holiday songs opening and closing the show.

With this assertive claiming of identity we are returned, finally, to the present moment and to the child's bedroom, to watch Alex battle with the ghosts of her parents. "As I stand now in my room,/ I hear nothing but my mother's silence:/ her denial of my need to find my original skin" (23–24). But she also knows that "[she] inhabit[s] that skin" (24). Having found a kind of habitation, having made her skin her home, she is able to read her past and her relationship with her adoptive parents differently. Returning again to the ship metaphor, she takes on the responsibility and control that she earlier delegated to her parents: "If this room is a boat, I steered it along the streams/I needed, taking the currents I desired" (24). This assumption of agency then allows her to repeat the end of her opening monologue, expressing her wish to send her mother and her room to a funeral at sea, in a way that moves beyond subjunctive desire. "I will look up at the stars," she says in her final lines, "and I will plot a new direction" (24). The change from *would* to *will* indicates her grasp on the blackness that she had long been alienated from and her ability to release an illusion of whiteness that controlled her youth.

In some sense then *Original Skin* follows the narrative trajectory of Brink's novel, and enacts the "new" South African family romance. Like Kristien, and at roughly the same moment in national history, Alex discovers that she has indigenous or African heritage and this discovery

helps her to recover connections with specific family members (both adoptive and biological) and to find a "home" in the democratic South Africa. Yet, de Villiers' testimony to the discrimination she suffered because of her denied racial heritage also powerfully reveals the shortcomings of the "melanisation" fantasy. Alex finds in her birth father the answer to a question that haunted her as long as she could remember and shaped her life, contorted as it was through apartheid laws and her parents' social engineering. Given the way race under apartheid was read off the body beyond other sociocultural cues, and given her "suspiciously" dark body, she was constantly treated and eventually came to feel as if she were playing a role or "passing" as a member of the white race (the performative nature of which, Kossew explains, is signaled by the South African term "playing white" ["Repositioning" 199–200]). In this context, finding out her biological parentage and hence what her actual race classification would have been could only be a relief. It means an end to "acting," breaking her out of the room or "house of whiteness" that imperfectly encased her, and gives her a way to make sense of her lived experience in a way that connects her with her political ideals.[20] The way psychic pain saturates her experiences suggests much more strongly than Brink's novel the importance of turning to Freudian models of trauma at the expense of the family romance. This shift in register also seems mandated by Alex's complete rejection, discussed above, of the "luck" of being adopted. Against Alex's lived experience, Kristien's revelations quite literally pale. Choosing a "hybrid" identity without having been judged and discriminated against as "Coloured" under apartheid's shameful laws empties out the content of the experience of multiracial individuals in South Africa and buries white complicity in the pain coloured South Africans faced.

Yet, the play's staging of trauma and the forms of working through for which it calls also raise questions. The semi-autobiographical nature of *Original Skin*, the way the story of Alex overlaps with and overlays de Villiers' own story, seems to predetermine its closure in a redemptive ending of the kind seen in Brink's novel and to posit a working through that is not always entirely convincing. Life narrative often holds a special affective power because of its proximity to "the real," but it also tends to be scripted in ways that respond to both psychological needs and market directives (Schaffer and Smith 2004). Speaking to the former, the play's role as a therapeutic exercise is quite clear. If scholars like Marcia Blumberg have suggested that the performance is a site of healing (254), then de Villiers states explicitly in a *Sunday Times* interview that "she wrote the piece as therapy" (Kennedy). Perhaps for this reason, the play mimics a performative structure made evident in the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings and described by anthropologist Allen Feldman as the "trauma aesthetic." Here, individual victims are healed as they recite their trauma symptoms to a group of spectators or a national public-turned-witness. This healing is doubled by the national body which is united and transformed through a kind of collective catharsis (Feldman 170).[21] De Villiers of course desires to be healed, and claims that she is healed in the act of performance. As a one-woman show, *Original Skin* literally enacts a process by which de Villiers takes on and works through both the racial roles forced upon her and the attitudes of the characters who shaped her life, in order to repossess her "original" or true black identity. Further, the artist connects this process to the one facing the country as a whole as it tries to recover from racist oppression: "Like South Africa, I had to examine the concept of African identity and try to heal the wounds to the psyche inflicted by 300 years of racist domination" ("Adopting Identity"). This comparison invites her audience to engage in and be positively changed through her performance. But what gets left out—for de Villiers and for the audience—as Alex's story is bent along the healing trajectory?

Despite its healing rhetoric, the play gestures to certain shards of experience that cannot fit in and yet cannot be ignored. One is the fact that, in real life as opposed to in the play, de Villiers remains estranged from her adoptive parents, who in 2010 were very much alive.[22] Fictionalizing their death in *Original Skin* allows this ongoing conflict to drop into silence. Her whiteness is also something that remains unresolved in the performance—especially as embracing blackness, in opposition to whiteness, is presented as the culmination of her identity trials. Does assuming a pan-African identity mean rejecting her white birth mother and her white adoptive parents and upbringing entirely? Is her white heritage something she can simply cast out to sea and let burn? Not surprisingly, the vision of blackness constructed here can also be seen as problematic, given that Alex finds her "home" in an essentialized vision of pan-African identity rather than within the historically complex field of South African racial politics. On one level this shows her commitment to progressive antiapartheid ideals, while on another it elides the complexities of the "Coloured" identity to which Alex would have been assigned and the vexed relation of many coloureds to South African blackness in the postapartheid period.[23] Finally, we might trouble the desire behind the performance itself. If the repeated and almost obsessive reenactment of this past can be read as an attempt to make memory "flexible" (van der Kolk and van der Hart) and thus as form of working through trauma, then it can also feel like an instance of "acting out." This, LaCapra argues, happens when "the past is performatively

regenerated or relived as if it were fully present rather than represented in memory or inscription" (70); it serves as an example of traumatic repetition that is often opposed to healing (148). The play in this second reading testifies to unresolved trauma, and puts the spectator-witness in a complex position that may heighten a sense of ethical obligation to the performer, or may involve doubt and distancing rather than affirmation in a community of feeling.

These very contradictions, importantly, reveal how discovering or claiming "non-white" ancestry can serve less as a solution to problems of identity and belonging than as a passage to a new set of difficulties—making the play ultimately a moving testimony to the ongoing troubles of finding a comfortable home in the "new" South Africa. Such a lack of closure is more consciously approached in Wicomb's *Playing in the Light*. Written at roughly the same time as *Original Skin*, in the later years of the extended transition, this novel again combines the Freudian family romance with that of the "new" South Africa. Yet, it scripts a different kind of conclusion by deliberately withholding resolution and forcing readers to explore what it means to live and to forge relations to others in a state of uncertainty. As a novel, *Playing in the Light* shifts us back from an embodied and shared encounter with spectacle to an individual imaginative transit into the lives of others regulated largely through narrative form, and from here approaches the questions of choice and responsibility laid out by Brink. Nevertheless, it remains invested in role-playing or performance as it intersects with the lived experience of race, especially for coloured communities.

Unremitting Crossings

As in the previous examples, Wicomb's *Playing in the Light* takes place at a moment of symbolic significance in the construction of the "new" South Africa—in this case 1996, just over a year after the 1994 elections referenced in Brink's novel and de Villiers' play and as the TRC hearings are beginning. While seemingly more straightforward in terms of its narrative style than Brink's text in particular and even perhaps de Villiers' multivoiced fictionalized testimonial, Wicomb's novel turns out to be a cunningly crafted piece that takes the family romance in a most perplexing direction. Here, Wicomb's adult protagonist Marion Campbell learns that her own parents are coloureds who spent their adult lives "passing" or "playing white." If she *was* white, then, given this information about her ancestry, she must now perhaps become something else (106). This brief description takes us back to the comments of Christiansë (375–76), who, as noted above, raises "passing" during apartheid as a form

of complicity that can be thought together with (if by no means equivalent to) the phenomenon of Afrikaners claiming victimization in the "new" South Africa. It connects the "new" family romance articulated by certain white South Africans, and the kind of "passing" it enables, to questions of the diverse coloured identities inhabited by individuals in South Africa in challenging and important ways.

Wicomb's novel, narrated from the perspective of a third-person omniscient narrator who masterfully shifts between an ironic distance from and the free indirect representation of various characters in the text, charts the growth of an amorphous unease experienced by Marion. This unease gets linked to a face that she sees in a newspaper photograph of the former Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) activist Patricia Williams, who in the present of the novel is testifying at the TRC to the pain inflicted upon her by apartheid agents. This face in turn connects to another one, that of Tokkie, the coloured woman who Marion remembers as her family servant when she was a child, and who inhabits her increasingly troubled dreams. Such unsettling associations lead Marion to revisit her past, and eventually prompt the suspicion that her parents John and Helen Campbell kept a "poisonous" secret from her: "Secrets, lies, and discomfiture—that is what her childhood had been wrapped in. Each day individually wrapped, lived through carefully, as only those with secrets lives. Before her an image arises, the past laid out in uniform trays of apples wrapped in purple tissue paper . . . a drop of poison hidden in the core" (59–60). Resonating with *Original Skin*, the narrative expectation set up in this passage is that the action of the novel will be about unraveling the secret.

While initially unsure of "where to start, how to unwrap those parcels" (61), Marion comes to believe with "uncanny certainty" that "the mystery is about her own birth" (62). Her first suspicion is that she is an adopted child and that Tokkie was somehow involved in this adoption. In discussion with her sometime boyfriend Geoff Geldenhuys, she concocts what can only be a parody of the Freudian family romance: "The scenario she and Geoff favor is that of a prominent, wealthy family in Constantia, who would not countenance an illegitimate child, and for whom their housekeeper Tokkie had the perfect solution: her beloved, childless Helen" (78). However, when Marion takes a trip with her coloured employee Brenda MacKay to find out more about Tokkie, and in the hopes of being led back to her imagined biological parents, Marion learns that this fantasy of adoption is nothing but a screen story hiding a more painful and "shameful" truth: that Tokkie is her grandmother.[24] This means Helen and John were not white at all but "play-whites," or coloured people "passing" as white in contravention of the apartheid law,

and that Marion herself is (in some sense) coloured. It also means that Helen allowed her own mother to pretend to be a servant so that Marion would never suspect that she was not white.[25]

Significantly, the moment of discovery of Marion's racial heritage comes not at the end of the novel but smack in the middle of it—turning it into a hinge that opens the story up to multiple possible futures, rather than acting as the culmination of the plotline. Indeed, as Samuelson notes, according to Wicomb "the narrative structure was deliberately crafted to refuse a climactic concluding revelation of 'blood mixing'" ("Oceanic" 555). Displacing the discovery from its privileged position at the end of the narrative, Wicomb decenters the teleological structure in which revealing the secret automatically creates resolution and disrupts the healing trajectory of *Original Skin*—where the new information about her biological father allows Alex almost magically to inhabit a black or African identity, solving her existential depression and isolation. Wicomb turns attention instead to, what is for Marion, the painful task of working through the implications of the discovery; and, through the genealogical investigations that Marion pursues to this end, to the thorny issues of how racial identities were actually lived during apartheid, what kinds of kinship they enabled, and what they now mean in a postapartheid society. The initial question of the secret, then, conceals more fundamental ones: To what extent and on what basis can Marion consider herself coloured? Is it possible that grappling with this question—an act quite different than simply assuming a new racial identity—might open her to new senses of relation, to new connections and commitments both within her family circle and outside of it?

In their attempts to help Marion come to terms with the situation, her friends urge Marion to claim a new identity as coloured as if it were a static or essential thing. Responding to Marion's distress, Brenda asks impatiently: "So it turns out you're coloured, from a play-white family . . . so what? Haven't you heard how many white people, or rather Afrikaners of the more-indigenous-than-thou brigade, are claiming mixed blood these days? It's not such a tragedy being black, you know, at least you're authentic" (102). Here Brenda points to exactly the kind of "melanisation" rhetoric that Wicomb noted in her critical writing ("Five" 170–72). If Marion rejects this discourse as being incapable of dealing with the disorientation she feels, then she similarly reject's Geoff's suggestion that she simply make her coloured heritage known and be done with it: "He says that it doesn't matter, that he along with the entire country has got beyond all that old stuff about race, and that she too should put it behind her" (105). Against the assumption that her discovery has a fixed meaning to be announced and dispensed with—or, alternatively as Brenda

suggests, embraced—Marion insists that she does not know what the "*it* (italics in the original)" to which Geoff refers *is* (105). Indeed, she experiences a profound confusion about what being coloured could mean in her case and at this moment in time.

The vision of her new-found identity that Marion ultimately if stumblingly articulates to her friends ends up being less about claiming a fixed racial or biological heritage than entering into a new kind of practice—one of constantly shuttling between places and categories that are themselves open to continual reconfiguration. "My parents were the play-whites; they crossed over," she states, "I was white, now I will have to cross over. But if the places are no longer the same, have lost their meaning, there can be no question of returning to a place where my parents once were. Perhaps I can now keep crossing to and fro, to different places, perhaps that is what the new is all about—an era of unremitting crossings" (107). Geoff's uncomfortable reaction to Marion's vision of "unremitting crossings"—"Is she theorizing the rainbow nation?" he wonders (107)—serves to ironically emphasize its power. This passage and its notion of crossing is one that has drawn the attention of critics such as Kossew ("Repositioning" 197, 201–202) and Andrew van der Vlies ("The Archive" 590). I would similarly suggest that, while always subject to Wicomb's trademark skepticism, this vision is posed as a starting point for rethinking identity in the post-apartheid era. Further, and as van der Vlies also points out, it can be read as a fictional revision of Wicomb's earlier notion of coloured identity as a site of "multiple belongings" ("Shame" 105). This, Wicomb argues, stands against tendencies in the 1990s of "denying history and fabricating a totalising colouredness" in part through creating myths of roots or pure origins that ensure belonging. It offers a way of unsettling comforting and essentialized identity claims and imagining "a culture where participation in a number of coloured micro-communities whose interests conflict and overlap could become a rehearsal of cultural life in the larger South African community" (ibid. 105; see also van der Vlies "The Archive" 589).[26]

The work of crossing gets taken up in the novel in different ways, most importantly, as Kossew suggests ("Repositioning" 201–202) and as I flesh out more fully, through a linked engagement with family history and literal travel. Marion—in an echo of Kristien and Alex's experiences gathering their family histories—learns in a sense to cross over into the lives of the other members of her family. Kossew shows how Marion's attempt to understand what "playing white" meant for her parents, including its associations with "role playing" or acting, is crucial to this passage ("Repositioning" 201). If in *Original Skin* Alex suffered from

being treated as if she were "playing white" while she actively believed herself to be of this race group, Marion's parents faced a situation in which they took on the task of performing another race consciously and had to make painful compromises as a result. Marion forces John to revisit the past and to share some of his most excruciating experiences, for instance having to legally renounce his beloved brothers and sisters. Reanimating the experiences of Helen, who has died, proves more difficult. Finding "nothing among the meager remains of Helen's possessions that gives anything away" (116), Marion goes to the National Library and finds it equally opaque, with no holdings about "play-whites" or "whiteness" itself. Marion nonetheless constructs a series of imaginative versions based on the fragments she unearths. While "[s]he is exhausted by the idea of Helen, by the bits and pieces she has had to put together, by the construction of a sci-fi monster of molded steel plates, ill-fitting bolts and scraps of rusted corrugated iron" (175), she continues "bolt[ing] together" and "undo[ing]" her mother "as new information comes to light" (176). Her process of trying to understand Helen ironically doubles what Kossew notes is the heart of "passing" itself, Helen's construction of a new self ("Repositioning" 200), as it reveals the high personal costs of what Marion comes to recognize as not "playing" but "hiding in the light" (124; Kossew 201). The result of having to, in Kossew's words, "perform . . . whiteness relentlessly in both public and private spaces" ("Repositioning" 200) is exhaustion and gloom, as family bonds are fractured and replaced with silence and hurt.

Marion also crosses into new family spaces by visiting denied relatives like John's sister and her aunt Elsie, who as noted above were shut out of the family life when John and Helen decided to pass. It is Elsie who gives her some sense of her extended kin network as she tells her stories of the past and shows her photographs of her paternal grandparents. These are not people that Marion can claim in an easy sense of the word. The narrator notes, "they are and are not Marion's grandparents; they are strangers who hint at a connection with her father" (174). Nevertheless, and as they echo a critical line in Wicomb's first novel *David's Story* ("This is and is not David's story" [1]), these words unfix any one truth of the past and gesture toward alternative histories with which Marion might have been, and still might become, bound up.[27] The same kind of complicated relationship of distance and connection is invoked between Marion and those of her relatives involved in the freedom struggle, when Elsie recounts to Marion the losses suffered by her immediate family—the death of her son and Marion's cousin William at the hands of the security forces—and reveals that Marion is related on her mother's side to none other than Patricia Williams (172). If Marion's haunting by this woman's image

and still-unknown connection to Tokkie caused her to venture into the world of apartheid that "she ha[d] never known, ha[d] never wished to explore" (74), and to recognize through the TRC hearings a "shameful" link to the security officers who confessed to torturing Williams (75, see also Kossew "Repositioning" 201), Elsie's information means that she must now also confront an unforseen bond with those people she previously called "terrorists" who fought on the side of liberation.

In keeping with the narrator's description of the apartheid past as a "foreign country" (74), Marion's imaginative transit into the histories of her family members prompts her to take literal trips which lead to further changes in her relationship with herself and with others (Kossew "Repositioning" 201; Samuelson "Oceanic" 553, 555). Marion's journeys begin with a trip with Brenda to Wuppertal in search of her family history. It is on this trip that she both makes the fateful discovery of her ancestry and, through an encounter with the unlikely troubadour who calls himself Outa Blinkoog, crosses over into the realm of art and storytelling, which becomes tied to travel in the text. Her travels culminate in a trip to Europe, a literal crossing of oceans, and eventually to England and to Scotland, the region from whence, according to John, her own "white" ancestors supposedly hail (186). This pilgrimage does not confirm a particular narrative of self, as traditional genealogical investigation is often seen to do, but rather breaks down various internal barriers—allowing her to become "stuck to" stories of people not immediately "related" to her in an immediate or familial sense. Here I would refer back to Samuelson's argument, noted earlier in relation to *Original Skin* but developed in response to Wicomb's oeuvre, that Wicomb turns to the sea to unfix official and bounded narratives, to permit repressed stories (including those inscribed in fiction) and memories to come to the fore, and to create space for fluidity and change.[28]

In London, Marion finally confronts her loneliness and grief, upon finding that "a hole, a curious negative definition of the familiar emptiness, develops in her chest" (189). Into this hole tumble some of her most deeply repressed memories of the past—such as that of Annie Boshoff, her childhood best friend who she abandoned when she discovered she was a "play-white." The memory of Annie's betrayal, long since blanked out or, in line with the theories of trauma noted above, never fully processed and therefore unable to be integrated into Marion's life, comes to her as if typed out by an "old-fashioned" typewriter on a blank page, "letter by clacking letter" (193). This vision of Marion finally finding language or words through which to understand her cruel actions toward Annie is foreshadowed and perhaps catalyzed by Marion's first and emotionally wrought experience of reading South

African literature, and particularly of finding herself in Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1974). Through reading "the hole in her chest seems to fill up with words" (190), and she is prompted "to carry on reading, to get to know those dark decades in which the Campbells were playing in the light" (191), and, in turn, the dark moments of her own life. The process of learning to read both her own past and her country's literature continues when Marion travels to Glasgow, where it also extends outward to help her engage or cross into the living stories of other individuals. Reading in the park, she meets Dougie, an European analogue of Outa Blinkoog. While she listens to his anecdotes about the Scottish Campbells for her father's sake, "she steers him away from the battles of the distant past" and prefers instead to hear more recent stories about strangers from the city (203). She also finds the freedom to strike up a friendship and perhaps even a sexual relationship with a South African business acquaintance Vumi Mkhize, who comes from a family who posed as coloureds until the day that apartheid was overthrown and then repossessed their Zulu identity (206). Vumi's story presents her with an entirely different model of what "passing" might mean (see also van der Vlies "The Archive" 590), even as he symbolically initiates her into a kind of intimacy with the black South Africans from whom she seemed completely disconnected.

As if confirming the usefulness of her vision of "unremitting crossings" between the experiences of different people, between countries and continents, between art and history, and between the past and the present, the Marion that returns to South Africa after having crossed over to Europe is not the Marion that left, and she returns to a place that also seems different. This difference is visible in the homecoming party that Geoff and Brenda organize for Marion at her father's house, which includes Marion's aunt Elsie and Brenda's mother, and serves up a mixture of old Afrikaner songs and "lekker coloured food" (213). As John jokes, "In this new South Africa we can play at anything, mix'n match, talk and sing anyway we like. Because of freedom" (213). At this party, Marion reveals her willingness to move into an uncharted future, as she spontaneously announces that she is getting rid of the house in Observatory that enclosed her childhood (we could invoke here again "the house of the white race"), selling her business, and working toward sustaining deeper relationships with her family and her friends. In this sense, her return to South Africa from the UK can be aligned with Kristien's decision to stay in South Africa after casting her vote in the elections—a decision to attempt to finally make herself at home in the country. Marion seems to have found through her multiple crossings a new sense of relation with her family and her country.

In a final turn of the screw, however, Wicomb destabilizes this optimistic ending with a surprise plot twist. In the last two pages, Brenda reveals to Marion that while Marion was abroad she has been spending time with John, and indeed, had begun to write out his story. As she puts it, "I found out that your father's was the story that I wanted to write, the story that should be written" (217). This statement sparks a row between the two women in which Brenda accuses Marion of not understanding her father's experience and Marion throws Brenda out of her car (218). The novel ends on this moment of anger and disruption, implying that creating the "new" South Africa is a process with ups and downs, and in which increased understanding and connection is not guaranteed. Indeed, the finality of the ending on a moment of disjuncture—with the "quiet click" (218) of the car door—suggests that discord may ultimately reign. The text, then, not only reveals as amnesiac fantasy the notions that one can just *become* coloured by making discoveries about one's bloodline and that such a discovery will make one a true part of democracy; but it also serves as a warning that even engagement with what it means to be coloured through the lens of concrete historical experience may not be enough. Marion, in spite of all her crossings, may never actually come to know her own family's story or to form lasting friendships in the present. In this case, the best we can hope for is a constant or "unremitting" process of negotiating misunderstandings and distances.

The novel's ending introduces another kind of destabilization or inconclusiveness through its implication that Brenda may be its narrator. While the question is never fully settled, van der Vlies persuasively argues for this position, carefully tracing the aspects of the text that, on a second reading, point to Brenda as the narrator or at least "chief focalizer" of what seemed to be Marion's story ("The Archive" 593–95). As van der Vlies shows, and building on Wicomb's own literary criticism, this turn brings into relief Wicomb's long-standing interest in authorial agency and narrative responsibility and raises questions about the "ethics and costs of narrative hospitality," including those of "the dangers of narrating or *narrativising* another" and "the limits of . . . the ability of any narrative to host the otherness of others' narratives without doing them harm" (ibid. 587). It also, if we accept Brenda as the author of the text, turns the novel from a story about a woman who thinks she is white "discovering" that her family is coloured and coming to terms with what that identity might mean, into a story about a coloured woman imagining a woman who thinks she is white discovering that her family is coloured.

Such a shift has rich implications for the family romance discussed here. As a device that undercuts "the effects—and affect—of realism," making Brenda into a meta-narrator of sorts foregrounds the constructedness of

stories of belonging or identity in the "new" South Africa and suggests a need for readers to pay close attention to who tells these stories and why (van der Vlies "The Archive" 596–97). The ethical task or responsibility facing readers then becomes not about choosing which narrative to believe in and to live by, as it was for Brink, but about critically examining the logics and the closures of each narrative possibility.[29] One such closure of Brink's family romance model, and as highlighted most clearly by Alex's story in *Original Skin*, is that not everyone can "choose" their racial category—most people indeed are forced into living a particular racial identity by their bodies.[30] Those that could "choose" to pass, like Marion's parents, often did so under structural constraints that make "choice" itself a largely inappropriate term. Considering Brenda as the narrator draws attention to the fact that white South Africans need to hear the family romance through the voices of those classified as "Coloured," that category newly reimagined as one of assimilation and democratization, in order to fully understand the violence it can do. Put differently, or run through what van der Vlies calls "the ethics of authorial responsibility" ("The Archive" 597), it implies that they must think through more fully what responsible authorship of such a story means. And this can only make more pointed Wicomb's critical comments in "Five Afrikaner texts and the rehabilitation of whiteness," where she not only raises the question of "melanisation" but also indicates the limits of "textual" strategies for "disaffiliat[ing] from whiteness" that fail to have corresponding material dimensions ("Five" 180).

This change also mandates that we read the novel as part of the vigorous project of reshaping coloured identity that has blossomed since the end of apartheid. Considering Brenda as narrator underscores the fact that coloured people as well as whites need to rethink their racial identities, and points to colouredness not as a static and biological fact but as a set of diverse historical experiences and ongoing practices shaped by forced and voluntary crossings of the body and the imagination. The "multiple belongings" revealed in this vision warn against embracing essentialized narratives and undifferentiated collective identities to rather position colouredness as a dynamic form of what Zimitri Erasmus calls "creolisation" (cited in Nuttall *Entanglement* 21; see also Kossew 204; Samuelson 555). Among the specific "creolized" experiences necessary to embrace and interrogate is of course the experience of "passing," which Yvette Christiansë has movingly posed as an "unspeakable" loss disavowed in the South Africa of the extended transition (377).[31]

The novel itself crosses between multiple interpretive possibilities with different implications for the present and the future. Kossew, building on the work of Erasmus, ultimately argues that it furthers the important

task of redefining coloured identity beyond its apartheid definition by revealing the performed or constructed nature of race, "acknowledging the wounds of the past and moving beyond them to the construction of new and more fluid identities" ("Repositioning" 204–205). The ending of the novel, with "Brenda being inspired to write the story of Marion's father's life," is here interpreted as a "positive coming to terms and moving on through the medium of narrative, through telling stories. This more enabling space of narrative can be seen as a way out of the imposed silencing [of coloured South Africans] brought on by an assumption of shame" ("Repositioning" 205). In this reading, the story of passing does get told, and readers are invited to cross over into these narrated lives and perhaps to find points of self-discovery and connection there. Yet, while Kossew's argument is undeniably correct, it seems difficult to read a novel that ends on a moment of unresolved anger merely as a sign of "positive coming to terms and moving on." *Playing in the Light* thus leaves its readers themselves unsettled, juggling different possibilities that never quite become commensurate.

★ ★ ★

Moving through these works by Brink, de Villiers and Wicomb, this chapter has largely tried to unsettle the family romance as a form of desire and an aesthetic project able to "melanise" whiteness and create new forms of relation in South Africa's extended transition. It reveals as particularly troubling the idea that writing new bloodlines, as a form of biological relation between whites and others, will somehow convert white South Africans into "hybrid" members of a "rainbow" nation. I have noted, and largely following Samuelson (*Remembering*), that such a vision risks reiterating the language of blood and genes as the language of citizenship; as it does so, it also risks perpetuating a politics of essence, which is a politics of difference, in the very act of trying to move beyond it. As Wicomb's compelling text and its interlocutors make clear, the task at hand is rather to break down essential racial categories and to find more capacious ways of understanding lived experiences of race. Further, and as I have stressed in my readings of both *Original Skin* and *Playing in the Light*, the biological relation model called into being through the "new" South African family romance often erases the pain of the multiple lived historical experiences of coloured individuals—turning "melanisation" claims into what Christiansë describes as a form of "passing" not liberating or transgressive but complicit in maintaining a whiteness that represses its own history. This is, as Gqola notes, the opposite of the active and critical work necessary to reframe whiteness in

South Africa (107). The alternative paradigm of confronting white and specifically Afrikaner familial complicity in the ideology and practice of apartheid seen for instance in Antjie Krog's *Country of My Skull* and *A Change of Tongue*, which Yianna Liatsos beautifully likens to "finding a new bloodline," is in this sense a more ethical approach (see "A New")—and it provides a different but equally productive counterpoint to explorations of the history of "passing" seen in Wicomb's novel.

At the same time, it is important to hold onto the idea—articulated most unambiguously in Brink's novel, but present in all three works—that seeing and feeling family differently can allow one to shape a different kind of relation to others and to a democratic state. Following Nash, one can say that producing new relations through genealogical excavation, as an active choice or affiliation, can be a first step that leads to a more profound engagement with others outside of these terms. This, it seems to me, is what Brink's novel most productively gestures toward. Further, the concrete work involved in "learning to live like family"—or better, as we see in chapter 3, learning to live *as* family—does not have to entail a return to notions like the shared bloodline so entwined with exclusionary ethno-nationalisms. Families are "done" or made rather than given, and the work of "doing family" encompasses a variety of social practices and forms of display (Finch 66).[32] This work of doing family across racial lines happens every day, in both biologically linked and chosen families. Emilia Potenza, a curator at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, reminds us of this reality in her "Foreword" to *Original Skin* when she notes that: "things have certainly come a long way since out first democratic elections in 1994. I myself am in a same-sex union now recognised by the South African state and have two 'transracially' adopted daughters who are black" (3). Her words illustrate how family is made through acts of care for those whose lives depend on us, and on whom our lives depend, regardless of biological ties. We will return to adoptive and queer families in chapter 4, but for the moment I merely note that the actuality of living in intimate spaces or in close contact with people we recognize as kin can fundamentally transform our selves and our wider social worlds.

Family of course should not be idealized. As all three texts force us to recall, making or doing family is an activity rife with physical and psychological violence. From the Freudian perspective, family is the very source of all our neuroses; from certain feminist and sociological standpoints, it can be seen as the site where abuse is most likely to occur (Samuelson *Remembering* 199–200; Chipkin and Ngqulunga 68–69). As Ivor Chipkin and Bongani Ngqulunga note, at least in the first decade of the 2000s, "the fault lines in South African society are in the family

and between friends" (69). Families can also be spaces where ideologies of hate and fear get passed on across the generations. Nevertheless, the possibility that engagement with family history and family members can catalyze new forms of relation can be salvaged from the family romance and the texts that I have used to think through it, and will float along with us through the next chapter. There, following on from the shift at the end of this chapter from white to coloured family history, I move to a conversation about the kinds of family history most helpful to the work of repair within black communities.

CHAPTER 2

REMEMBERING THE LOST: ON FAMILY MEMBERS AND DOMESTIC LIFE

Santu Mofokeng's installation *The Black Photo Album/Look at Me (1890–1950)*, first shown by the well-known photographer at the Johannesburg Biennale in 1997, consists of slide projections of a number of digitally enhanced family portraits and other photographic images salvaged from the private collections of ten black families, and which alternate with slides of captions and commentary.[1] The images are ones, Mofokeng explains in the text accompanying the installation,

> that urban black working and middle-class families had commissioned, requested or tacitly sanctioned. Dead relatives have left them behind, where they sometimes hang on obscure parlour walls in the townships. In some families they are coveted as treasures, displacing totems in discursive narratives about identity, lineage and personality. And because, to some people, photographs contain the 'shadow' of the subject, they are carefully guarded from the ill will of witches and enemies. In other families they are being destroyed as rubbish during spring-cleans because of interruptions in continuity or disaffection with the encapsulated meanings and the history of the images. Most often they lie hidden to rot through neglect in kists, cupboards, cardboard boxes and plastic bags. ("The Black")

Indeed, as Mofokeng further notes, a majority of the photographic images were "neglect[ed]" ones found in an old box given to Soweto-based Moeketsi Msomi by his grandmother. While the images were presumably of Msomi's relatives, the individuals they depict were largely unknown, and the desire to identify and to learn more about these people was one impetus for the installation and the larger and on-going social history project from which it stems ("Field Trip Report").

The original title of the project, which Lauri Firstenberg (at 60) notes was *Politics of Representation: Images of Self and Family History of Black Urban*

South Africans, 1890–1950, gives a sense of the images that Mofokeng commands the spectator to "look at." They are generally studio shots that share a strong Victorian register, with clothes and props meant to attest to the "civilized" status of the subjects (Mofokeng "The Black"). Many depict families posing together to create keepsakes for themselves and loved ones, such as the wedding portrait of Ephraim Maloyi (see figure 2.1). This image is a treasure from Msomi's box. Taken in the 1890s, the torn picture visually symbolizes the ravages of time, and in particular the century that transpired between the 1890s when the photograph was taken and the 1990s when the exhibition was mounted. The triangular wedge of whiteness cutting through the image uncannily marks the damage done by colonialism, segregation, and apartheid in tearing apart black families and the diverse textures of life that they created around them; and reminds us that, as a result of this damage, the recall of these people and places will always be interrupted and incomplete. Yet, the image also provides a Barthesian link to the past. It confirms the prior existence of these richly and formally dressed people it represents and connects them to today's spectators. "Every photograph," Roland Barthes writes, "is a certificate of presence" (87).

Figure 2.1 Santu Mofokeng (b. 1956), "The Black Photo Album Slide 32/80." Black and white slide projection, installation. 1997. © Santu Mofokeng. Images courtesy Lunetta Bartz, MAKER, Johannesburg.

One way to read this installation is to say that it reveals a need to return to the past and recover what has been lost. The images and often the people depicted in them—never mind knowledge about these ancestors' lives—were lost in the upheavals created by the state, when "forced removal," "influx control," and a host of other policies aimed at maintaining white power separated individuals from each other as well as from their homes, land, and possessions such as family photographs. Such injustice calls for memory against forgetting, and memory is in this sense an ethical imperative. But memories were also repressed by families as a result of "disaffection" with the stories they seemed to tell about black life. In the explanatory text for the exhibition as well as in questions posed by various slides, Mofokeng underscores how many of the images were left "hidden to rot," and the people figured in them unidentified, because they were deemed too European or bourgeois and, therefore, unacceptable to later black radical politics ("The Black"; Peffer 278). This intimate censorship calls to mind sociologist Elizabeth Jelin's emphasis on the struggle of memory against memory, rather than the struggle of memory against forgetting (6), and illustrates how conceptions and conventions of acceptable memory can overwrite other rich and varied experiences

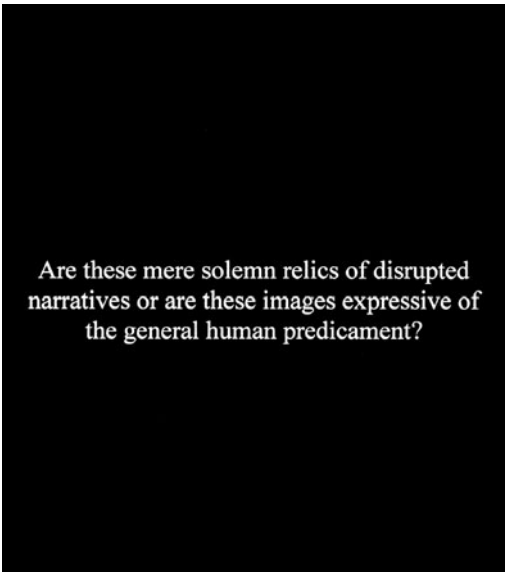

Figure 2.2 Santu Mofokeng (b. 1956), "The Black Photo Album Slide 33/80." Black and white slide projection, installation. 1997. © Santu Mofokeng. Images courtesy Lunetta Bartz, MAKER, Johannesburg.

where paths to alternative modernities and democratic futures might rest. The need to look again at these "lost" or repressed images, and to reassess their value in the ongoing work of claiming equality in South Africa, is expressed in the return to a kind of early twentieth-century humanism in the slide that follows the Maloyi wedding portrait: "Are these mere solemn relics of disrupted narratives or are these images expressive of the general human predicament"? (see figure 2.2). In addition to promoting remembrance, then, Mofokeng's installation raises questions about *which* memories should be recovered as well as how and why to retrieve and relate to buried or uncomfortable pasts.

This second reading of Mofokeng's installation, which I return to and extend in the chapter's closing section, points to a need to broaden the analyses of aesthetic engagements with family history as discussed in the last chapter. There, I explored one way in which Afrikaners and other white South Africans in the extended transition reimagined their relation to others within the democratic state—namely, by rewriting their family trees or bloodlines to contain new and racially diverse ancestors—and the stories of coloured families that complicate this endeavor. This chapter furthers what I suggested as a need to supplement investment in creating a "rainbow family," at least when understood in biological terms, with something like what Shaun Irlam calls "unraveling the rainbow." It also probes more explicitly the public ramifications of a seemingly "private" artwork. Irlam poses the transitional period as one marked by "[a] new literature of separate development . . . in which communities once submerged in their common resistance to apartheid now finally exercise the liberty to explore their own histories and agendas" (698). He argues that black and white South African writers, as well as coloured and Indian ones, have turned an internal spotlight on racially or ethnically specific experiences that went "unheard" until the democratic transition. While Irlam is concerned about whether and how the turn to a "more private, introspective, and confessional mode" becomes a turn away from national politics (see pp. 698–99), I focus on its potential gains by looking at black fiction and theater that, as in *The Black Photo Album*, direct public attention to buried histories of family and home. Mofokeng specifically points out that the images shown in *The Black Photo Album* were originally "private" ones ("The Black"). What, I ask, is accomplished when novelists and playwrights put similarly "private" family stories on display for diverse audiences? What kind of "memory work" do they exhibit?[2] How does this work impact family relations and how might such artworks reshape feelings of relation beyond the family circle?

I specifically approach these questions through readings of John Kani's domestic drama *Nothing But the Truth* (2002) and Njabulo Ndebele's novel

The Cry of Winnie Mandela (2003). These pieces, the first full-length aesthetic projects of the democratic era from figures who became legendary within the South African cultural scene during apartheid, pose the complex and shifting memoryscape of family and home life as a critical zone for confronting and working through the wounds of apartheid. Yvette Christiansë notes that South Africa's transitional institutions excluded from public conversation experiences deemed "nonpolitical" and pertaining to the "domesticity of apartheid"—such as the "passing" explored in the last chapter—and converted these into "unspeakable (losses)" of the postapartheid era (373, 380). I argue that Kani and Ndebele attempt to reverse this "unspeakability" by taking spectators and readers inside black South African homes and exposing some of the tensions and traumas hidden there. I further argue that these artists pose counter-hegemonic forms of family remembrance as a way of opening up visions of black life circulating during apartheid and in the early years of the transition. Such an opening, their works suggest, is crucial to helping black communities engage with the personal and affectively "sticky" tasks of repair necessary for the rehabilitation of individuals and the realization of democracy.

Because these pieces engage explicitly with models of memory popularized by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), I begin my analysis with a discussion of the kinds of memories that tended to be sanctioned in this institution and think about how Kani and Ndebele remain within and depart from them. Building out from Ndebele and especially his writings about the public life of intimacy, I conclude by returning to Mofokeng's works and considering the possibilities offered through the remembrance of repressed domestic stories for reshaping relationships in the wider part of South Africa. While questions of memory in postapartheid culture have often been approached through the lens of mourning, Ndebele and (even more so) Mofokeng point us to other registers that elude the TRC grid and present alternative ways of envisioning relation. Becoming increasingly significant as the extended transition winds onward, these include what Jacob Dlamini calls "native nostalgia" and what Sarah Nuttall terms "historical entanglement" (*Entanglement* 2–3).

Memory, Spectacle, and the TRC

The TRC, touched on at various points already in this book, was arguably *the* primary site for memory work in postapartheid South Africa—and much of this memory work centered on family life.[3] As many critics have pointed out, the TRC both inspired and coordinated personal narratives of apartheid history. According to Joseph R. Slaughter, the commission

solicited the public recollection of private or personal memories in order to create a "socio-civic story space" from which a new democratic nationalism and public culture could grow; it was in effect an attempt to model or create on the basis of personal memory an open public sphere where the voices of all people could be heard (Slaughter 145).[4] This was most paradigmatically the case in the Human Rights Violations Committee, which took in over 20,000 individual written statements from people who suffered from abuse during apartheid and then held public hearings on approximately 2,000 chosen cases across South Africa from 1996 to 1998. It can also be seen in the Amnesty Committee proceedings that famously brought together perpetrators and victims in countless town halls and community buildings, as the perpetrators gave a "full disclosure" of their misdeeds and petitioned for amnesty. This committee's work did not end until 2002.[5]

The stories foregrounded in this space, and particularly in the TRC's Final Report (published in 1998 with addendums in 2003) and in national and international media representations of the process, tended to be about particular figures and kinds of events. Because its mandate was limited to gathering information about gross human rights violations that occurred after 1960 for politically motivated reasons, the TRC often elicited stories focused on spectacular violence done to victims or to the families of victims. Women in particular testified about the death of their husbands, children, or other relatives, rather than about harms done to them or about "ordinary violence" (CALS report, cited in Sanders *Ambiguities* 76–77; see also Samuelson *Remembering* 161; Liatsos). At the heart of the Human Rights Violations proceedings were two figures identified by Meg Samuelson as the "political widow," who spoke to and for her martyred spouse (*Remembering* 196), and the "mother-witness," who testified to the loss of her children and called for information about their deaths in a way that created "a dominant national narrative of sacrificial redemption" (ibid. 159, 164). As this description suggests, these figures stressed the importance of seeing their lost loved ones as heroes who sacrificed themselves for liberation.[6] The Amnesty Committee proceedings replicated many of these elements and added the figure of the perpetrator and the rituals of confession and apology.

Along with encouraging the telling of family stories about specific people and kinds of events, the TRC also foregrounded stories that took a certain form. This form reenacts the redemptive power typically ascribed to memory and puts it in the service of broader social unification (Samuelson *Remembering;* Wilson). In an analysis of the TRC hearings, and as noted in the last chapter, anthropologist Allen Feldman points to a specific and repeated structure seen in the stories of survivors of human

rights abuses. In it, victims identify their trauma, turn it into a narrative to share with others, and, by sharing their story, achieve a healing catharsis (170). This model was central to the TRC in part because it addresses what we have already seen as trauma's elusive structure, its existence as an event that haunts the victim because it resists integration into his or her normal flow of memory and thus into his or her understanding of the past.[7] The hope was that allowing victims to put trauma into words and to make it into a comprehensible story, would provide an avenue for healing. When the trauma in question is not a violation experienced by the victim himself or herself but the death of a family member, as in the case of the "political widow" or "mother-witness," this project can also be described as moving from melancholy to mourning. Mourning, as Sigmund Freud put it, "is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one" (cited in Eng and Kazanjian 3). "Unlike mourning, in which the past is declared resolved, finished and dead," David Eng and David Kazanjian note, "in melancholia the past remains steadfastly alive in the present" (4).

One should of course question the assumption that mourning necessarily leads to healing, and for this reason I rely throughout this book on LaCapra's concept of "working through" as an unfinished, incomplete process of mourning that must be allied with structural and political change. As LaCapra notes, "[t]he appeal to psychoanalytic concepts such as melancholia and mourning, acting out and working through, adds a necessary dimension to economic, social and political analyses but does not constitute a substitute for them" (ix; see also 57, 152). The crucial point at the moment, however, has to do with a different kind of shift from individual to collective. By aiming to bring about collective in addition to individual healing, the TRC added a further and potentially troubling layer to the psychoanalytic schema described above. Feldman argues that the TRC anticipated that the individual catharsis achieved by victims would be doubled in a social body that was convened through the victim's testimony, and which could address repressed memories and heal alongside the victim—a process that he argues was often meant for the good of the spectators rather than the victim (191–93).[8] Richard A. Wilson takes the even more critical stance that the "religious-redemptive narrative" created through the TRC was ultimately about "legitimizing" the rule of the African National Congress (ANC).

The TRC can from this perspective be seen as a *spectacle* of recruitment with both beneficial and problematic elements. It rewrote the official history of apartheid South Africa by including unacknowledged memories and gave voice to the victims of apartheid in a way that publicly valorized their experiences of suffering, struggle, and loss. This is a real

accomplishment that must be held on to. Yet, as it subordinated the needs of the individual to that of the collective, be this the "South African people," the "national body," or the ANC government, it can also be seen to have restricted or narrowed the kind of memories that could be shared and to have authorized specific reactions to them. This dynamic, especially in combination with what I noted above was the TRC's mandate to explore only politically motivated human rights violations, created the conditions of "unspeakability" so aptly described by Christiansë.

I take the term "spectacle" most immediately from South African novelist and playwright Zakes Mda's description of the TRC Amnesty hearings:

> Here was true spectacle: the spectacle of confession; the spectacle of violence; the spectacle of victims and their relatives moaning softly as evidence is led and then bursting out into searing screams before they faint into the arms of someone nearby. ("Fiction" 125)

Yet, the term provides an intriguing bridge to earlier discussions of black experiences. As Ndebele famously argued in his 1984 essay "A Rediscovery of the Ordinary," if there was a hegemonic narrative of black life during apartheid, then it was one of oppression and heroic struggle, which emphasized the extreme mistreatment of blacks at the hands of whites and focused on scenes of "spectacular" violence. "What [wa]s finally left and what [wa]s sketched deeply into our minds," Ndebele writes of the work of artists aligned with the resistance movements in the 1970s and 1980s, "is the spectacular contest between the powerful and the powerless. Most of the time the contest ends in horror and tragedy for the powerless" (46). This narrative focused on exteriority and broad outlines rather than interiority and detail, and, even as it channeled support to the "right" side of a political struggle, it suppressed both social fears and "the deepest dreams for love, hope, compassion, newness, and justice" (46). As a result, Ndebele writes, South Africa in the late apartheid years had become one dimensional: "a society of posturing and sloganeering. It [wa]s totally heroic" (50). Mda's description of the Amnesty hearings suggests that certain aspects of this paradigm, still circulating outside the TRC in the 1990s, were also uncannily repeated in it. The TRC folded inward, exploring intensely affective personal and family memories and in this sense taking up Ndebele's call to reject spectacle and "rediscover the ordinary" through engagement with interiority and everyday life (53, 57). Yet it also foregrounded violence, heroism, and sacrifice, thus helping to extend, forward in time, a kind of spectacularization and reduction to exteriors.

Mda points to another notion of spectacle, though, one linked to the openness and inversions of carnival, and shows how spectacle can also enable what we might call "unauthorized" responses. He cites cases in which spectators at the TRC hearings interrupted proceedings to weave in their own performances, be they comments, hymns, or modes of heckling ("Fiction" 126, see also Feldman). Mark Sanders argues that such modes of reappropriation, when participants took official process of remembering in unscripted but needed directions, ultimately made the TRC a more responsive and ethically productive institution (*Ambiguities* 4, 8–11). Such creative engagement is also visible in the massive outpouring of fictional or artistic responses to the TRC that were produced in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Many of these responses, including *Nothing But the Truth* and *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*, both repeat and invert the guiding narratives of the TRC. They validate its basic understanding of memory work while supplementing it with other approaches and pushing it in new directions. Kani and Ndebele each do this by performing or narrating a different and more ambiguous set of family or home memories than those typically seen in the commission. Kani's play is less formally challenging and more concerned with exposing the failures of the TRC process, while Ndebele's intricate novel focuses on extending the possibilities offered by the TRC for personal and social renewal. Yet, despite these differences, both artists suggest that a deeper engagement with often less-than-heroic histories of family, domestic or "ordinary" life is necessary to complete the work of individual repair especially among black South Africans and to work toward wider social transformation.

Unsettling Heroes and Heroism

Nothing But the Truth takes as its starting point precisely the death of a "hero of the Struggle," Themba Makhaya, in his prolonged exile in London. The year is 2000, and the TRC Amnesty hearings are taking place across South Africa. Themba's elder brother Sipho Makhaya has been charged with collecting his body from the airport and arranging the funeral, so that Themba can be put to rest near his mother and his father in New Brighton, a township outside of Port Elizabeth. While the task sounds simple, Sipho is full of confusion about how to mourn his brother's death, and, as his symbolic surname suggests, how to care for and shepherd his wider family through this time of crisis.[9] His concerns are partly practical, given that cremation is not widely accepted within the Xhosa culture and Themba's Anglicized daughter Mandisa shows up at the airport with the ashes of Themba rather than his body. What kind of funeral can one have when there is no body to bury? How will

his other relatives react? What will the ancestors think? (see also Graham "I WAS" 78; Mda 128). Beneath these practical concerns lies a deeper challenge, stemming from an unresolved conflict between the siblings. How can Sipho mourn a brother who betrayed him, and for whom he harbors a deep anger?

Asking these questions, Kani draws his audiences into the private and domestic world of black South Africans. This movement inward is accentuated through the staging and other formal qualities of the play. The action takes place entirely in the living room and kitchen of a "simple four-roomed house in New Brighton" (2). The house is specifically scaled to "approximat[e] the actual size of a township dwelling" (2), and, as made evident in Sarah Roberts' layout plan for the set design included in the printed edition of the script, it takes up almost the whole of the stage (x–ix; see also Graham "I WAS" 75). The audience follows conversations that take place between Sipho, his daughter Thando and his niece Mandisa from room to room, and as the characters enter and exit this central domestic space. Like the interior of the house, furnished in typical township style, the conversations and exchanges between the characters are presented through what both Mda ("Fiction" 129) and Shane Graham ("I WAS" 70) identify as the codes of "mimetic realism." The realistic style encourages audience identification with the characters, and opens channels of empathy and engagement with the interior dramas played out on stage. As Mda describes it, Kani creates "theater that stretches the forms of realism to make people feel" ("Fiction" 129).

Kani's decision to bring audiences literally into the home and to focus on domestic strife there, may point back to the influence of his prior collaborations with Athol Fugard, who was intensely interested in interiority and who wrote with Kani and Winston Ntshona classics such as the 1972 *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*. But the choice to foreground family conflict in his first single-authored play—and a play written, moreover, after decades of silence—also clearly responds to the particular dynamics of the unfolding democratic transition. As Graham argues in a compelling article that I build on here, *Nothing But the Truth* aims to "explore the processes of mourning loss and to represent the domestic spaces in which ordinary middle- and working-class black South Africans live their lives" ("I WAS" 70). As it does so, it not only challenges the "divide between public and private" that solidified the spatial ordering of apartheid, but also becomes a "commentary on the TRC, by dramatizing its tensions and conflicts through the microcosm of one family, as well as by showing the deep-seated drama and traumas that fall outside the Commission's ambit" (ibid. 75, 70).

The play's relation to the TRC is further addressed by Mda, who suggests that it works specifically to counteract the failure of this institution to promote repair, "reconciliation," or "accommodation" within the black population ("Fiction" 13). Mda notes:

> Despite Nelson Mandela's transformational leadership, tensions of the past among black people were never resolved, or even mentioned in polite company. These include the divide among families that were on different sides of the apartheid struggle; the political divide, for instance, between what was called the mass democratic movement and the Inkatha Freedom Party;...the ethnic divide that occasionally exploded...into violence orchestrated by apartheid and their divide-and-rule strategy, for example, among Xhosas and Sothos at the mines; and intraethnic violence among the various Zulu clans...Reconciliation was seen only as a process of rehumanizing former opponents, and blacks could not be conceived as former opponents of blacks. There was no recognition of the hurt that was seething underneath. (ibid. 13)

In contradistinction, Kani for Mda draws needed attention to uncomfortable and unacknowledged schisms that "seethe" within black communities.

Which exact schisms Kani is interested in will be detailed below as I explore how the author poses the recovery of disavowed family memories—memories in certain ways like the images that Mofokeng finds hidden away in kists and cupboards—as an important form of working through knots of anger and pain. At the beginning of the play, Sipho relies on repression and silence to keep up a wall between the present (in which he lives alone with his daughter Thando, a teacher who also serves as an interpreter at the TRC Amnesty hearings, and works as the Assistant Chief Librarian at the Port Elizabeth Public Library) and the past (when he wished to be a lawyer, his brother was still in South Africa, and a series of traumatic events occurred involving Themba and other family members). When Thando, waiting for Mandisa to arrive from England with Themba's body, asks for information about her uncle, Sipho refuses explanations beyond the often-repeated line meant to deflect all further inquiry: "He was my brother." Thando complains: "It's funny, every time I try to make you talk about Uncle Themba you change the subject. All I know is what everybody else has told me" (5). Sipho is equally silent when it comes to any information about Thando's mother, who left Sipho and Thando when the latter was a small baby, as well as about her brother Luvuyo, who was killed as a teenager at an antiapartheid rally.

Silence, however, proves an insufficient approach to history. As Graham writes, "[d]espite his express desire to forget the past" and his

"amnesia" about Themba, Thando's mother and Luvuyo specifically, "Sipho is forced under the cumulative weight of the memories of a lifetime to reveal the details of [an] ugly past to his daughter and his niece" ("I WAS" 75–76). Mandisa's arrival with the urn of Themba's ashes begins to crack his wall, as she dredges up the unspoken past with her insistent questions about her father, and challenges Sipho's tight control over Thando's present and future. The real break comes, however, when Sipho learns that he has failed to get his dreamed-of promotion. After having expectantly waited to be promoted to the post of Chief Librarian after 38 years of service, Sipho is informed that the position has been given to a younger man whose main "qualification" seems to be that he was "from exile" (32)—like his brother Themba. The combination of this bad news drives Sipho to drink, in turn precipitating a cascade of transgressive remembrance. He finally offers a window into his repressed experiences when he drunkenly comments about the job: "People always take things from me. It's been like that all my life" (32).

The idea of "taking" is one he links to Themba, and which draws his losses together in an iterating narrative.[10] In a long monologue punctuated by questions from Thando and Mandisa, and in which he tells "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God" about their family history (49), Sipho relives how Themba takes away his opportunities for education and to have a better career, as Sipho was forced to work to earn money so that Themba could earn his university degree at Fort Hare. He takes over the funeral of their father in order to turn it into a political rally. He takes away his son, since it was because Luvuyo admired Themba's activism that he decided to get involved in politics and was killed. But none of these seem to be as painful as the story of his wife, which Sipho recounts as if it were burnt into his brain in the exact terms in which he first experienced it:

> I came home early from work that day. I wasn't feeling well. I had the flu. My head was pounding. When I got there I opened the kitchen door with my own keys. The radio was playing too loud. The radio was right there on this sideboard. I turned the volume down. Then I heard your mother laugh. I went towards her, looked into the bedroom and there they were. On my bed. Both naked and making love. They looked up as they felt my presence. Your mother screamed. Themba dropped his face into the pillow in shock and shame. I walked out. I did not say a word. I just kept walking and walking. When I came back, they were both gone. I never saw them again. (49–50)

Gesturing toward the empty space on the sideboard where the radio used to be, Sipho points metaphorically to the ever-present hole in his

domestic life created by Themba. What makes it worse is that, given the timing of the affair, it is even possible that as he took away Sipho's wife, Themba in a sense took away his daughter—since Themba could be Thando's biological father.

Stories such as the ones Sipho tells about Themba clearly unsettle the heroic narrative of struggle and sacrifice emphasized outside and within the TRC hearings and bring us back to Mda's comments on the need for reconciliation within black communities and families. His personal narrative of betrayal by his brother speaks to a number of still largely undisclosed areas of experience during apartheid. One is the way in which political activism could be used as an alibi for less altruistic goals. Here, a "hero of the Struggle" is revealed as a self-serving and morally compromised individual who becomes an activist in order to improve his sex life. While Themba's commitment is largely validated by the end of the play, the questions raised about life in "the Struggle" have far wider consequences. They open the door to contemplation of the dense intertwinement of political and emotional or affective choices that went into joining various resistance movements—choices made through calculations both egoistic and altruistic and which cannot fit easily into flattened narratives of sacrifice for "the people." As they suggest a need to rethink the different historical dimensions of commitment to the antiapartheid movement, the questions Kani raises about the use of one's Struggle credentials for personal gain also foreshow more recent and crucial concerns about corruption within the ANC elite.

Just as importantly, Sipho's stories about what his brother took from him also reveal the painful gaps and betrayals created in families by the decision of certain family members to participate in the liberation struggle at the expense of their domestic responsibilities. Sipho himself is forced into a life of both economic strain and personal compromise as he cuts short his dreams in order to financially support his brother, although he doubts the commitment and wisdom of Themba's activism. In return he believes that his brother broke up his marriage and caused the death of his son Luvuyo. Sipho's family pride thus contains an undercurrent of anger, missed opportunities, and loss. Through the character of Thando, *Nothing But the Truth* further gestures to the consequences of the political choices made by elders for the next generation, who are forced to live in the shadow of activists and often to pick up the pieces. This generation must ask why their fathers, mothers, or uncles choose detention, exile, and even death rather than remaining to take care of or to share a life with them. The damaging legacies of prioritizing commitment to a cause over care for a family have been beautifully documented in the memoirs of children of prominent activists such as Gillian Slovo's *Every Secret*

Thing: My Family, My Country (1998) but have yet to become a major site of public discussion.[11] For Thando, as we have seen, the difficulty extends to her biological identity itself, and threatens to set in motion another version of the family romance discussed in chapter 1.

These difficult revelations about the Makhaya family, painful as they are at the moment of telling, have a variety of positive consequences in the play—underscoring what is posed as the importance of sharing hidden family stories. As Sipho rages, "The taking stops here and now. I want everything back, Themba" (52), he seems to break a kind of spell under which he and the girls had been held and provokes an affective outpouring in return. It is immediately after these words that Thando reaffirms her commitment to her father: "I am your daughter. Nothing is going to change that" (52). Having finally learned the story of her mother, and through it the extent of Sipho's love for her, Thando is able to give herself and her father security about their relationship. Mandisa too feels more bound to her South African family on account of this information. "I love you too, Uncle Sipho," she states, "You're the only father I have now" (55). When Sipho admits that he "forgave Themba long ago. All I wanted was for your father to come home and stand in front of me and say 'I am sorry, my brother'" (56), Mandisa responds by taking up her father's unfinished task: "For what it's worth, Uncle Sipho, I am sorry for what my father did to you, to our family" (56). As these rituals of remembrance and apology bind Sipho, Thando, and Mandisa together, Sipho finds that he himself is ready to finally face his brother. At the beginning of his final speech, he picks up the urn filled with Themba's ashes and tells his brother: "I love you" (59).

This plotline clearly conforms to the redemptive trajectory associated with the TRC, in which remembrance and apology lead to a cathartic outpouring of feeling that can bind wounds and stitch together communities. Yet, the play also points to the way memory work can subvert "healing" paradigms and suggests how psychological processes of working through must be connected to political and economic transformations in society. Through his process of revelation Sipho also finds the strength to confront another issue that threads throughout the play: his frustration at the failures of "freedom" or liberation. One of these, and developed in dialogue with Thando's work at the TRC Amnesty hearings, is the lack of "justice" for the death of his son Luvuyo (Graham "I WAS" 80–81). He demands that the killers of Luvuyo experience the pain of being charged with murder, taken to jail, and subjected to the humiliations of incarceration before any amnesty can be granted. This demand is never closed off in the play (ibid. 81). When Thando asks her father in the last scene if he can forgive Luvuyo's killer, the stage directions specify:

"Long pause. Sipho does not answer" (58). In Sipho's charged silence one can hear something of Kani's response to his own loss of his brother Xolile Kani in 1985 in a circumstance very similar to that of Luvuyo, which he has noted was the kernel of the play itself. As Kani told a *New York Times* interviewer, "I miss my brother. I still feel his death as a waste. I'm still struggling with forgiving. I'm still not prepared to forget" (Swarns).

Connected to the call for legal justice is Sipho's anger over the lack of material improvement and structural change accompanying the transition to democracy. "I was part of the Struggle," he points out,

> I too suffered as a black person. I went to the marches like everyone else. I might not have been detained. I might not have been on Robben Island. I did not leave the country, but I suffered too. The thousands that attended those funerals on Saturdays, that was me. The thousands that were tear-gassed, sjamboked by the police, mauled by Alsatian dogs, that was me. When Bishop Tutu led thousands through the streets of white Port Elizabeth, that was me. I WAS THOSE THOUSANDS. I too deserved some recognition, didn't I? (51–52)

What he demands as "recognition" is a demonstrable and material commitment by the new ANC government to the "dreams" and "needs" of their constituency:

> I am going to write a letter to President Mbeki. I want to remind him that I voted for him. I put him in power… They must never forget the little people like me. The little Assistant Chief somethings who still make up the majority who has kept them in power and will still do so for a long time to come. We have dreams too. We have our needs too. Small as they may be, they are important to us. We want 'A Better Life for All' now! Today! It's our time now. (58)

Sipho's speech asserts that democracy must entail attention to the "small" but crucially important demands of ANC constituents who have not been consecrated as "heroes" (Graham "I WAS" 81). This is something that Kani himself has also underscored. "We need to accelerate the process of change," he noted in 2002, "Otherwise there will come a time when the millions of this country will feel they have not yet benefitted from this dispensation, and that would build the biggest opposition to our government" (Swarns). Sipho's specific "small" request is to be given money to build an African public library in New Brighton, over which he will preside as Chief Librarian. The importance of this issue can be seen in Kani's choice to make the request for library funds the closing moment of the play.[12]

Referring to the desire for justice after Luvuyo's death and passages such as the "I WAS THOSE THOUSANDS" speech, Graham shows how Kani's drama points to the need for more robust transformation and challenges the focus of the TRC—and that of the transitional ANC dispensation more generally—on gross human rights violations, its decision to endorse restorative rather than retributive justice, and its initial failure to prioritize material redress that might actually transform life for the majority ("I WAS" 80–81). These topics, like the family memories of personal tragedies such as Themba's betrayals, the domestic costs of activism for Sipho and Thando, and Sipho's own resulting ambivalence toward the liberation struggle that I have emphasized, were boxed up and set aside in the official discourse of the early years of democracy and became difficult to broach in other forums. This despite the fact that, as Wilson has shown, many township inhabitants rejected notions of amnesty or forgiveness in favor of revenge and retributive justice (158). Perhaps because of such official repression, calls for legal justice and material redress visible during the TRC and in its immediate aftermath have only increased over time.

We thus circle back once again to Mda's suggestion that *Nothing But the Truth* points to multiple and overlapping zones of unfinished business within black communities given short shrift in the TRC, and which need attention before any real reconciliation or repair can occur. Kani poses remembering or telling the specific histories of such repressed or publically ignored domestic experiences as necessary both to mourn this past and to create alternative futures. This stance of course replicates certain elements of the TRC even from within its critique. In its method of pointing out lapses and blindspots, *Nothing But the Truth* reinscribes some of the commission's underlying assumptions—such as its emphasis on the importance of recovering and retelling traumatic memories, and its conviction that such memory work can lead to or at the very least begin the process of healing or repair for both the individual victims and the community gathered around them. If anything, it suggests that the TRC must be opened up and extended, by staging something like intra-family TRC hearings capable of addressing an extended range of topics in private living rooms across the country (see also Bystrom "The Public" 147).[13] Such a scenario clearly speaks to what Graham identifies as Kani's desire to unsettle the division between public and private spaces ("I WAS" 75), as it positions the home as a primary locus for working through the past. Yet, if Kani shows this homemade memory work to assist in letting go of the dead and the hurt they have caused, thus repairing fractures within individuals and families, then he also uses it to clarify where such closure is inappropriate—indeed, where it

can become a foreclosure of freedom—and stages the usefulness of what Eng and Kazanjian theorize as a productive melancholia that must also move outward from private to public spaces. Here, a refusal to accept loss or harm remains the basis for demanding the fulfillment of unfulfilled dreams, grounding "a politics of mourning that might be active rather than reactive, abundant rather than lacking, social rather than solipsistic, and militant rather than reactionary" (2).

Winnie Mandela and "Ordinary" Life

Like *Nothing But the Truth*, the acclaimed novel *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* unsettles heroic narratives of struggle and suffering to refocus attention on the home and on stories of domestic life that often fell outside the purview of the TRC. Specifically, it takes one of the most "spectacular" figures in the TRC hearings—Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, former wife of Nelson Mandela and a political force in her own right—and embeds her within a tale of the "ordinary violence" shared by many black African (and other) women but not often discussed in public (Samuelson *Remembering* 210). This is the story of "waiting women," or women whose husbands have left them. It is a tale that Ndebele labels "a great South African story not yet told" (1). One example is the character Mamello, who lost her husband to exile and then jail on account of his political activism. Released from jail in the early years of democracy, he chooses to divorce her and marry a white female "comrade," thus living out the dream of nonracialism by creating a "rainbow family" (24). Ndebele also and pointedly includes black women whose losses are tied not to the freedom struggle but to the conditions of the capitalist modernity leading up to and underpinning apartheid, including those whose husbands are lost to the mines and to moral disorientation in the township. The novel explores how women cope with such common but intensely painful domestic betrayals, and it suggests that contemplation of their struggles and strategies might offer something valuable to black South Africans finding their way in the democratic transition as well as to the wider democratizing public.

By insisting on reading Winnie Madikizela-Mandela within this fictional framework, Ndebele responds to his earlier call to "rediscover the ordinary" and asserts its relevance in the extended transition. He also, as multiple critics have noted, reworks this paradigm for South Africa's changed circumstances. First, and drawing on what we have seen to be the discourse of memory, mourning, and catharsis surrounding the TRC, the novel asserts an important role for memory in "rediscovering the ordinary." The work of remembering the past becomes a primary vehicle through which stories from domestic life generally considered

to be "minor" can be recovered and circulated. Second, and as David Medalie points out in his investigation of how *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* reconfigures Ndebele's earlier arguments about "the ordinary," Ndebele moves from a realist aesthetic to a high-modernist approach that foregrounds artificiality and meta-fiction ("*The Cry*" 56). This shift speaks to Ndebele's suggestion in the novel and his critical writing that memory must be conjoined with imagination in order to effect social transformation. Finally, Ndebele links "the ordinary" to the gendered questions of women, home spaces, and the realm of feeling. Samuelson focuses on this shift and notes that Ndebele's foregrounding of women not only addresses an important gap in his earlier paradigm but also brings new difficulties, as tying "the ordinary" to women and home can trap women in confining roles (*Remembering* 210–11). The embrace of emotion and feeling, long seen as negative forces associated with women and previously rejected by Ndebele (*Rediscovery* 49), should also be linked to this discussion. Yet, and here going further than Samuelson, who delineates the positive openings created by the very contradictions of the visions of women, home, and ordinary life staged in the text,[14] I suggest that the novel's interrogation of family stories and domestic life constitutes a productive model of what Ndebele describes as a "pouring out of personal feeling and thinking into the public domain" that may be crucial to the construction of deep democracy (Ndebele "Thinking" 217).

The text that Ndebele offers is formally intricate, rich in allusion, and intertextual to the extent of containing fragments of some of the author's postapartheid nonfictional writings (such as his 1998 essay "A Home for Intimacy") and selections from other nonfictional sources including newspaper reports and Winnie Mandela's memoirs. Divergent from both *Nothing But the Truth* and Ndebele's earlier work, the form of the novel is described by Medalie as "an exercise in anti-realism" that offers "unremitting artificiality" ("*The Cry*" 56). It is split into two parts that create a polyphonic dialogue. Part I begins in an essayistic fashion with an omniscient, third-person narrator who addresses the reader by asking him or her to imagine a book about the "descendants" of Penelope from Homer's *The Odyssey* in modern day South Africa, forced by gender norms to "wait" for their husbands to return from the mass migrations caused by South African modernity: political exile, job training overseas, the mines, warrens of moral corruption, and illness. This book then comes into being as it tells in separate chapters the story of four of these women—at the same time foregrounding their status as fictional creations of the author/narrator. Their names are Delisiwe, 'Mannete, Mamello, and Mara. Part II narrates an imaginary meeting of these women, who have come to form an *ibandla,* or community discussion

group, in Delisiwe's sitting room. Here, and from a first person perspective, they engage in a game of addressing questions to Winnie Mandela, characterized as the most prominent and problematic of the "women who waited" in the apartheid context.[15] This part also includes the response of Winnie Mandela to the entreaties and queries of the other women. It ends with a final chapter written from the perspective of the frame narrator and in which the South African women including Winnie Mandela come face to face with Penelope.

Their shared losses tie these different women together. These are not only the losses of their husbands but also, and perhaps more importantly, the losses of their homes, and the textures of domestic life, selfhood, and the intimate relations woven there, that occur when their husbands depart or are taken from them. Samuelson draws attention to the centrality and difficulty of home as a signifier in the text. She shows that home, in one of two contradictory incarnations embraced by Ndebele, holds a deep spiritual and emotional power capable of sustaining personhood and associated with women as mothers and housewives (*Remembering* 215–16). It is a space where rich veins of memory feed deep if complex relationships, and where creativity finds its roots in a continuous history of experiences and feelings. When men leave, women enter into the phase of waiting, defined in the text as "living in the zone of absence without duration" (6). In this phase, social expectations and gender norms are crystallized, turning each woman into a "thing-person without agency" who is important only in the way her actions reflect back upon her absent man (4). As women are reduced to objects or surfaces, the home as a space of security, intimacy, and nurture capable of allowing individuals to "flourish" is broken down and its vitality is sapped (72). Mara decries this situation with an illuminating question: "What is it that one does within the privacy of one's home that turns it into an eye of society looking at every turn in your life?" (67). Forced to act out roles or "postures" for the "eye of society" rather than attending to their own needs and creating relationships in their own ways, the women lose the ability to "sustain" themselves and others (72). Indeed, speaking to the latter point by citing from "A Home for Intimacy," Mara asserts "the rebuilding of homes and communities may have become the most compelling factor in enabling us to sustain our nationhood . . . homes that can sustain public life because they infuse into it the values of honour, integrity, compassion, intelligence, imagination, and creativity" (72).[16]

The way offered by the novel beyond this resulting self "afflicted by loss and hollowness," as Medalie puts it ("*The Cry*" 58), is to actively put an end to waiting. Significantly, this task is allied to that of mourning. "Are we really a gathering of waiting women or a gathering of women

in mourning?," Delisiwe asks, "Didn't so much die in us while we waited?" (42). And this mourning, understood simultaneously as a process of rebuilding one's interiority or intimate resources, can only be finally accomplished by remembering both cherished and painful or difficult details of domestic life. Reminiscent here of *Nothing But the Truth*, or at least showing a similar reliance on the notion of memory as pathway to healing or catharsis popularized by the TRC, *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* shows how the women overcome their losses by jointly remembering repressed aspects of their lives, addressing them, talking and working through these events, and grappling with their contradictions.[17]

Nevertheless, and in line with his stylistic emphasis on "artificiality," Ndebele moves beyond a straightforward valorization of memory work to suggest that the open and vulnerable probing of the past undertaken by his characters needs to be supplemented by imaginative engagement with it. In his essay "Memory, Metaphor and the Triumph of Narrative," Ndebele suggests "there is something inherently reflective about memory, as there is about narrative," such that "narratives of memory, in which real events are recalled, stand to guarantee us occasions for some serious moments of reflection" (20). Moreover, he argues that the "facts" of memory can become "the building blocks of metaphor," inspiring imaginative stories that allow for reflection and debate, and in this way forging paths for remaking and renewal both for storytellers and for the people reading or listening to them ("Memory" 21). The work of remembering thus grounds and opens up the transformative potential of the imagination, and the effect is a productive exchange between the "real" and the "fictional" that is also modeled formally as the novel sutures fragments of nonfictional works with invented descriptions.

This movement between memory and imagination is precisely what is represented in the novel. One example is that of Delisiwe, who "waited" for her husband to finish medical school in Scotland so that he could become the community's first black medical doctor. In the fourteen years that he took to finish his degree, she had two affairs. The second was with a family friend, and left her pregnant; when her husband returned, he divorced her for her infidelity and began a new life with a black nurse. This affair, while the most outwardly visible manifestation of what society deems as Delisiwe's failure, is not actually the event that causes her the most guilt and shame. Her real shame is tied to an earlier affair with a much younger man that she has never revealed to anyone, and in which she debases herself and allows the man to control and humiliate her. This relationship leaves permanent scars—especially since, after she finally breaks things off, the young man hangs himself. Inspired by her imagined conversation with Winnie Mandela about a

letter that Winnie wrote to a young lover that was leaked to the press, and in which Delisiwe recognizes many of her own feelings, she is able to recall her experiences for other women.[18] Articulating her memories of the affair to the *ibandla*, admitting her feelings of agony over having started it, the exhilaration of having found a way out of it, and her sense of complicity in her lover's violent end, Delisiwe confronts her "ambiguous journeys" (51) and creates a "bridge between the public clamour of [her] life and the intimate secrets deep inside [her]"—a bridge that becomes a "special salvation" for her and perhaps for others as well (52).

Delisiwe's use of Winnie Mandela as a catalyst for her own memory and imagination brings us to a second example: the controversial figure of the former wife of Nelson Mandela. By taking on the burden of representing a living political figure, and one who is the object of both adulation and hatred, often around a polarized racial gap, Ndebele cuts himself a huge task. Wilson suggests that, in the 1990s and early 2000s, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela came to be "the national voice of black vengeance, someone who articulate[d] widespread emotions of anger at the continued racialization of privilege in the 'new' South Africa and the lack of economic betterment for the majority of black South Africans" (165). Vengeance here is posed in continuum with the demands of the freedom struggle and against the rhetoric of forced closure and reconciliation associated with the TRC. In line with Sipho's call for justice and material reparation in *Nothing But the Truth*, Madikizela-Mandela "ke[pt] alive the aspirations of the liberation narrative of the 1980s . . . She reject[ed] reconciliation and instead nurture[ed] desires for a Robert Mugabe-style seizure of the political and economic resources still held by a white elite" (Wilson 165). Such a vision clearly animates perspectives such as Lungile Madywabe's, who in 2003 writes:

> Many young black people still see her as a hero . . . The reason for this is that Madikizela-Mandela is seen as the champion of the poor and the voiceless . . . Madikizela-Mandela visits squatter camps and exposes the failure of the newly elected government to bridge the economic disparity between black and white. She thereby alerts the majority that the minority still enjoy the fruits of the land and, consequently, endangers the fragile rainbow nation.

Yet, if this "hero" became the "Mother of the Nation" due to her marriage to Nelson Mandela, she was also christened, in a 1997 *Mail & Guardian* article, "Mugger of the Nation" (Wilson 165). This second epithet captures the violence she actively or tacitly encouraged in the members of her personal gang, the Mandela United Football Club, and which

culminated in the murder of a 13-year-old boy named Stompie Seipei. Allegations about her role in Seipei's death suggest that her resistance to reconciliation also had more personal motives.[19]

Her appearance at the 1998 TRC hearings on the Mandela United Football Club encapsulates what Ndebele surely saw as an unhelpful example of self-serving spectacle. Video footage of Madikizela-Mandela shows her in dark Chanel glasses that deflect all attempts to see into her emotions and motivations, in much the same manner as her own evasive answers to the commissioners' questions. Her "apology," prompted by a desperate plea from Desmond Tutu, lacks depth and sincerity. She becomes a figure of exteriority, standing by the righteousness of older heroic narratives of struggle and refusing to accept their ambiguities and contradictions, or their entanglements with failure and complicity.[20] It is telling that, in one of the novel's representations of this scene, Mamello describes Winnie Mandela's "victory" as "the victory of image and posture, which had become fused into a compelling reality of their own" (63). For Samuelson, the character "personifies the culture of 'spectacle'" from which a "private" self needs to be recovered (*Remembering* 214).

In his novel, Ndebele allows his fictional Winnie Mandela to come to an understanding of this "private" self beyond the "posture," "heroism," and "anger" obvious in her TRC appearance by sending her on an imaginative journey into her past similar to that experienced by Delisiwe, Mamello, 'Mannete, and Mara (Samuelson *Remembering* 216; Medalie "*The Cry*" 63). Joining their game, claiming that "I too, Winnie Mandela, will speak to Winnie" (92), she imagines herself as a separate character who she can send on a car trip through all of the significant locations of her married and divorced life. As the second Winnie Mandela follows the map of her memory, the first Winnie Mandela asks her questions and prods her to reflect on what these places mean. It is through this process that she confronts again the experiences from apartheid that made her into a waiting woman: her marriage and the breakdown of her domestic life on account of Nelson Mandela's decision to go underground and then his arrest; her experiences under house arrest in Brandfort and in the torture chamber run by Major Thenuis Swanepoel; the manifold seductions created by Mandela United Football Club; and the moment of going to fetch Nelson Mandela from prison. What Samuelson calls Ndebele's choice to "double" this character, turning her into two figures in order to at once relive and reflect on the past (*Remembering* 216), allows Winnie Mandela to make it through "the beginning of [the] end" of waiting and "arrive at [her]self" (107)—coming to a mental space where she can confront with candor what the

book poses as her two most troubling moments of the postapartheid era. These are her rejection of Nelson Mandela's love once he returned from prison, and her refusal to apologize for the death of Stompie Seipei at the TRC hearings. Through this process of remembrance, imagined and shared with the other waiting women, Winnie is "renewed" (122). "At the end of my game," Winnie Mandela claims, "I feel surrounded by new possibilities" (122).

Quite appropriately, Winnie Mandela's renewal does not take the form of an easy closure of the past or a submission to the dictates and bywords of "rainbow" nationalism. In a crucial passage, she states:

> I will not be an instrument validating the politics of reconciliation. For me, reconciliation demands my annihilation. You, all of you, have to reconcile not with me but with the meaning of me. For my meaning is the endless human search for the right thing to do. (113)

With this statement, Winnie Mandela affirms that the only "reconciliation" she is interested in is what is later described in the novel as a "reconciliation with [herself]" (117). Such a reconciliation is not about smoothing over differences but about accepting and living with inconsistencies and contradictions, and about facing the conditions that made her and the consequences of her actions, no matter how ugly or uncomfortable they are.[21] Given the complex realities of postapartheid South Africa, the memories of both her fight for freedom and her "technical denial" of responsibility for Stompie Seipei's death must be faced and accepted, rather than wished away by supporters or detractors. They must also be connected to memories and struggles over home life with Nelson Mandela, her dreams and desires, and the future promises and happiness that she represented for many black South Africans. Confronting such contradictions, Samuelson argues, is in some sense the ethical core of the novel, which is able to "accommodate both ends of the remarkable spectrum of positions spun around her" because it allows an "unruly" Winnie Mandela to coexist with and haunt the "domesticated" one, "rather than choosing between the two" (*Remembering* 221, 219).

It is from this unstable ground that her listeners may be able to reconcile themselves with "the meaning of [her]" and learn from Winnie Mandela's experience—an operation, as the passage above implies, even more important than this character coming to terms with herself. If the authorial narrator and the stories of Delisiwe, Mamello, 'Mannete, and Mara act as "frames" for Winnie's story (Samuelson *Remembering* 212), then her story also acts as a mirror that reflects their stories back outward, giving other women a way to measure themselves against her perceived

successes and failures. Winnie Mandela was always understood in some sense as a mirror; as she proposes her "game" to the *ibandla* Mamello explains: "I want us to ponder the departures, the waitings, the returns in her life. Were they not ours too? I'm just looking for a way we can look at ourselves" (40). Medalie suggests that in this role Winnie Mandela comes (on one level) to "embod[y] the curative properties which inhere in reliving trauma" (61), though I would add that it is not simply trauma that she inspires the women to relive but also love. By engaging with Winnie Mandela's contradictions, with the reality of her failed expectations and misguided choices, and the contexts in which those choices were made, the four women relive their own family histories and feel their way toward different presents and futures. In this way, coming to terms with their memories through their imagined dialogue allows them to "reconcile with themselves." Such a formulation resonates with Mda's call for black communities to focus on internal reconciliation, and underscores how remembering and working through everyday domestic pleasures and challenges as well as more traumatic experiences—both so integral to the experience of a population caught in the grip of the extractive forces of modernity—is crucial for black South Africans to recover their inner resources and their ability to move beyond "postures" composed for the "eye of society."

This process of recollection, imagination, and repair exposes "home" as a dynamic space that contains betrayal and vanquished dreams, as well as instances of care and desire—and redefines it in a way not attempted by Kani's play, which ends rather by reaffirming the stability and security of the home space and family relationships as something like what Mallet calls a "home as haven" vision. As Samuelson compellingly argues, Ndebele's new and "uncanny" vision of home, in Homi Bhabha's sense of the term as a recognition of "the-world-in-the-home" ("The World"; Samuelson 195–99), is aware of the gendered workings of power within it. It contains traces of the unresolved past. It is open to the foreign and the other. It may even cease to be a four-walled dwelling place and become instead a conversation in motion that spans the length and breadth of the country (Samuelson *Remembering* especially 219–20, 223–24). This is, of course, in stark contrast to the earlier patriarchal version of the home that Samuelson locates in the text, another "home as haven" model that serves as the place to retreat from the complexities of the public world and as a site of sustenance, where women comfort their men and themselves, and where the psychic traumas done by apartheid might be undone (ibid. 219). It also contrasts with the country as "home" defined under apartheid, where travel was risky and Pretoria, in its "homeland" or Bantustan policies, legally strove to make black citizens homeless as

it rendered their actual homes so fragile. As Mara notes, far from having any sense of ownership or place within South Africa:

> what I remember is that the intervening physical space between A and B was something to endure because of the fear of being stopped and having my existence questioned by agents of oppression. No journey was undertaken with the certainty that the intended destination would be reached. (68)

By the end of the text the four women and Winnie Mandela are on the road, sharing a minivan on the way to a needed vacation. They geographically "reclaim the country as home" (Samuelson *Remembering* 223).

The Cry of Winnie Mandela may also turn the country into a home in a different way, recognizing, in addition to "the-world-in-the-home," how forms of action and expression associated with the home can infuse the outside world. Beginning in the mid-1990s with essays like "A Home for Intimacy," Ndebele has consistently drawn attention to the positive potential of "making the private, public" ("Thinking" 217). In his memorial for pop star Brenda Fassie, "Thinking of Brenda," written in 1996 and revised in 2002 and in 2004, he argues:

> Only if we attempt [a] pouring out of personal feeling and thinking into the public domain will a new public become possible. We cannot tell what kind of public it will be, but we do need to release more and more personal data into our public home to bring about a more real human environment: more real because it is more honest, more trusting and expressive. (217)

The uncertain "public home" he envisions here is one created through revealing "mutual vulnerabilities" and "dependencies," much in the way Fassie dared to do (217). Ndebele expresses a similar sentiment in his "Afterword" to McGregor and Nuttall's 2007 collection of personal testimonies *At Risk: Writing on and over the edge of South Africa*, when he praises the volume for "making public spaces intimate" and links "self exposure" and "the sharing of vulnerabilities" to both "the restoration of public trust" and the possibility for "new, interpersonal solidarities" (245).

Working from these writings, I have previously argued that acts of "intimate exposure" can support democracy by making public space more hospitable or home-like, in an open and inclusive sense of this term—a change that may help individuals to regain inner recourses and create interpersonal ties that strengthen oppressed communities (Bystrom "Johannesburg" 335, 339–40; see also Berlant *The Female*).[22] We could also say that these acts can generate what Sarah Ahmed calls "social stickiness" (*Cultural*). Of course, sharing oneself in public is "risky" in that

it invites misunderstanding and rejection as well as possible connection (Bystrom and Nuttall 311). In relation to stickiness, Ahmed notes how it can function to block as well as to create solidarity: one can be "stuck in traffic" or "stick with a friend" (*Cultural* 91). Ndebele, in "A Home for Intimacy" and *The Cry of Winnie Mandela,* similarly calls "intimacy" "a dangerous word" (71; Samuelson *Remembering* 221). The *Cry of Winnie Mandela* nevertheless valorizes this risk, as it poses Winnie Mandela's intimate exposures to the *ibandla* as the basis for constructing alternative futures. If only the *real* Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and others like her had taken the risk during the TRC to share their inner thoughts and feelings, the novel seems to say, the country could be further along the road toward transformation.

This project of shaping a "public home" through intimate exposure includes but reaches beyond the unfinished reconciliation or working through by black South Africans that I have underscored thus far to envision a "desegregated" community. Here, trust among and between groups can be gained by revelations of memory and feeling, as well as in response to these offerings (Bystrom and Nuttall 308). If, as I suggested above, Kani critiques and extends the work of the TRC by broadening it to new topics and multiplying its forms in black living rooms, then Ndebele goes further as his novel transforms the *ibandla* that meets in Delisiwe's sitting room into a mobile gathering that welcomes others. This includes an updated version of Homer's Penelope, whom the group stops to pick up in their caravan when they find her waiting by the side of the road. Antjie Krog sees the appearance of Penelope—described in the novel as someone with "auburn hair" and "heavily tanned" (117)—as an invitation for white people to join the women's conversation ("What the hell" 56; see also Samuelson, 227). Samuelson reads this meeting, with the *ibandla* taking in the "foreigner" or "stranger," as a way to think about productive forms of transnational feminism (*Remembering* 225). The inclusion of Penelope as a recognizably fictional character even more explicitly brings *literature* into the conversion, and points to the work to be done by aesthetic projects investigating private, domestic, or ordinary life in the extended transition. Penelope the character in *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* takes the opportunity to lament her own treatment by Odysseus after his return and renounce the role of the faithful wife she has come to embody. As it joins this mythical figure's intimate exposures with those of Mara, 'Mannete, Mamello, Delisiwe, and Winnie Mandela, Ndebele's novel suggests that personal conversations staged in fiction may create a kind of ersatz public sphere that—like the desired "public home"—sutures memory and imagination and threads between different racial groups to create shared affective ties.

Memory beyond Mourning

Both *Nothing But the Truth* and *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* suggest that the complex memory work of uncovering the nuances of family and domestic history—rather than relying on spectacular narratives of heroic struggle or victimhood—is necessary for rebuilding damaged relations within families and within black communities more generally as well as for finding new ways to inhabit the present. Speaking out about hidden or unacknowledged pasts can play a therapeutic role as individuals and families undergo processes of mourning and regeneration. It can allow for, if not healing, then at least attending to psychic wounds created over a long history of exploitation. These are not only wounds inflicted by outsiders and particularly by white settlers and then upholders of apartheid, but also ones that come from places too close for comfort, from within one's circle of family and friends, and which tended to be downplayed in public discussion during the extended transition. Along with assisting processes of psychological repair, and as we saw in Kani's play in particular, this memory work can also produce calls for structural change and material redress. This may mean denouncing deprivation such as the unavailability of stable jobs, lack of access to education and other public resources, or oppression by corrupt leaders. It may also mean demanding financial reparation for gross human rights violations like those expressed to the TRC, or pressing for wider forms of economic redistribution.

This chapter has focused on relationships within black families and communities; but, as the ending of Ndebele's novel suggests, something remains to be said about relationships across racial groups. On one level, it may be that looking within provides a basis for turning outward again, reaching out to others with a more complex vision of history and better preparedness to ask for and to give what is needed. This possibility is raised by Irlam, who suggests, as a counter to his own skepticism about the move away from national politics associated with "unraveling the rainbow," that "the turn inward and away from others to address more parochial issues of cultural reconstruction, should be regarded as the first step on the long road to national recovery . . . allow[ing] writers to turn toward their own communities and to permit more modulated voices to be heard" (715). Once previously muffled stories can be spoken and heard within the relevant communities, they can also be shared outside of them in extended forms of memory and mourning. Sanders' *Ambiguities of Witnessing* presents an alternative to the social catharsis model critiqued above when he describes the TRC hearings as spaces designed to be open to outside direction and encouraging of "condolence"—a shared structure of mourning that has at least the capacity to generate an

affective surplus both within and across racial lines (49, 54–55). The process of listening to others' stories, or mourning with the "other," is here revealed as a process that potentially enables the building of social ties. Something like this notion can be useful in understanding the effects of narrative and performance outside the TRC. As we have seen, Ndebele urges us to take on the work of memory and mourning in public venues as well as in the alternative public spheres created through the circulation of literary texts (or, we might add, by attending performances or art exhibitions) as such acts create conduits of feeling that can attach or glue together varied individuals.

Mourning lies at the heart of this chapter because both Kani and Ndebele's pieces are so invested in this process. Indeed, it is hard to avoid the topic. Discourses of memory and mourning are omnipresent in postapartheid culture and in scholarly analyses of it. This omnipresence speaks to the urgency and ethical power of these terms as well as to the way the TRC came to colonize, at least from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, the imaginative capacity of artists who wished to remember the past and participate in the national process of constructing the present and the future. The assumption embedded in the TRC that memory work is essentially tied to trauma and the possibilities of emerging from this trauma is both deep rooted and difficult to see around in the extended transition, as it is from this link that much of memory's moral character is drawn. Yet, as Ndebele's novel begins to suggest and as his critical writings and Mofokeng's installation show even more clearly, the creation of the thick ethical relations need not rely only on memories of suffering and pain. Moving beyond mourning to what I called in the Introduction modes of "working toward" is also crucial to reconceiving South Africa as a democratic society. I conclude by exploring two modes of working toward seen in *The Black Photo Album*—which, perhaps because it was produced before a TRC memory narrative crystallized in public consciousness, presents us with possibilities outside psychoanalytic models.

Working for the legendary photojournalism agency Afrapix in the 1980s, Mofokeng was confronted on a daily basis with the demands of "spectacular" representation decried by Ndebele and operative beyond narrative form in the visual language of "struggle photography." This paradigm demanded high contrast images that focused on white violence and black victimhood (see Peffer, 258, 261–62; Hayes, 267). Lauri Firstenberg (at 60), John Peffer (at 272), and Patricia Hayes (at 269) all argue that Mofokeng from the beginning resisted this paradigm and aimed instead to depict "ordinary" or "everyday" life.[23] In his autobiographical essay "Trajectory of a Street Photographer," Mofokeng claims

he was particularly concerned to make images that black people would recognize as part of their lives (46). This essay reveals his discomfort with the propaganda images expected of "committed artists" that "reduced life in the townships to perpetual 'struggle'" (ibid. 45). It foregrounds instead his desire to make "pictures of quotidian African life" such as "shebeens, street-soccer and home life," and his realization of the need to pay more "attention to the narratives and aspiration of the people [he] was photographing" (ibid. 45–46). As part of this approach in the late 1980s, Mofokeng began collecting the domestic portraits that would later make up *The Black Photo Album*. Interestingly, the reception of these images at that time was not particularly positive. Speaking on this point, Peffer speculates that the photographs of "civilized" black South Africans from the turn of the twentieth century were "no longer recognizable" to their descendants in the late twentieth century because their desire to reject colonial and apartheid white rule also blocked out the dreams and accomplishments of the earlier generation (278). In the dynamic Mofokeng would explore in *The Black Photo Album,* memory was being overwritten by other, more politically "acceptable" memories aligned with the Black Consciousness Movement and mass mobilization.

The end of apartheid created new opportunities to complicate understandings of black life under apartheid, and Mofokeng continued to push for other modes of representation. His exhibition "Distorting Mirror/Townships Imagined" (1995) juxtaposed "public political photos found in print media with private portraits from family albums" (Firstenberg 60). It allowed Mofokeng to chart the distance between his stark journalistic work and the images he had taken as a "street photographer" for township residents of events including birthday parties and weddings, "ie, images people chose to value, to treasure, to conserve" ("Trajectory" 46). *The Black Photo Album*, as we have seen, draws spectators back further in time to look at another set of these private images, and to consider how they might be recuperated as well as what practices or scripts of remembrance led to their erasure. As noted in the beginning of this essay in reference to the partially torn wedding photograph of Ephraim Maloyi, the images speak to presence and absence; they assert the *hereness* and tangibility of the lives and dreams of the photographed subjects and point to the fragility of these dreams and the images themselves. Marianne Hirsch cautions that family photographs can often be "slippery and deceptive" because they seem to offer access to the past and to the people depicted in them in a way that can also function as a "screen" (*The Familial* xiii). Yet, as the "camera has become the family's primary instrument of self-knowledge and self-representation" (ibid. xvi), these photographs also offer an unrivaled

window to the ways historical families wished to be seen as well as into current difficulties in receiving them.

One useful lens for reading this installation of found family photographs comes out in Jacob Dlamini's 2009 memoir *Native Nostalgia*. Here, Dlamini suggests using memory work as a way of recovering the affective and sensory fullness—and, particularly for periods flattened into suffering, to recover the satisfactions and achievements—of black experiences during earlier time periods. Dlamini points to the need to decouple memory and mourning or trauma, and to recover in addition to painful ones the lost histories of joyful and everyday events and feelings. Writing a history of his home township of Katlehong through the five senses, he traces the uncomfortable and the pleasurable aspects of life in areas generally written off through what he calls a "master narrative of black dispossession, that hides deep class, ethnic and gendered fissures within black communities" (18). His own "shards of memory" (22) serve as his guide through a dense and nuanced tangle of experiences. Citing Andreas Huyssen, he notes that: "It has been all too tempting to some to think of trauma as the hidden core of all memory . . . But to collapse memory into trauma . . . would unduly confine our understanding of memory" (110). Remembering what gave people pleasure and meaning even during apartheid, he suggests, constructs a more accurate vision of the past and points to resources that allow a different future to be imagined—including "the bonds of reciprocity and mutual obligation, social capital, that made it possible for millions to imagine a world without apartheid" (13).

A decade before Dlamini, Mofokeng seems to pose a similar challenge. Hayes notes in relation to "Distorting Mirror/Townships Imagined" that Mofokeng protests the reduction of a rich township life to "monotony, gloom and despair." In *The Black Photo Album*, he asks spectators to see in the recovered images traces of each photographed group's sense of pride and accomplishment, their desire to show their "very best selves" to their family members and others who would view their photo albums.[24] There is a way in which the assertions of domestic comfort and satisfaction so evident in the images (even if not always true to fact, as we know from our own family albums) function as a kind of everyday resistance to the degradation of colonialism and segregation, showing how racism failed to fully determine people's lives and how families and communities found ways to thrive in spite of difficult circumstances. This altered frame of vision may make it possible to rehabilitate repressed black histories, both in the sense of identifying the individuals depicted in the photographs—to recall, the identities of many people depicted in the images in the original box with which Mofokeng worked had been lost over the decades—and

in the sense of forming attachments that allow for identification with these individuals. Identification depends on finding a thread of continuity, in this case a pathway from the past to the present, from which people can draw out useful imaginative and affective resources.

Complementary to this approach is Sarah Nuttall's call to read for "entanglement," examining "sites in which what was once thought as separate—identities, spaces, histories—come together or find points of intersection in unexpected ways" (*Entanglement* 11). Nuttall draws our focus beyond black South African communities to look for moments in which people and ideas move between racial groups, sometimes willingly and sometimes unwillingly. Such movements create unexpected alignments and coalitions that, while mindful of history and ongoing structural inequality, nevertheless open a "utopian horizon" (ibid. 11). What Nuttall calls "historical entanglement" is particularly relevant to Mofokeng's installation, as it speaks to the way South Africa's colonial history of dispossession brought black and white communities into close contact, with new forms of interdependence and exchange emerging even as harsh racism was being formulated (ibid. 2). It can also encompass the uneven circulation of texts and ideas that, following Isabel Hofmeyr, creates a "connective membrane" across groups and geographies (cited in Nuttall *Entanglement* 3); and tries to account for the conditions that might have allowed "other historical possibilities" than apartheid and that remain available (if submerged) for the construction of a "future-inflected politics" (ibid. 19).

The fact of "historical entanglement" is one that Mofokeng seems to embrace. Consider two final examples from the installation. One is the silver bromide print of Elizabeth and Jan van der Merwe, a couple formally posed in immaculate Victorian clothing, from Elizabeth's shining white shirt to her lace-up boots, and from Jan's jacket and bow tie to his clean spats. The backdrop of their portrait is a cavernous room in something like a British country house, with "a scene of Greek architecture framed by antiquities" (Firstenberg 60–61). The other is the image of Tokelo Nkole and his two companions, all dressed in three-piece suits, with Nkole seated in center with a commanding gaze and a cane reminiscent of a royal scepter. Mofokeng notes in the adjacent slide that Nkole was a follower of Marcus Garvey and an eventual warder at Alan Paton's Diepkloof Reformatory. He is still remembered by his grandson Dodgey Ramela, who laments in the following slide that "his legacy of books was plundered by his teacher friends after his death when I was still a small child." Both portraits show upwardly mobile black people in possession of accessories, styles, and attitudes seen to belong to the West, and taught to a black elite in the mission schools of South Africa up through the

1950s, when apartheid laws finally strangled this avenue of advancement (Campbell; see also Comaroff and Comaroff).

These images insistently direct the viewer's gaze to moments of crossing over racial and cultural boundaries. Four times in the installation, the photographs are followed by slides with the question: "Are these images of mental colonization, or did they serve to challenge prevailing images of 'the African' in the Western world?" Mofokeng leaves room for different answers to these questions. He suggests that the adoption of the standards of Western civilization can be a crippling aspiration to fit into the hegemonic culture. This is signaled in the way the embrace of Western clothes, props, and "civilizational standards" comes at the expense of indigenous traditions, and stabilizes a relatively privileged class identity at the expense of others.[25] The energy of the installation, however, pushes in the opposite direction. References to Paton and Garvey suggest that recovering the lost photographs and ancestors in them creates a link to the early freedom struggles in South Africa and beyond. Indeed, the foundations of the ANC were forged by figures from precisely this generation and class of black South Africans (Peffer 278). As James T. Campbell writes, these images "may or may not be evidence of mental colonization, but they are evidence of assertion, of struggle. They were staking claims to forms of identity and culture, to ways of being in the world that the keepers of South Africa's racial order sought to reserve for whites" (np). Projecting images of these people close to "life size" in a small exhibition room, Mofokeng brings their "ghosts" into the present (Peffer 278–79—not just as melancholy survivals but also as figures whose struggles and legacies deserve productive reengagement. The artist explicitly directs spectators to ponder the status and dreams of these ancestors with questions reminiscent of his own approach to discovering the contents of Msomi's box. He asks in a slide: "Who were these people? What were their aspirations? What is going to happen to those aspirations at the end of twentieth century South Africa?"

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Mofokeng, then, points to the risks of dismissing or writing out the forms of satisfaction and pleasure as well as the forms of historical and contemporary cultural exchange and dependence that have in fact, if not always in popular consciousness, marked black South African history. It is in such histories, I would argue, that submerged visions of transformation and relation useful to democracy might be retrieved.[26] While the memory work Mofokeng privileges is aimed at making visible different

aspects of black South African domestic life than those seen in Kani's and Ndebele's works, all three artists point to the importance of recovering material from the domestic or "private" realm and displaying it to both local or racial and wider national or multiracial publics, in the hopes of repairing old and creating new affective and imaginative connections.

The next chapter shares this investment in bringing to public view domestic spaces and histories generally kept hidden, but shifts the locus of inquiry by turning to the institution of domestic service. This too presents us with unacknowledged histories that inform and need to be recognized in the present, if we are to confront and alter the continuing inequality that exists in many South African households.

CHAPTER 3

KEEPING HOUSE

As a brutal war for the liberation of South Africa begins, Maureen Smales—the white protagonist of Nadine Gordimer's *July's People* (1981)—flees her suburban Johannesburg home with her husband and children to seek refuge in the rural village of her erstwhile "houseboy" July. Written in a period marked by rhetoric of "total onslaught" and "total strategy," and in a country spiraling closer to the states of emergency that would be declared in the mid-1980s, the apocalyptic vision of how apartheid might come to an end is less remarkable than one might nowadays think; certainly less remarkable than the way that, in this fraught context, Gordimer fixes attention on the micro-politics of the home and envisions the beginning of the postapartheid future through an exploration of the very concrete and intimate relationships that exist between "master" and "servant." This future is one that is dependent on what the novel labels an "explosion of [the] roles" (117) that stabilized "ordinary" life for white South Africans, a process Gordimer models by expelling Maureen from her home and shattering the "normal" routines that July enabled. It is only as she and July are forced to work out new forms of everyday life that Maureen comes to recognize the constriction of her previous vision and to inch—if inconclusively—toward a different kind of relation with him.

Maureen's recognition of the way her suburban home worked as what Rita Barnard identifies as an "enclosure" (*Apartheid* 44), trapping her within certain raced and gendered social patterns and beliefs, comes in part via a photograph, or rather the memory of a photograph, that doubles the question of domestic service at stake in this chapter.[1] In what Barnard calls "one of the novel's most intriguing flashbacks," (*Apartheid* 58), a brass plaque labeled "BOSS BOY" in the interior of a hut in July's village sends Maureen's memory tumbling backward to her childhood (where her father oversaw crews of mine workers) and to her treasured

relationship with her childhood servant Lydia (30). One afternoon, when Lydia was helping her with her school things on the way home, a passing photographer snaps a picture of the pair at a crossroad: "the marvellous photograph of the white schoolgirl and the black woman with the girl's school case on her head" (33). She remembers Lydia asking the photographer to send them a copy of the picture, which never arrives, and also later chancing upon the image in a book produced by *Life* magazine. Here it was given the caption "[w]hite *herrenvolk* attitudes and lifestyles" (33). As she recalls this last encounter with the image, Maureen formulates a series of questions that ought to have occurred to her much sooner:

> Why had Lydia carried her case?
>
> Did the photographer know what he saw, when they crossed the road like that, together? Did the book, placing the affair in context, give the reason she and Lydia, in their affection and ignorance, didn't know? (33)

These, Barnard notes, "prefigur[e] the many disconcerting questions about places and roles that suddenly arise in July's village" (*Apartheid* 59), and underscore how the work of reconfiguring the deep-rooted habits and feelings that thread between employers and their domestic workers is the very stuff of revolution.

That a triple displacement—first that of Maureen from her home, then that of the past from the present, and finally that of Maureen from her own experience via the catalyst of a stolen image—is necessary for her to recognize the "context" that placed the adult Lydia in a position of inferiority and servitude to a small white girl speaks to the difficulty of what Barnard calls "breaking open daily life" (*Apartheid* 59) not only in the architectural and ideological senses that she emphasizes but also in the linked interpersonal and affective ones. On the face of it, domestic work—which drew women of color into the bosom of white families to keep house and tend to a million other details of daily life—would seem to be a paradox or contradiction of apartheid's obsessive ideology of keeping races separate. What could be more intimate than raising one's child or washing one's underclothes? And yet, as Jacklyn Cock pointed out at roughly the same time as *July's People* was written, the institution of domestic service was so "deeply entrenched in white South African culture," so much an example of collective common sense, that it was often overlooked as something worthy of analysis and contestation (142; see also Ally 2).

Black women, of course, as well as black men and members of other "non-white" communities, were forced to often painfully live the paradox of separateness that their masters and madams were unable to

see. Cock's seminal study *Maids and Madams: A Study in the Politics of Exploitation* (1980), based on in-depth interviews with white women and their black female servants in the Eastern Cape in the 1970s, maps the "*ultra-exploitation*" of domestic workers under apartheid (6, italics in the original). If this concept does not always leave space for the emotional complications and layered resistances shown in many artistic portrayals, and that will be the focus of this chapter,[2] it provides an important baseline reading of domestic service during apartheid as an oppressive institution defined by an egregious paternalism. Workers were almost always considered by their employers to be "one of the family" (141). However, they were decidedly junior members of the family: "The essence of the domestic servant's position indeed is that he is a child. And the essence of the master's position is that he is the *paterfamilias* of a household that includes more than simply kin" (Rex cited in Cock 102). This relation presents a quite different vision than that seen in André Brink's optimistic reformulation of the notion of "living like family" in chapter 1, as it reveals how designating domestic workers as kin-like children reinforces the superiority of the master or madam. It also points to the specific pressures on workers it creates: psychological degradation, material insecurity, and what Cock calls "deprivation" of the worker's life with his or her actual family. Workers were almost never allowed to keep their family with them in the small quarters they occupied in suburban backyards, and were rarely given time off to spend in their actual homes (Cock 52).

This very situation made "breaking open daily life," and the concomitant "explosion" of master and servant roles that *July's People* depicts and calls for, crucial to the foundation of a postapartheid society. Yet, this task has been even more difficult in South Africa's extended transition than Gordimer may have imagined. Evidence from the first 15 years of democracy shows a troubling continuity with the apartheid past. Domestic work continued to fall out of mainstream cultural discourse even as it remained as an entrenched part of middle-class culture—for whites and increasingly for people of color (Dodd "Dressed" 471). Further, relations between employers and workers often seemed remarkably unchanged. According to Shireen Ally in her 2009 *From Servants to Workers: South African Domestic Workers and the Democratic State*, the ANC government made an effort to improve the conditions of domestic workers by passing a set of comprehensive rules regulating such labor (3). However, these regulations had uneven impacts. Joyce Nhlapo, a domestic worker interviewed by Ally, expressed the following frustration: "What democracy? What new laws? Those laws stop at the master's door. Inside white people's houses, it is still apartheid law. We are their servants, like girls. You have grandchildren, but you are

still their 'girl'" (cited in Ally 80). "The 'like one of the family' myth," Ally notes, continues to "operat[e] as an employer ideology of control by delegitimating paid domestic work as real work, erasing the workers' own familial obligations, and thereby extracting further labor and loyalty through the trope of kin and familial obligations" (99).

How then can democracy make it inside the house? One way, Ally suggests, is for the state and society to recognize and reject the "maternalism" undergirding domestic service—and I note that Ally borrows the term "maternalism" from Judith Rollins to depict a female-centered paternalism that enfolds the notion of workers being "like family" (that is, family, but not quite).[3] Ally presents unsettling the maternalist paradigm as a first step toward more adequately recognizing domestic work as "intimate labor"—something different from other wage-producing activities, and which blurs the boundaries between "work and family, contract and affect" (Ally 97)—and to more adequately recognizing domestic workers themselves. Here, Ally's largely materialist analysis may help to focus attention on the socioeconomic *and* the psychological or emotional dimensions of the ties that bind the employer and the employee. The notion of *intimate labor* signals the value and agency of domestic workers, as it also points to the complex emotional landscape that these workers inhabit in common with (and against) their employers. Importantly, this is precisely the terrain inhabited by a new generation of artists asking for themselves how to bring democracy past the front door, and beginning this process by representing domestic work and workers.

In this chapter, I explore four family fictions that in some sense update *July's People* as they explore the work of keeping house in the extended transition: Craig Higginson's play *Dream of the Dog* (prem. 2007/pub. 2009), Marlene van Niekerk's novel *Agaat* (Afrikaans 2004/ trans. into English by Michiel Heyns 2006), Zanele Muholi's *'Massa' and Mina(h)* project (2008–) and Mary Sibande's exhibition *Long Live the Dead Queen* (2009). The first piece examines in a polyphonic fashion the workings of "maternalism" and the fate of the relationships configured through this paradigm. The second piece returns to this question specifically from the point of view of the white Afrikaner madam, pointing to the difficulties and benefits of giving up one's role as mistress and accepting a radical codependence with one's former servants. The third and fourth pieces highlight the experiences of black domestic workers and the families they were forced to leave behind, in order from this perspective to unsettle maternalist attitudes and "queer" madam–maid intimacies (Muholi) and to model how the limitations of these relationships and domestic work itself can be overcome (Sibande). As we will see, works by these artists reveal how domestic service sews or knits together people of different

races, genders, and classes, on willing and unwilling terms, and suggest that these complex relationships must be at the very least confronted for democracy to hold meaning.

I thus focus on the "sticky" (Ahmed *Cultural*) ties that develop between domestic workers and their employers—sorting through, to use Sarah Nuttall's term, an "entanglement" that binds together past, present, and future, family and stranger, affective economies and financial ones. Without being reduced to a metaphor, domestic service can be seen as a microcosm for the damaged race relations put in place during colonialism and codified by apartheid. It became a crucial institution connecting people of different races in South Africa, and the middle-class family and home concurrently became key sites where the contradictions of "separateness" were lived out. In this context, returning to and rethinking the work of keeping house in various art forms can mean both sifting through the myriad ways of being together it engenders and radically challenging the wider social conditions that underpin it, in order to imagine new forms of relation within families and beyond them.

Poised between Dream and Nightmare

Craig Higginson's play *Dream of the Dog* is set in "real time, several years after the new millennium, in KwaZulu-Natal" (141).[4] Higginson, who is a novelist, the former literary manager of Johannesburg's famous Market Theater, and one of South Africa's most celebrated young playwrights, conceived of the piece as "a state of the nation play" that reflects the changing circumstances of the democratic South Africa.[5] Building on actual conversations with employers in KwaZulu-Natal and his own former domestic worker, the play explores relationships of servitude forged during apartheid—relationships based on hatred and love, on loyalty, duty, and debt—as they become the foundation of the "new" society. It creates what Higginson describes as an "internal dialogue" about the past, in which "truth" is flexible and based on subjective memories, and binary categories such as "good vs. bad" and "victim vs. perpetrator" no longer hold fixed meanings. Like *Nothing But the Truth* and *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* in chapter 2, it speaks to the TRC and its legacy and has been interpreted largely in this context. Critic Greg Homann suggests that *Dream of the Dog* shows "that testimonies of partial truths appeased many but that ultimately the TRC was merely a token offering in the process of reconciliation" (24). Yet, and as I will explore below, the play moves beyond the TRC in the direction suggested by Kani and Ndebele to focus attention clearly on home spaces and the layers of spoken and unspoken memories and grievances that can become the paste of domestic life.

The plot centers on the return of a former "garden boy," Look Smart/Phiwayinkosi Ndlovu, to the farm where he grew up and to the elderly white woman who was both his employer and his benefactor when he was a child. He comes at a time of drastic transformation. The business of farm owners Patricia and Richard Wiley has failed, forcing them to sell their house and land. Richard suffers from Alzheimer's disease, an affliction which leaves Patricia more or less alone to pack up her decaying house on the eve of their move to Durban. In a reversal of fortune enabled by the transition to democracy and its Black Economic Empowerment policies, Look Smart is in fact one of the real estate developers who has bought the farm, and returns in this guise. His interest, however, is not in talking about how the farm will be redeveloped but in exploring the complicity of his former "Master" and "Madam" in the death of his childhood sweetheart Grace, who worked as a domestic servant in the house. As director Malcolm Purkey notes, "oppression is inscribed in the body . . . before you can be a human being, you need to forget or discharge these inscriptions. Look Smart comes to discharge his memory."[6] Specifically, Look Smart attempts to "discharge his memory" by questioning Patricia and her maid Beauty, who is also Grace's sister, about Grace's death.

The claustrophobic staging of this drama as seen in Purkey's 2007 Market Theatre production in Johannesburg, with the audience on three sides of the stage that represents one room in the interior of the farmhouse, full of open boxes and broken objects, replicates the kind of uneasy emotional intimacy that unfolds between the characters. This confined setting focuses attention on the physical and psychic space of the home and on modes of inwardness and processes of intimate introspection, much in the way the staging of *Nothing But the Truth* invites audiences into the complexities of home and family life in the township. At the beginning of Look Smart's visit, Patricia wants to insist on the bonds of affection and pride that existed between her and someone she saw as a surrogate child, who she taught to fish and to garden and also sent to private school, and who in return brought joy into an otherwise dour household. As she tells him, "you were like the sun, Look Smart. My son" (166). She claims to have seen him as a replacement for her only biological child, a stillborn daughter. Yet, as their conversation continues, she is forced to admit that these bonds disintegrated: "You went away to boarding school and came back full of plans, excitement. Then you started to judge. Me. With terrible contempt. I thought it was adolescence, that it would pass. It didn't. Then Grace. Then you vanished . . . Then I came to think of you as another dead child. I didn't want to think of you as taking from me and giving nothing back" (166).

For his part, Look Smart oscillates between wanting to reciprocate memories of childhood closeness and rejecting them as a sham. He sees Patricia's actions as ones that separated him from his biological family and turned him into an outsider vis-à-vis other black Africans. He also suggests that her cherished memories of him as a child may be Freudian screen memories hiding more violent realities. In his 1899 essay "Screen Memories," Sigmund Freud describes a "screen memory" as a memory that comes to displace a more traumatic memory, covering over the uncomfortable or momentous elements of the deeper memory. The concept speaks to "a case of repression, accompanied by the replacement of what is repressed by something in its (spatial or temporal) vicinity" (27). The most important trauma Look Smart sees Patricia screening out is the death of Grace, which occurred when Look Smart was eighteen. Patricia remembers trying to help a girl involved in a fatal accident, but Look Smart has a different vision. He remembers vividly Grace being devoured by Richard and Patricia's dog: "Suddenly Grace was a double creature. Half woman, half dog. She utters a sound so terrible that I don't even recognize it as her, as coming from her" (158). He claims that in the wake of this event, Patricia, caring more about the cleanliness of her car than Grace's life, refused to bring Grace to the hospital in her Mercedes until Look Smart found a set of old blankets to lay down on the seats. In addition to this damning delay, Look Smart reveals an even more horrifying secret that Grace conveyed to him, just before she died (though, as we will see, this secret itself is not the final "truth" of the matter). The story Grace tells Look Smart, and which echoes a long and savage "tradition" of white masters abusing their "non-white" maids, is that Richard raped Grace and purposefully set the dog on her to prevent the news from spreading when she broke free and tried to escape.

Their past, and particularly the circumstances of Grace's death, bind together this madam and her former "garden boy" in complex ways. On one level, they both find their lives haunted by it. Grace's death, combined with her perceived betrayal by Patricia, shatters the young man. In a similar if not parallel or equitable way, Patricia remains grief stricken by Look Smart's disappearance, especially since his rejection of her doubles the loss of her stillborn daughter. On another level, Look Smart's desire to get revenge on Patricia by exposing the secret of Grace's death, to make her suffer the way he has, also binds him to her through the fear and hatred that the play codes the "dream of the dog." This dream was responsible for Grace's death and threatens to continue perpetuating violence in the new democracy. As Patricia explains: "That dog was trying to please us. It had learned to do that, to hate like that, from the country. My husband. Me. It's a poison we have, we grow up with. Now it has

been passed on to you. The dream of the dog, the dream of the dog doing its dark work, destroying everything" (161).

Their meeting, like the impending sale of the house and grounds that harbor so much pain, might signal a chance for a fresh start. As far as the house is concerned, however, Look Smart informs Patricia that what will happen is something much more ambiguous. After asking "What will happen to the house?," Patricia continues, "I hope they knock it down, brick by brick" (167). Look Smart expresses a similar desire: "When the sale of this farm reached my ears, I made sure I'd be involved in developing it. I wanted to cut it up" (168). But instead of tearing down the house, his agency plans to leave it standing, and, further, to "reproduce it a dozen times, with slight variations, all across the valley" (168). Look Smart expands: "Everything will go except the house. The house will remain alone. But it will be transformed beyond all recognition. There will be pale wooden floors, sliding doors, skylights. The veranda will be extended all around" (168). In this scenario, the desire to wipe out the past leads instead to an "uncanny" repetition of the site of trauma—where, again invoking Freud, the uncanny or *unheimlich* speaks to the resurfacing of a repressed past that is uncomfortable precisely because it is so familiar.[7] The redevelopment thus stands on the edge between dream and nightmare, an ambiguity explicitly signaled in Look Smart's line: "We will whisk this place into something you could never imagine, not even in your wildest . . . nightmares" (168). Can the house be "transformed" in a way that exorcises its ghosts? Or will its reproduction only create more spaces where the nightmarish "dream of the dog" can grow?

As it charts the shifting relations between characters, the play itself enacts a similar edge between dream and nightmare. In the course of the one-act play, Look Smart, arguably, does achieve a kind of liberation. Facing down the inconsistencies of his own memory, getting Beauty's confirmation, watching Patricia accept and struggle with his story—in these ways, he seems able to work through his former hatred. When Patricia says, "Tomorrow we'll be gone, you'll be able to clear yourself of everything that's dead," he responds, "Dead, no, now that I'm here, I feel differently about it. At one point, you know, I think I loved you . . . even more than my own mother" (168). Further, through this interview, they may construct a basis for salvaging some kind of future relationship. Look Smart rightly rejects the idea of her as his mother, and criticizes the maternalist beliefs that set them up as such: "For your generation, the white people, you still want to be the mothers, the fathers, and we are still something like the children. That relationship, it has no place in the future of the country" (169). Yet, when Patricia counters that their story is not just a matter of generalized "maternalism," saying

"you *were* like my son" (170), he seems to acknowledge the "stickiness" of their particular relationship that cannot be entirely encapsulated by his important structural assessment. It is in this spirit that he agrees to consider her invitation to visit her in Durban. While this may never happen, even entertaining the idea is an opening to a different relationship. As in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, visitorship may present "a new footing, a new start" (218). This potential solidarity infuses Look Smart's farewell: "I will walk with you always" (173).

However, if Look Smart is able to gain something from the encounter, then other characters are left less satisfied. Importantly, the story that Beauty confirms when Look Smart confronts her in front of Patricia is not the whole story; this she only reveals to Patricia after Look Smart has left. According to Beauty, rather than setting the dogs on Grace because he was afraid of his sexual abuse being discovered, Richard kills Grace because he discovers that she is pregnant with his child and refuses to have an abortion. He thus murders not only his lover but also his unborn baby, another analogue to Patricia's stillborn child. This revelation shifts the focus and the emotional center of the play from Look Smart onto Beauty, her relationship with Patricia, and both of their relationships with Richard. What does it mean to live with the person responsible for killing your sister? To have a husband who kills his mistress and unborn child? Given this horrific situation, how can Beauty and Patricia find some way to live together?

These questions, raised in the final minutes of the performance, undercut any sense of catharsis or healing that the action involving Look Smart might suggest, for they are given no easy answers. Patricia does attempt to free herself from Richard, symbolically expelling him from the family when she announces to Beauty that she will send him to a nursing home. Homan describes this choice as an appropriate form of punishment, noting that "the only way to advance our society is to take personal responsibility . . . [Patricia's] simple decision is, for Higginson, one that takes [Richard] to task for his actions. By acting in the present, Patricia is able to compensate, to a small degree, for the past atrocities; a message of empowerment for us all" (28). This decision however seems an inadequate ending in various ways. First, it begs the question of whether or not being sent to a nursing home is sufficient justice for murder. Second, it provides only the minimal beginning for what is perhaps the most important task facing Patricia and Beauty—that of living with themselves. In her final lines Patricia, overwhelmed with the revelations of the day, asks Beauty: "how do I carry on?" (177). Beauty answers, "It's what people are doing every day" (177), prompting from Patricia another question: "It is what you have done, isn't it?" (177; cited also in Homan 28).

The query meets with silence, as Beauty returns to making tea and laying out the medications for the man responsible for her sister's death.

This fraught exchange can be viewed as a moment in which Beauty asserts her strength and dignity. Simply carrying on, and facing the challenges of life with whatever resources one can put together on any given day, is a way to move forward. This kind of working through entails not only a refusal to forget but also equally a refusal to be trapped in painful memories, and a commitment to approaching the future with a spirit of defiance and practicality. Her resilience further forces Patricia to take account of the domestic worker as a reciprocal partner in the project of building a future—indeed, to count her as a full human being with needs and capabilities that may exceed her own. Higginson lauds Beauty's decision, noting that "Beauty is the one we should look to for wisdom and guidance." His play suggests that the model of endurance she shares with Patricia may be the best either woman will be able to do in the coming days and years. However, the play's ending is both what Homann describes as "cautiously optimistic" (28) and something much more complicated. It is uncanny in Homi Bhabha's sense, constituting a moment of unsettlement in which "borders between home and the world become confused . . . forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating" ("The Home" 9, cited in Samuelson *Remembering* 195); one in which we see clearly, and as Meg Samuelson explicates, that "far from being located outside power, the home is equally the site in which women encounter the operations and intersections of gendered and racialized power" (*Remembering* 218). What are the ethics of simply "carrying on" in these positions forged by history, of madam and maid, connected by a shared knowledge of the violence of the master and the endless everyday habits of service that find their very normalcy in their continuity with those of a profoundly racist ordering of society—the habits that Maureen Smales can attribute to July at the beginning of *July's People* as what "his kind has always done for their kind" (1)? What does this say about the peculiar nature of the affective ties or "entanglements" holding these individuals together, on the one hand, and about the options open to domestic workers and women of color more generally in postapartheid South Africa, on the other?

As if to underscore the darker currents surging through these questions, a more recent version of the play staged in 2010 at the Finborough Theatre in England radically undercuts the possibility for the rehabilitation of interracial relationships glimpsed above.[8] Here, Look Smart flatly refuses Patricia's invitation to visit her, and the play ends with Beauty's announcement that she will remain on the farm to work for Look Smart's company instead of "carrying on" with the Wiley family. This revision

responds to what Higginson saw as the deterioration of possibilities for productive race relations in South Africa in the second half of the first decade of the new millennium, by the end of the extended transition, as well as to his desire to more fully reflect black calls for independence.[9] Indeed, the newer version of the play more fully acknowledges the force field of anger and frustration that has grown among people treated as "boys" and "girls" in their positions as domestic workers, and presents a more ethically acceptable solution for Beauty. I will return to these concerns in relation to the work of Muholi and Sibande later. For now, though, I want to hang on to the difficulty and the intense emotional intimacy—between Patricia and Beauty and also between these characters and the audience—that informs the ending of Purkey's earlier Johannesburg stage version and to think through the questions they raise via a very different text.

Learning the Languages of Care and Betrayal

Like much of renowned Afrikaans language novelist van Niekerk's at once beautiful and comically transgressive fiction, the landmark novel *Agaat* is difficult to categorize. It takes in and threads together a huge array of aspects of South African life. Rita Barnard ("On World Literature") has argued that the novel can be seen as an "encyclopedic" text that enacts a farewell to the genre of the *plaasroman* and to Afrikaner nationalism, while Mark Sanders ("Miscegenations") has described it in terms of a critique of the liberal assimilationism running through "progressive" white society in the apartheid era and as an investigation of the psychic drives underlying Afrikaner culture then and in democracy. Here, I will speak about only one—but one particularly important—element of the text: its engagement with the question of domestic work and domestic workers. While published three years before *Dream of the Dog* premiered, the novel can be seen as a speculation on what it means for madams and maids to "carry on" with the habits of daily, domestic life in the extended transition. It also picks up and deepens the question of "maternalism" and mothering raised by Look Smart by putting at its center an adoption gone wrong. However, unlike in Higginson's play, where by the nature of the genre no one voice stands alone, van Niekerk's novel is narrated through the controlling consciousness of an elderly white Afrikaner woman. It is through her eyes that we grapple with the moments of care and betrayal that mark domestic service, as we witness the turns and returns of her memories.

Straddling the four-and-a-half decades of apartheid and the first few years of democracy, *Agaat* tells the story of Milla de Wet, an Afrikaner

woman striving to manage her massive and isolated farm in Overberg in the Western Cape, along with the family she has created on the farm. This family includes her abusive husband Jak, their son Jakkie, and also the coloured woman Agaat who Milla "adopts" (or rather, forcibly removes from her biological family) when she is a small child and then turns into a maid when Jakkie is born seven years later. While the novel has a prologue and epilogue narrated by Jakkie, who lives in voluntary exile in Canada and returns to South Africa only for his mother's funeral, the body of this almost 700-page novel is presented from the point of view of Milla. Milla's reflections take four different forms and represent four different, if sometimes overlapping, temporalities. The first is a present-tense and first-person narrative chronicling Milla's last months of life in 1996, as she lies paralyzed from the progressive motor neural disease ALS. The second is a stream-of-consciousness monologue ranging from the early days when her disease set in, roughly in 1993, to her death. The third is a retrospective description of Milla's earlier life on the farm, from the late 1940s up through the 1980s. It focuses on Milla's marriage to Jak, her actions vis-à-vis Agaat, and the birth, childhood, and coming to maturity of Jakkie. The fourth, finally, consists of selections from Milla's diaries written from the 1950s to the 1970s. Cheryl Stobie calls these the novel's four "narrative strands" (61). Almost every chapter in the novel begins with the present-tense narrative but contains each of the other "strands" in varying configurations. The exception is the final chapter—which has no diary entry, for reasons and with implications to be discussed below.

As critics have commented, Milla is a classic unreliable narrator (Carvalho and van Vuuren 41). Especially in the later time streams, as her disease develops, it is unclear to what extent her thoughts are tied to the reality of the daily life she attempts to describe. Yet, even her earlier memories and diaries present a warped view of the social relations that inhere in her farm, Grootmoedersdrift. Milla believes herself to be a wronged wife, neglected and abused by her small-minded husband; an abandoned mother, rejected by her son in favor of his nanny; and a misunderstood humanitarian, criticized and ultimately punished by a conservative community for trying to help a crippled and abused coloured child. The stories and conversations embedded in her narrative, however, suggest that Milla is an egocentric, demanding, and often misguided woman. She is alternately cruel and caring, and unwilling to take responsibility for events that she sets in motion. Van Niekerk frames the instability of her narrator in no uncertain terms: "Milla de Wet is a self-indulgent, delusional diary-keeper, a vainglorious and self-justifying memory machine,

an invalid delirious from lack of oxygen lying powerless on her back in a bed" (Pienaar; also cited in Carvahlo and van Vuuren 41).

While Milla seems to have no conception of her own unreliability for most of her life, something seems to change in her final months, as she is dutifully nursed by Agaat and communication becomes her central difficulty. Turning attention to communication and language, I build on the work of Alyssa Carvalho and Helize van Vuuren, who point to the centrality of language, both verbal and nonverbal, in the novel. Their analysis focuses on the ability of the "subaltern" servant to use various codes of Afrikaner culture to "challenge the white woman's dominant perspective and the story that she tells" (40). While taking up their theme, I explore rather Milla's attempts to "read" Agaat's words, performances, physical touch, and other sensory cues, and her corresponding attempts to convey her changing feelings toward a woman who has been both a servant and a daughter. Milla's first sentence wryly highlights the connection between the challenge of communication and death: "It'll be the end of me yet, getting communication going. That's how it's been from the beginning with her" (9). Yet, as the allusion to Agaat's childhood in this opening line suggests, the problem of communication in the present is linked to a return to the past, in order to reassess it, and to find ways to transcend old narratives, identities, and habits—and thus with finding new ways to live, even in the face of death. In some sense similar to Patricia in *Dream of the Dog*, Milla's attempt to work through and communicate the feelings embedded in the past becomes an opening through which she recognizes some of her mistakes and begins to understand her present relation to her closest companion.

When we are first introduced to Milla, some eight months before her death, her ALS has already progressed to the extent that she is dependent on Agaat for all aspects of her daily life. In what we later find out is a complete inversion of Milla's early treatment of Agaat, akin in spirit to the reversal of roles that occurs when Maureen Smales and her family move to July's village, Agaat has access to and control over all of Milla's bodily cavities, from her mouth to her anus—and Milla narrates in darkly comic detail what it feels like physically and emotionally to have her maid enter into these orifices. While she can communicate fluently with the reader, however, doing so with Agaat is more difficult.

The first major puzzle Milla faces is how to get Agaat to bring her maps of her farm. These maps are key because they conjoin land she owns with the story of herself that she wants to hold onto at her death:

> I want to see the maps of Grootmoedersdrift, the maps of my region, of my place. Fixed points, veritable places, the co-ordinates of my land

> between the Korenlandrivier and the Buffeljagsrivier, a last survey as the crow flies, on dotted lines, on the axes between longitude and latitude. I want to see the distances recorded and certified, between the main road and the foothills, from the stables to the old orchard, I want to hook my eye to the little blue vein with the red bracket that marks the crossing, the bridge over the drift... Places to clamp myself to, a space outside these chambered systems of retribution, something on which to graft my imagination, my memories, an incision, a notch, an oculation leading away from these sterile plains. (40)

As these lines reveal, Milla's attachment to her farm is unmistakable—she sees and knows herself most fundamentally and intimately through this land. And yet, as much as the farm constitutes her, she constitutes the farm through her ownership of it. It is at least in part her ownership that is asserted in her love of "fixed points, veritable places, the co-ordinates of my land." In short, knowing the land is there and hers, being able to chart and measure it, allows her to assert a self with which she is comfortable—one composed of fertile imagination and memories, and that escapes from a sickbed and house that she can only see as a "chambered systems of retribution." As she puts it later, "between the land and the map I must look, up and down, near and far, until I have had enough, until I am satiated with what I have occupied here... so that I can be filled and braced from the inside and fortified for the voyage" (105).

If the request for the maps is about shoring herself up before the "voyage" to death, however, Milla fails to think toward the destabilizing possibilities that might emerge once the maps appear and are shown to contain stories other than her own—including the stories of those whose labor is necessary to give the farm any real meaning. Agaat juxtaposes her bringing of the maps with medicines and foods meant to force Milla to relieve her bowels, and thus symbolically with the act of pushing out Milla's excrement, her nastiness, that which needs to be expelled. As Milla's unwilling body complies, and Agaat unfurls the maps, the servant undergoes what Milla sees as parallel process of "flush[ing] her system" (405–406). Milla describes this event as Agaat surveys the documents:

> She is looking at the layout of the yard of Grootmoedersdrift, the house and garden plans. She aims up and down, forward and back. Here comes an outstretched arm, here comes a finger pointing, at me, at the plan. Here comes a stamping of feet. What is coming here? Here comes something else. A salute.
>
> She presses with her finger, presses, press, press, press so that it bends back, the forefinger of the strong hand, presses on all the places. (406–407)

The violence of her stamping feet and her finger expresses her frustration with "[e]verything that [Milla] forgot and never even noted in [her] little books" (405), or the diaries that Agaat discovers and avidly reads and rereads. She puts the map literally and figuratively under pressure to reveal the absences and erasures in Milla's understanding of the farm and life on it.

The most important of these for the novel is Agaat's own story. Her anger at this gaping hole culminates in the cry:

> Seven-years-child.
> And then?
> Can-you-believe-it?
> Backyard!
> Skivvy-room!
> [. . .] W hitecap! H eartburied!
> Nevertold! Unlamented!
> Good-my-Arse!
> Now-my-Arse! Now's-the-Time! (407)

With Carvalho and van Vuuren, we can read these lines as the ultimate expression of Agaat's anguish at her sudden demotion within the family, from precious and "good" daughter to servant expelled from the house to a backyard room and expected to scurry around following orders (45). Through her rhyme, Agaat reveals to Milla her pain at first having been cast out when Jakkie was born, largely on account of apartheid racial codes that restricted "normal" familial bonds to people of the same race and named "Coloureds" as lesser human beings than whites. As if this were not enough, she then must conform to these codes in yet another way by serving as a maid the woman she had seen as a mother.

Though she arguably wishes to, Milla ultimately cannot dismiss Agaat's cry. Rather, Agaat's story throws her own into question, revealing it as incomplete and rendering the farm that she considers to be home "uncanny" in both Freud's and Bhabha's senses of the term. That is, it is a place where repressed but familiar knowledge comes to light, and one where "safe" and "enclosed" domestic spaces are seen to be shot through with the tensions and exclusions of the world at large. Yet (and as we have seen before in Samuelson's reading of *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*) this unsettlement proves to be a boon, since it allows the map to give way to exchanges that displace the old boundaries sketched on paper.[10] Inspired by the map incident (434), Agaat digs up an alphabet chart that Milla had used to teach her when she was a child, and the two women embark on a renewed project of communication that results in something like the reanimation of Milla: "There's a whole grammar developing there on the

wall. Every day there is more of it . . . A skeleton of language, written down in print and in script with a Koki chalk, bigger, more complicated than Agaat on her own, than I or the two of us together could think up. If it has to be fleshed out as well . . . muscles, skin, hair . . . " (436). As Carvalho and van Vuuren underscore, this is not a process Milla can control, even when it is her words that are spoken back to her, since Agaat adds new emphases and inflections (44). Milla is unsure if Agaat wants to "invest [her] with language" or to "goad" her with it (436). Nevertheless, Milla recognizes this frustrating process of communication as a "last chance" (438)—one that, following twists and turns rather than confirming prior beliefs, is risky, but may lead beyond the old "sterile plains."

Around the maps, then, Milla's puzzle shifts from being that of how to tell Agaat to bring her something—an order given from madam to maid—to a question of how to recognize and to share her feelings—an offering of the self from one human being to another with whom she is deeply implicated. Solving this puzzle is "more difficult than any last wish" (438). There are no guarantees that communication is possible, especially since all traditional modes of expression have been stripped away. Agaat must respond to Milla's slightest physical movements and expressions, and especially to the taps and eye blinks which correspond to letters in the alphabet chart. Milla is likewise forced to search out meaning in room decorations, forms of touch, and the smell of food; as well as in the songs and nursery rhymes, quotations from the Bible and farming manuals, and the expressions of needlepoint embroidery that Barnard ("On World Literature"), Carvalho and van Vuuren, and Sanders ("Miscegenations") show to make up the warp and woof of Agaat's story. This kind of communication also requires the will to confront pain—returning to the sites of history heretofore purposefully unwritten and unsettling the screen memories and narratives meant to provide comfort and stability.

Carvahlo and van Vuuren characterize Milla as an ultimately incompetent reader of Agaat and herself, stating that Agaat's words "are all but lost on Milla, who in the absence of a competent 'interpreter,' can only begin to fathom their true complexity" (53). I would argue in contrast that the process does suffice for Milla to understand something. Even as she lashes out at and insults Agaat, Milla is able to recover her most deeply hidden secret, the one she always refused to confront, avoiding even an inscription of it in her diaries—the story of how she found and stole Agaat from her family, raised her as a daughter, and then abandoned her to the role of servant at Jakkie's birth, presented in brief in Agaat's rhyme above. This core of mother love, buried beneath the "special relationship" as madam and maid, surfaces in the last few days of her life (639). It is a

recuperation that Milla struggles to share: "Oh my little Agaat, my child that I pushed away from me, my child that I forsook after I'd appropriated her, that I caught without capturing her, that I locked up before I'd unlocked her!... Why only now [must I] love you with this inexpressible regret? And how must I let you know this?" (540). Discussing these lines, Stobie argues that "[t]hrough the catalyst of Agaat, in Milla's extremity she comes to realize her previous transgressions against Agaat, and she mentally confesses to her, poignantly showing her heartfelt penitence" (65). Further, as she "confesses" to her own violence and her feelings for Agaat, Milla may also recognize the damage she has done and begins to understand that it is Agaat and not herself she must attend to: "Let yourself be consoled, Agaat, now that language has forsaken me and one eye has fallen shut and the other stares unblinkingly, now I find this longing in my heart to console you, in anticipation, for the hereafter" (541).

We must ask, of course, whether she manages to "console" anyone other than herself. Milla passes away with her love for her child Agaat filling her consciousness, her thoughts bounded by the memory of feeling "*in my hand the hand of small Agaat*" (674). But is this love ever communicated? Is her restoration as daughter something Agaat has access to? The revelation comes only after even their newly forged communicative strategy may have reached an end, with Milla's eyes either "shut" or "unblinking." Further, as already noted, Milla's version of the story of Agaat is never set out in the notebooks that Agaat consumes so eagerly and tries to place herself within. The last chapter of the novel, the one in which the deepest layer of Milla's feeling is set out, is the only one in the book that does not contain entries from the diary. As Milla explains it in the second person:

> The beginning you never recorded. You couldn't bring yourself to it
> It wasn't meant for the diary
> It would have to be taken up into the family saga direct: Grootmoedersdrift, farm, house, man, wife, child.
> First child.
> From the beginning. It was never a story on its own. (653)

The story of the love and self-love that binds her to Agaat is so intimate and discomfiting that it could not even be set down on paper, even as it lays the foundation of all future life on the farm. It thus remains, as Sanders notes, "an enduring textual silence" that deprives Agaat of the chance to "narrate a crucial part of her story" (23).

The servant's acts of care throughout the book, the way she recreates all the actions that Milla did for her when she was a small child, do

suggest that Agaat has gone through some process of restoration. At the very least, and as Barnard ("On World Literature") suggests, the act of embroidering Milla's funeral shroud seems to allow Agaat to go through her own necessary work of mourning. Perhaps the most moving example of the accommodation Agaat and Milla find with each other is what Stobie (at 65) terms the "call and response" that Agaat participates in at the moment of Milla's death: "*where are you agaat?/ here I am/ a voice speaking for me a riddle where there is rest/ a candle being lit for me in a mirror/ my rod and my staff my whirling wheel/ a mouth that with mine mists the glass in the valley of the shadow of death/ where you go there I shall go/ your house is my house/ your land is my land/ the land that the Lord thy God giveth you*" (673). Stobie beautifully explicates this song, showing how the words of the biblical Ruth are embedded in the lines, asserting the loyalty and love of the servant (66). Further, the one other reporter we have, Jakkie, describes the gravestone arranged by Agaat as one that reveals her profound sympathy for Milla and that marks in stone the tie between these women. Not only, and sensitive to Milla's ultimate hatred for her husband, does Agaat engrave Milla's maiden name on her headstone, but she also inscribes a sentence that might signal her forgiveness of Milla—"and then God saw that it was Good" (Stobie 66–67).

Ultimately, however, this rapprochement can only be speculation, since we have no access to Agaat except as filtered through Milla's thoughts and briefly through Jakkie's cryptic reports. As Stobie puts it: "Agaat is the exemplary other in the novel, she is both memorably present and a significant absence in terms of her own voice, desires and beliefs, which have to be inferred as they are filtered through the consciousness of others" (67; see also Carvalho and van Vuuren 41). There is no final way to know if Agaat has come to terms with everything that was done to her and reached a point of forgiveness. Similarly, there is no way to know what will happen to the farm that Agaat, in a seeming act of reparation much like that shown between Kristien and Trui in *Imaginings of Sand*, is given control of upon Milla's death. While this change creates the possibility for a changed structure of relation in their micro-community, when Agaat brings in the farm workers to give their last regards to Milla, Milla reads the encounter skeptically: "The message is clear. I see how they look at each other, how they assess it, the new order. We'll have to see. We'll just have to make the best" (650). In part because Agaat "has learned her lessons well from her own oppressors," she threatens a continuation of "tyrann[y]" (Stobie 67). Agaat's modes of "retribution," Sanders argues, should also caution us from viewing Agaat as an angel of redemption. He suggests that we cannot simply make Agaat "good" and participate in either Milla's original fantasy of

"saving" Agaat or in the readerly fantasy that Agaat can somehow be repaired ("Miscegenations" 29). Repair and redemption are not the only outcomes of the story, and certain things from the past cannot be made up for or made good upon. Asked if Agaat can be seen as a "saviour" of Africa, Van Niekerk herself calls Agaat "a *saviour* of the continent maybe, but not a very *savoury* one" (Pienaar).

Like Sanders, Barnard ("On World Literature") powerfully argues that this uncertainty is central to the ethical thrust of the novel. Like *Playing in the Light* in chapter 1, this novel does not end with certainty or closure but uncertainty. This uncertainty leaves the future open, much as the unpredictability of the language of the alphabet chart opened the way to a remapping of the past and present that could be a failure or a success. What does seem clear is that Milla comes to acknowledge, even when it may be too late, both the folly of treating Agaat "like family" and her profound codependence on and love for the woman she can finally reclaim *as* family. Milla's final understanding of the pain she caused by taking Agaat from her biological family, making her "seven-years-child," and then abandoning her—or, put differently, by shaping a human being to be something less than a child or family member but something more than an object that labors for you on the farm—signals a personal reckoning with complicity. It also constitutes a profound critique of the "maternalism" which marks the institution of domestic service in South Africa in a less literal way. If we think of Agaat as a figure for the domestic worker more generally, it becomes crystal clear that, while the legacies or afterlives of the contorted relationships created through this institution remain to be reckoned with, its family mythology is morally bankrupt. Samuelson remarks in a brief reading of the novel that "it reveals the torturous relations of betrayal, dependency, care-taking, and, dare we say it, 'love'... as it writes the home in which these intimate relations unfold as a space of both tenderness and terror" ("Walking" 134). The way "terror" gets interlaced with "tenderness" in Agaat's experience shows the urgency of undoing the maternalist paradigm and, working through it and toward other possibilities, forging more equitable and less emotionally damaging models.

Escaping Maternalism and the Service Circle

Because of *Agaat's* limited narrative perspective, I focused my comments in the last section mainly on how employers can come to face the consequences of their treatment of other human beings, and potentially find a way beyond seeing their domestic workers "like family" when this trope entails degradation and exploitation. As Milla learns,

finding new ways of communicating with those she previously regarded as inferior—one that begins from the pain of the past and tries to work through and beyond it—is necessary. But the fact that Agaat's perspective is only accessible through Milla's consciousness begs the question of how domestic workers themselves might interpret this process and what their dreams and desires are. For this reason, *Agaat* can be seen to participate in the long tendency to silence domestic workers—painting them as mute and stereotypical victims (Ally; Dodd "Dressed")—even if it breaks the silence about this work in other ways. To engage more clearly with workers themselves, we might rather turn back to Look Smart and Beauty in *Dream of the Dog*, who strive to undo some of the damage done by the dehumanizing aspects of the institution, claim recognition, renegotiate the meaning of their intimate labor, and (at least in the later version of the script) move into futures not bounded by their "masters" or "madams." These two characters raise for consideration the need to build new forms of relation with former employers and with oneself, as well as to find new modes of relation to the past and its legacy of servitude. Such projects come to the center in the works of two young black visual artists who have personal ties to domestic service, Zanele Muholi and Mary Sibande.

Celebrated photographer Muholi's project *'Massa' and Mina(h)* deals explicitly with the experiences of domestic workers in white households. Muholi, a major figure in the postapartheid art world and an important protagonist of queer activism, is best known for her photographic images of black lesbians in South Africa. Her personal story and her belief in the importance of art as a tool of activism for queer South Africans are movingly portrayed in Muholi and Peter Goldsmid's 2010 documentary film *Difficult Love* (in part through a discussion of *'Massa' and Minah*). Kylie Thomas describes Muholi as creating an "intimate archive" of lesbian life, not only by claiming "a visual space for embodied black lesbian experience" in the canon but also by questioning the outlines and limits of the very canon into which she seeks to place this experience (424).[11] In *'Massa' and Mina(h)*, Muholi builds on this work to forge another kind of "intimate archive," one that stages what she terms "racialized issues of female domesticity—black women doing housework for white families."[12] Here, she allows others to turn the camera on her, as she acts out scenes from domestic life while posing as a domestic worker. The title plays on the performativity of Muholi visible in the resulting images and the questions of desire, power, and identity at the heart of domestic work, with "Massa" a colloquial spelling of master that also with its quotation marks calls this role into question. The "Massa" is here juxtaposed not only to a fictional domestic worker named Minah

but also to Muholi's "I," which is signaled by the use of the term "mina" (meaning "I," "me" or "myself" in Xhosa and Zulu).

Curator Gabi Ngcobo (2010) locates the seeds for this project in a performance at the Association for Women's Rights in Development conference held in Cape Town in November 2008. As Ngcobo describes it, a "maid" in her "'working' clothes" asked to be let into the conference in order to find her "madam." Inside the conference venue:

> the maid, still in her "working" clothes did the inconceivable, she reached inside her bag for a camera and began taking pictures of the . . . conference delegates, capturing the general mood of the gathering sometimes even including herself posing in different parts of the building. [Then . . .] In a hall packed with feminists and woman's rights activists from all over the world, the "maid" rose to say something . . . The "maid" . . . asked all the people present to acknowledge and thank all the domestic workers that had cleaned their toilets that morning. (Ngcobo)

The "maid," of course, was none other than Muholi, and her "public intervention" inspired the later photographic series.

The *'Massa' and Mina(h)* images create what Ngcobo calls "the story of an emerging love affair" between a madam and her maid to bring the question of domestic work into dialogue with that of queer desire (see also Matebeni 411). This erotic dimension can be seen in what Zethu Matebeni notes is Muholi's choice to cast her white partner opposite her as the madam in images from this series (410). Muholi suggests that the series is about "a domestic worker who fantasizes about her madam" in *Difficult Love* and more fully explains the nexus between domestic work and queer desire in an interview with Ghassan Abid:

> In the past and still today we hear the stories of the female black domestic worker being raped or having an intimate relationship with the white male Massa. But let's queer it and imagine that those white Madams may have loved their black maids, been intimate with them. Maybe because they shared something simply as two women in love, or maybe it was a purely carnal relationship based either on mutual erotic desire, or on the unequal power and labour relations that exist(ed) between black women and white women, that the white Madams, like the white Massa, took advantage of the situation. We don't know. And it's still so taboo to talk about. But, I want to get people talking and looking at race, gender and sexuality in the context of domestic work.[13]

While not all of the photographic images that make up the series are easily accessible, three were shown alongside Muholi's exhibition "Faces

and Phases" at Johannesburg's Brodie/Stevenson Gallery in July and August 2009, and were showcased as portals to the project on Muholi's website: "Massa and Minah 1," "Massa and Minah 2," and "Massa and Minah 3."[14] Together, they depict a series of sliding and often contradictory roles played by domestic workers in the households that they serve and instigate the "tabooed" conversations Muholi mentions.

"Massa and Minah 1" shows Muholi dressed in a uniform cap and dress using her fingers to cover the eyes of her white madam. Her head leans close to that of her employer, and her cheek touches her forehead, as if checking for a fever or protecting a small child from an unpleasant scene playing out in front of her. The framing and angle of the image, which places Muholi slightly in front of the madam and draws attention to the tenderness in her face, speaks to the intimacy of the relationship between the two women and the emotional power workers can sometimes have over the people they supposedly serve. As it reveals a seemingly sincere attachment between employee and employer, the image also stages the vulnerability of the white woman and the moment when "maternalism" folds into its opposite, with the domestic worker coming to be the one who "mothers" the madam—seen also in the case of Agaat as she gains control over Milla's body. As Matebeni puts it, it is "subvert[ing] the power relations between the black female and the white female" (412). Queering the gaze on the photograph of course makes the supposedly "child-like" or "kin-like" worker into something quite other, blurring maternal care with sexual desire and capturing the shifting supremacies created by desire even as both women are limited to "their designated 'roles' marked by the kind of garments they wear" (Ngcobo).

"Massah and Minah 2" shifts perspective to frame Muholi, again dressed in the domestic worker's cap, dress and apron, behind and below her white employer (see figure 3.1). The madam, shown from the knee down and caught in mid-stride, is dressed to go out in a flowered skirt and high heel sandals. Through the space between her legs, Muholi is caught scrubbing the floor on her knees. As Barbara Ehrenreich points out in an analysis of domestic work in the United States, cleaning on your hands and knees is degrading, and it forces the worker to enter into zones of abject personal filth. "It's a different world down there below knee level," Ehrenreich writes, "one that few adults voluntarily enter. Here you find elaborate dust structures held together by scaffolding of dog hairs; dried bits of pasta glued to the floor by their sauce; the congealed remains of gravies, jellies, contraceptive creams, vomit, and urine" (86). Focusing on the way domestic workers are made to inhabit the space "below knee level," the shot asks spectators to visualize the underside of

Figure 3.1 Zanele Muholi, "Massa, and Minah 2." Photograph, 2008. © Zanele Muholi. Courtesy of Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg.

domestic life, the space that usually falls out of the frame in photographs. It also quite literally brings into focus the hidden labor occurring there, as the sharply defined laborer is stepped over or trampled upon by the blurry legs of the madam.[15] Yet, while exposing an abject zone, the image preserves the agency of the domestic worker peering out of the frame at the spectator, and creates space for imagining her point of view. When placed within the imagined storyline of a lesbian affair, the photograph begs us to consider (among other things) what it means to "serve" one's lover in this manner. Indeed, as Muholi notes more generally about interracial lesbian couples in *Difficult Love* just before this image appears on screen, "sometimes we feel like slaves in our relationships."

"Massa and Minah 3" is even darker, with its presentation of a naked Muholi next to a well-groomed, white pet dog. This image underscores the common assertion (seen, for instance, in *Dream of the Dog*) that pets of masters and madams are often treated better than "kin-like" workers themselves. The image also picks up on the debased sexuality referenced by the hands-and-knees position in the previous image, which Ehrenreich associates with "sexual subservience" and the "kinky" fantasies that servitude generates (85). The image's portrayal of Muholi's bare breasts, especially when paired with its portrayal of the dog almost licking its lips next to Muholi, points to the disturbing and disturbingly common sexual fetishization of "non-white" domestic workers among their male employers. As we may recall, this eroticization of the domestic worker and the violence of the master it can elicit was also a key element in Higginson's play—ultimately leading to Grace's fatal

attack by the dog. This photograph can be seen to ironically undermine this damaging patriarchal attitude, since rerouting the sexual relationship from master and maid to madam and maid in some sense cuts out the male gaze from the circuit of desire. As Matebeni puts it in relation to Muholi's *oeuvre*, she "forecloses the opportunity for male intervention" and "asserts a subversive sexuality not interested in reproduction" (408). However, "Massa and Minah 3" also shows how the male gaze can be easily replaced by the gaze of a woman desiring another woman through the maternalist lens, as Muholi suggests in her interview comments about the likelihood of the "white Madam, like the white Massa, [taking] advantage of the situation."

These three images then chart a complex practical and emotional geography of life as a domestic worker, one that draws together fields of intimacy and abjection, closeness and distance. While the images powerfully speak back to stereotypical visions of domestic work and domestic workers even without the sexual register, Muholi's queering of the relationship between maid and madam makes them particularly effective in troubling the maternalist paradigm discussed above. Switching from the trope of (almost) family member to that of lover deepens the sense of vexed or painful attachment we have seen in the other artworks considered so far and emphasizes the far-reaching possibilities of abuse inherent in domestic work even as it plumbs some of the less easily categorized emotions the institution can engender. What for straight publics would be a massive defamiliarization of domestic service snaps into focus many challenging aspects of the "intimate labor" done by women keeping house for other women—or, as Muholi describes them on her website, "all domestic workers around the globe who continue to labour with dignity, while often facing physical, financial, and emotional abuses in their place of work." As it does so, it underscores the need for redress.

The performative aspect of this project, where Muholi herself plays the role of a domestic worker and her lover the madam, further spurs thinking about the socially constructed nature of master and servant roles and their extensions into wider society—perhaps in preparation for the "explosion of roles" called for in *July's People*. Beginning with its very title, glossed above, the photographic series raises a number of questions: What does it mean to play the role of servant or master? Who is authorized to do so? To what extent do these roles get projected on white and "non-white" subjects, and what damage does such projection do? At the same time, the self-reflexivity of the images also points to the autobiographical nature of these images. Muholi claims in her description for the 2009 exhibition that they "pay tribute" to her mother Bester Muholi, who was in fact a maid. From this perspective, the images not only open

up the "sticky" relationships created between employers and employees but also bring into view the hardships faced by domestic workers as they attempt to maintain two sets of families, as well as the impacts of this near impossible task on their actual families. I think of a comment from an anonymous domestic worker cited by Ally: "We are the ones who make all the homes good... Without us, there will be no black families. Without us, no white families will survive" (133). The photographic series seems to stage a deeply personal working through of the effects of her mother's situation on Muholi, even as the images ultimately validate Bester Muholi's struggles and recognize the crucial work done by domestic servants more generally.

Muholi's later comments in *Difficult Love*, on the *'Massa' and Mina(h)* project and her relationship with her mother, both underscore the register of ongoing personal trauma visible in the series and alter its direction. The film depicts a visit to her mother's former employers, Mick and Kathleen Harding, after Bester Muholi's death in September 2009. The "maternalism" directly espoused in Kathleen Harding's claim that "the Muholis are part of the Harding family" is troubling, and after this pronouncement the film cuts to an unreadable facial expression by Muholi. Yet, unsettling this "like family" narrative is clearly secondary to Muholi's need, in the wake of her loss, to "celebrate" her mother and try to come to terms with why Bester Muholi was unable to fully accept her daughter's sexuality. Kathleen Harding seems to be an important and valued support in this work. As Muholi states here, perhaps in reference to both the trials faced by domestic workers and those faced by queer South Africans, "[i]n as much as we think that we have moved on as South Africans, there's a whole lot that we still need to deal with, because, the wounds of the past, they keep on opening when we think of where we come from and where we are right now."

Sibande stages a similarly complex engagement with domestic servitude, though one less focused on exploring the intimate geographies created between madams and maids, and the unresolved traumas that result, underscored in my discussion of Muholi than on imagining how the difficulties this relationship engenders might be transcended. (Indeed, as we see later, she furthers the work of thinking memory beyond trauma discussed in relation to Santu Mofokeng and Jacob Dlamini in chapter 2). Like Muholi, Sibande comes from a family of domestic workers. Her great-grandmother, grandmother, and mother were all maids, though her mother was eventually able to leave domestic service and had her first job at a hair salon before opening up a convenience store. Sibande is thus the first generation not to have worked as a maid for white families (Dodd "Dressed" 473). In part because it pays tribute to her ancestors and

foregrounds the self in ways that resonate with Muholi's work, I focus here on her breakthrough exhibition *Long Live the Dead Queen*, which ran at Gallery Momo in Johannesburg from July to August 2009. This exhibition was followed by massive public acknowledgment of her work, especially when her images appeared on 20 billboards throughout downtown Johannesburg during the 2010 soccer World Cup.[16]

Long Live the Dead Queen centers on the character Sophie, described by Sibande as an "alter ego."[17] Sophie is presented in a series of four installations, each comprising a pitch-black and life-sized sculpture in painted fiberglass and resin modeled on Sibande herself and dressed in fantastically altered maid's uniforms. Instead of the typical plain dress, white cap, and apron seen for instance in "Massa and Minah 2," the outfits are royal blue Victorian gowns with flowing skirts and elaborate detailing. These installations correspond to the three women in her family noted above and Sibande herself, with the figures named Sophie-Elsie, Sophie-Merica, Sophie-Velucia, and Sophie-Ntombikayise (Sibande's other name) respectively. They were positioned within the gallery to make what Sibande calls a "service circle," so that viewers following the progression from Sophie-Elsie to Sophie-Ntombikayise would end up at the first sculpture. Also included in the exhibition, in a separate room, are photographs of Sophie posed in playful scenes.

At the heart of Sibande's project is exploding typical visions of domestic workers and revealing the human depth of her maternal ancestors. Costume or dress plays an important role in this task. By dressing the Sophie-Elsie figure in a modified version of Queen Victoria's coronation gown ("Description of the Artworks"), Sibande asserts a three-dimensional counter-reality to the two-dimensional vision of a mute domestic worker that often circulates in the public imagination. Arguing that Sibande's works help domestic workers repossess physical and cultural space, journalist and art critic Alexandra Dodd shows how Sophie's exuberant and spreading gowns shift understandings of social space and blur the boundary between maid and madam by putting the maid in a position where she must be served ("Dressed" 468; see also Allan). Dodd also shows how the fact that it is a Victorian dress—and, beyond that, the dress of Queen Victoria—is a further reversal given that the Victorian era is the one in which races became pegged to a certain colonial order of society, turning black people inescapably into servants ("Dressed" 470–71). By dressing Sophie in the clothing of the "superior" class and race, Sibande indicates the arbitrary or fictive nature of ideas about social stations and racial character that become entrenched in culture. In this, Sibande echoes or implicitly cites the work of celebrated Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare—for example, the mannequins in "Gay Victorians"

(1999), who wear elaborate dresses made out of "African" batik fabrics actually produced in Europe for the colonial market. These figures begin to deconstruct the world as ordered by colonialism, suggesting that the ideas about the civilized self and savage other that underpinned the colonial project were far more complex and unstable (Dodd "Dressed" 470; see also Nuttall "Wound" 427).[18] The subversive appropriation and modification of the maid uniform thus allows Sophie to resist the constructed confinement of black women to specific social roles and ignorable places, and challenge an unequal ordering of society.

The fact that Sophie-Elsie's eyes are closed (as is the case in all the sculptures and photographs of Sophie) suggest that her fanciful dress may be a figment of her imagination, a dream or fantasy—in other words, a vision that she uses to block out the forms of objectification she experiences and the painful claims made on her. Sibande notes that "[a]ll four figures are refusing the limitations of reality by closing their eyes, venturing into another realm where fantasies can best materialize" ("Description of the Artworks"; see also Dodd "Dressed" 468). This turn to fantasy allows dress to contest stereotypical social positionings in another way also, as it points to deep springs of humor, creativity, and desire for change in Sibande's ancestors. Indeed, many of the pieces turn the "hands and knees" drudgery and degradation of domestic work into something ironic and playful, as in the photographic image included with the sculptures "They don't make them like they used to" (2009), where Sophie knits a woolen jersey with a Superman logo on it. The ability to generate laughter from repetitive housework suggests a core of selfhood that escapes containment by the "*ultra-exploitation*" of domestic service. Equally, the persistence in dreaming of a life with frills, bustles, and delicate fabrics shows an expansive personality and a hunger for recognition, beauty, and wealth despite harsh material realities. The desire encoded in these sculptures is a longing not for the body of the madam (as in Muholi's images) but for her lifestyle, and the objects or commodities that constitute it. The pieces show a clear investment in an "unfixing and reconstructing of the self through the capacities of things" (Nuttall "Wound" 427).[19]

What Dodd notes as the "the power of fantasy" to transform society ("Dressed" 469) is actualized in the narrative of family progress presented to spectators through the exhibition. Key here is the piece corresponding to Sibande's mother. Sophie-Velucia is an active figure, wearing the typical apron and cap over a stylish blue dress covering the floor with an enormous ruffle. She leans forward with long ropes of synthetic black hair in her hands, magically weaving the hair onto a portrait hanging on the opposite wall. The woman in the portrait is Madame C. J. Walker,

the first self-made female African-American millionaire—a former slave who made her fortune on hair and beauty products for black women.[20] As Sibande puts it,"Sophie-Velucia is looking up to Madam CJ Walker as her icon. For her, she symbolizes a breakthrough from the generations of servitude" ("Description of the Artworks"). In the installation, the daily work of stitching and knitting are transfigured, becoming a physical connection to an alternative life of wealth, status, and style. And this dream does come true on some level, since Sibande's mother escaped servitude by finding a job in a hair salon. This achievement fundamentally transformed her life prospects as well as those of her daughter, who, as we know, becomes an artist. The final installation presents Sophie-Ntombikayise floating above the past (see figure 3.2). Her arms are outstretched, as if levitating toward the sky. Below her feet, her purple dress billows out, covered by an overskirt in a gauzy blue fabric bunched and ruffled in ways reminiscent of a rising mist. She seems to be buoyed up by her history rather than trapped in it. "On cloud nine," is how Sibande described the figure in a personal interview.

One can and should raise some troubling questions about the forms through which liberation from the "sticky" ties of domestic service described in this chapter take place: What is freeing about putting Sophie into restrictive gowns that confine movement, or binding her to the consumer or commodity culture that as an artifact of capitalism underpinned the rise of colonialism and apartheid? What does it mean to position a woman such as Walker who became rich on hair products—items such as hair cream relaxer that cater to a degradation of black beauty and a desire to look more European[21]—as a figure of the successful life? Is the

Figure 3.2 Mary Sibande, "Sophie-Ntombikayise." Life-size, mixed-media sculpture, 2009, Mary Sibande courtesy of Gallery MOMO.

fantasy of escape a betrayal of the collective struggle for equality, even as it oversimplifies the difficulty of transforming master–servant relationships? Reviewers such as Lisa Allan have made some of these arguments. Yet, Sibande seems to say that equating fantasy with mere escapism is too easy, and reminds us of the centrality of dreaming and desire in the process of shaping individual lives. Further, and as Dodd suggests, it is precisely the creative and fantastical quality of her artwork, "its focus on generative fictions over the verisimilitude of documentary," that is "key to [her] transformative power" (469). Representing dreams and fantasy through art, Sibande is able to make what Dodd calls "a crucial shift from melancholic understandings of a post-traumatic culture" and to open up "fresh possibilities" of imagining the future (473). Similarly gesturing to the usefulness of moving beyond the trauma register, Sarah Nuttall tracks how the turn to anti-mimetic visual rhetorics like "cladding and sealedness" help shift Sibande's work away from "the language of wounds and flesh" and open up new and necessary conversations about race, gender, the past, and the future ("Wound" 429).

Significantly, the narrative Sibande constructs through her exhibition is one in which her own gifts as an artist come from the escape artists that are her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother; the creativity she deploys is an inheritance from the past as much as it is a tool used to re-vision this past. This creates a circular time scheme literalized or spatialized in the "service circle" of the exhibition, where each piece leads to and feeds into the next. Sibande's own process of going back through her family history and showing it in a new way has allowed her to find an abundance instead of a lack in a history of domestic service, and a set of resources rather than the sense of absence that might be expected from children whose mothers were forced to leave them to tend the children of others. These treasures help her build herself, since she is also the very mold for Sophie. The exhibition allows Sibande to "celebrate" the women she comes from and show how they manifest themselves in her, even as she completes something in them by turning their dreams of royalty into reality.[22]

There is of course also an outward-oriented element to the exhibition, beyond the representation of an internal personal journey, and one that allows me to approach relations of servitude in another way. At the base of Sibande's representation of the power of her female ancestors to break free from the conditions that stop them from achieving their dreams is also a recognition of these conditions. As already noted, these persist even though apartheid has ended and a whole generation has been born into freedom. Such persistence leads to a different reading of the "service circle" the artist creates. By challenging others to see domestic workers

in ways other than through a maternalist lens—indeed, by inviting the largely upper- and middle-class spectators at Gallery Momo to confront the will, dreams, and desires of all the domestic workers that they more than likely employ—Sibande gestures to the need to find alternative escape routes for other women who continue to experience the economic uncertainty that forces them into domestic service. She further suggests that acknowledging the creative and resistant spirit of domestic workers, rather than continuing to ignore them or to treat them as victims, may be the first step in creating such routes. Here as in Muholi's work, acknowledgment of the rich inner worlds of women (and men) often regarded as child-like kin may create space for working toward needed change—whether this means providing more adequate compensation to workers for their "intimate labor," which may eventually give them the freedom to learn new skills and seek other employment, or enacting a large-scale "explosion" of the racialized and gendered roles that still govern the work of keeping house.

★ ★ ★

Sibande's reliance on needlework, the sewing and stitching that allows her to refashion the maid's uniform into a royal gown, calls to mind both Agaat's embroidery and the threads of feeling and habit that tie together employers and their domestic workers—to return to a theoretical model referenced at the beginning of this chapter—in manifold forms of "entanglement" (Nuttall *Entanglement).* It also raises the specter of what poet and critic Leon de Kock theorizes as "the seam," the imaginative place in which that thing we call South Africa is stitched together out of its heterogeneous parts. For de Kock, the seam is a space of healing and of wounding. As much as it draws disparate items together, it also marks their continuing separation, and the violence done by the desire to conjoin those who stand apart. We have seen that the institution of domestic service, so full of chores like knitting, sewing, and mending, is equally a space in which disparate people are knit together, often in agonistic forms, and in a way that confounds ideological visions of separateness and of unity. It creates an intimacy riddled with distance, a codependence both foundational and unacknowledged, and an interpersonal field filled with recognition, tenderness, anger, hatred, and fear.

What I have tried to draw out of the representations of domestic work by Higgins, van Niekerk, Muholi, and Sibande is not only that the seam created through this colonial and apartheid institution continued to frame and shape concrete relationships of servitude in the extended

transition, but also that, because of this, it can serve as the ground for rethinking how democratic relations in a more general sense might be lived out. Returning to the space of the home and the meaning of family through the lens of domestic work may help to clarify what kinds of "common sense" understandings need to be jettisoned in favor of new forms of communication and communal organization. It asks us to confront the deeply personal bonds, both positive and negative, that have been forged between people of different races and classes and from there to work toward a society in which vertical paternalism or maternalism can be replaced with a kind of horizontal fraternity. Achieving this transformation depends in part on white and other middle-class South Africans shedding the habits of mastery, recognizing the value of the human beings they employ to help them, and trying to address the damage done through the "*ultra-exploitation*" of domestic work. It also depends on these workers and their children being able to work through the past and to gain access to the respect and the resources that will allow them to bring their dreams to fruition, in or outside of the domestic workplace.

These are major challenges, but they are also challenges that have begun to be confronted in the diverse homes made up by families across South Africa. Without wanting to overplay the role of culture in general and individual artworks in particular, I would conclude by suggesting that this process of confrontation may be facilitated by the forms of imaginative creation and readership or spectatorship tracked across the chapter. Turning back to *July's People* and to Maureen Smales' chance encounter with the photographic image of herself as a child with her nanny Lydia, we see an example of how encountering the familiar—both in the sense of that which is minutely known and that which relates to family and domestic life—in a work of art can unsettle it, exposing its strangeness and contradictions, or what Barnard calls "breaking open daily life." The pieces explored here enact a different but also similar kind of intimate exposure to the passing photographer in Gordimer's story, as they bring the personal and the interior into the public realm where it can interrupt common relays of perception and invite readers and spectators into conversations about domestic work. Especially when considering the transformations that need to take place among South Africa's more privileged classes, the shared space of a theater or the exhibition hall where many (though not only) middle-class citizens gather seem to be appropriate places for such conversations to begin.

The activist dimension I point to here—so visible in Muholi's images, for instance, if less obvious in the novel *Agaat*—becomes even clearer

in the following chapter, when we explore the ways in which intimate exposures of family and home life have been mobilized to address two seemingly "new" social issues of the extended transition. The first is the question of gay rights approached in this chapter though the discussion of Muholi's work, and the second the rights of asylum seekers and other black African immigrants.

CHAPTER 4

QUEER HOMES AND MIGRANT HOMES

On June 2, 2008, 25-year-old drag queen Desmond "Daisy" Dube—who had moved to South Africa from Zimbabwe in 2004—went out for the evening with some friends in the under-resourced but diverse Johannesburg suburb of Yeoville. Yeoville is a location to which this chapter circles back, for despite its poverty it has long been known as a place for immigrants dreaming of better lives and others attempting to find their footing in South Africa. Similar in many ways to its neighbor Hillbrow, it was a site where poor whites from Europe and elsewhere settled in the middle of the twentieth century, a space for racial mixing in the waning years of apartheid, the primary destination for African National Congress (ANC) exiles returning to their newly democratic country in the early 1990s, and most recently, the receiving arena for immigrants (commonly called "migrants") from other African countries.[1] It stands as a local symbol for cosmopolitanism. Yet, as in many places where changing demographics are experienced as actual bodies encountering each other in the streets, the potential for cosmopolitanism and its cousin hospitality easily slides into conflict. In Dube's case, Yeoville cruelly betrayed her dreams when she and her companions were confronted by a group of three hostile men who insulted them by calling them "*izitabane*." When Dube resisted such labeling, one of the men produced a gun and ordered another to "shoot *lezitabane*" or to fire at the group. Dube did not make it out of the confrontation alive.[2]

Stabane, as Amanda Lock Swarr has noted, is a derogatory Zulu word used to refer to a person thought to have both male and female genitalia and in which intersexuality and homosexuality are often conflated.[3] Framed in this vocabulary, Dube's murder clearly forms part of the widespread attacks on gays, lesbians, and transgender people in South Africa's extended democratic transition. Although gay rights up to and including

same-sex marriage are theoretically guaranteed by the Equality Clause in the 1996 Constitution and consequent legal decisions, queer and particularly black queer individuals are culturally denigrated and often find their bodies subject to "policing and violence" (Livermon 301). In addition to murder, this violence has encompassed a series of brutal "corrective rapes" against lesbians of color in the townships. The gap between law and life evidenced by such attacks —what Brenna Munro calls the need to make "legal citizenship into living citizenship" (xxi)—points to a key fault line in South African society, and highlights the shameful insecurity of citizens and others who diverge from heteronormative expectations.

Given Dube's nationality, though, it also seems important to put her murder in the context of the xenophobic riots that took place just a few weeks earlier in May 2008. Since 1994, immigrants and asylum seekers from the rest of the African continent have become a "problem" in the eyes of many South Africans. Anger against those perceived to be "foreigners"—a definition that generally means black people from other African countries but can also encompass black South Africans from smaller ethnic groups—flared up into a national crisis on May 11, 2008, when a group of young men in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra began assaulting such "foreigners" in their community. The attacks quickly spread, ultimately taking 62 lives and displacing tens of thousands of people (Worby, Hassim and Kupe, 1–2; see also Everatt). The iconic image of Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave, an immigrant from Mozambique burnt alive in the riots, became a potent symbol of the violence and horror. Dube's status as a "foreigner," indeed as a refugee, suggests that her sexuality may have been only one, if the most obvious, element at play in her murder.

If Dube's case conjoins the situation of "queer" and "foreign" bodies in the South Africa of the extended transition, then so too does the pernicious term *makwerekwere*, the most common slur used to refer to black foreign nationals in South Africa. Neville Hoad has noted that *makwerekwere* contains an echo of "queer" in its older, unreclaimed meaning (*African* 81). Hoad's comment is one of few that draws gays and lesbians together with black African immigrants, although these are perhaps the two key figures used to define the borders of contemporary South African nationhood; and it shows how homosexuality can be made to overlap with a coding as stranger or noncitizen, at once casting both "queer" and "foreigner" outside the national home. Such a doubling relies on persistent notions that homosexuality is "un-African." As Gabeba Baderoon reminds us: "No matter how often historians, scholars and other sociologists show convincing evidence to the contrary, the trope that varied genders and same-sex sexualities in Africa are corrupt practices of the West is stubbornly

invoked by conservative politicians as well as religious and civic leaders" (391; see also Hoad 69, Livermon 301, Matebeni 408–409, Munro ix, Reid). Yet this doubling, which I see as crucial to understanding South Africa's first 15 years of democracy, is also complex and unstable.

In the 1990s, and as prominent scholars like Hoad, Munro, and Graeme Reid have argued, gay and lesbian South Africans came to symbolize the promises of liberal democratic citizenship and national "progress" or "modernity" even as they were positioned as foreign to the "authentic" African identity the ANC went on to construct.[4] Immigrants faced similarly paradoxical, if not entirely commensurable, positions. Refugees and immigrants were posed as a sign of South Africa's democracy and as a link to Africa and the country's role in leading Thabo Mbeki's "African Renaissance." Simultaneously, and increasingly across the 2000s, they were also demonized in popular culture and political discourse for siphoning off "South African" resources (Peberdy 15–16, 29; Everatt 11–12). The symbolic valences of "migrant" and "queer" bodies here flip back and forth between the competing discourses of citizenship and Africanness that often ran against each other in efforts to shape a democratic nationalism. Referring to Hoad's gloss on *makwerekwere*, Munro suggests that "foreigners have effectively been made the new queers even as South African gays and lesbians have been (ambivalently) embraced" (xxvi). This insight is clearly borne out in contemporary culture, but we should also trouble this one-way "queering" to show how the treatment of "foreigners" and their claims may also impact gay and lesbian citizens, and how both are intimately linked to South Africa's "new" national project.

This chapter builds from the imperfect intersection of queer South African and black African migrant experiences in the extended transition by drawing together recent representations of their home and family life. Home and family are key tropes for a number of reasons. In a passage that resonates with Anne McClintock's discussion of home as both a metaphor for the nation and an institutional space for reproducing certain visions of it, Sara Ahmed explores how hegemonic national cultures are imagined to be (and often are) reproduced through rigidly defined and defended, as well as racially exclusive, forms of male and female "coupling." She notes that:

> [t]he coupling of man and woman becomes a kind of birthing, giving birth, giving birth not only to new life but to ways of living that are already recognizable as forms of civilization. It is this narrative of coupling as a condition for the reproduction of life, culture and value that explains the slide in racist narratives between the fear of strangers and immigrants

> (xenophobia), the fear of queers (homophobia), and the fear of miscegenation as well as other illegitimate couplings. (*Cultural* 144–45)

While as discussed in chapter 1, "miscegenation" gets ambivalently revalorized in South Africa's democratic period, the "slide" between racism, xenophobia, and homophobia that Ahmed points to remains vividly apparent. Both queer and migrant subjects have been consistently presented as threats to the security of the normative South African family (here showing obvious overlap between the white patriarchal nuclear ideal during colonialism and apartheid and the equally patriarchal "traditional" African forms invoked by President Jacob Zuma). If queers face a continuing stigma of sexual and moral "perversion," male migrants also have been stigmatized as sexual and moral threats due to their supposed heightened ability to attract South African women, their perceived status as carriers of HIV/AIDS, and their alleged perpetration of immoral actions such as child rape (Ndlovu "Penises").[5] In this situation, the gendered spaces of family and home become literal and metaphorical battlegrounds in which struggles for inclusion and exclusion play out. Yet, if home is often a space and sign of rejection, oppression and violence, then the work of disavowed "couples" or groups making their own version of homes may also allow new forms of belonging to unfold.

On another level, home in an expanded sense is at once an object of longing and something largely denied to both "queers" and "migrants"—if for different reasons. Popular opinions (sometimes shared by migrants themselves) locate migrant homes elsewhere on the African continent. This can be seen even in the term "migrant," which, as opposed to "immigrant," suggests an enforced transitoriness and occludes the work of making different kinds of homes across national lines. Also widely circulating are ideas that gays and lesbians have no families. Reid cites a comment by one man overheard in KwaZulu-Natal: "A gay person does not have relatives, because he cannot give birth" (41). While many gays and lesbians certainly choose to forgo childbearing and childrearing, the comment patently ignores the realities faced by many queer individuals as well as the validity of queer families and alternative kinships. Nevertheless, such beliefs help to justify the multiple obstacles facing "queer" and "foreign" subjects in their attempts to make diverse homes in South Africa—be they non-heteronormative or de-territorialized—as well as to make South Africa home. The work of rendering these homes visible and exploring the struggles involved in shaping them is thus of particular importance. In addition to asserting presence and dignity, I argue that it may help to shift a dominant representational register of violence and suffering associated with both groups.

The violence suffered by immigrants and queers must be decried, and for this reason I began this chapter with one painful example. Yet, new cultural imaginaries—ones that explore questions of agency, selfhood, and intimacy—are necessary for new social formations to emerge. I thus turn to works that straddle affective registers toward the end of reshaping senses of relation in South Africa, and specifically making it a more welcoming and hospitable society.

The following pages plumb a diverse set of texts and exhibitions, spread across the extended transition and coming from a variety of racial, national, and gendered perspectives. These do not always have common ends, but they come together in their focus on the work of making and displaying family and home; in their desire to destabilize and reshape images of home, family, and domestic life in contemporary South Africa; and in their turn to "intimate exposure" as a strategy for creating affective ties within and across social divides. I have noted that intimate exposure includes not only sharing oneself in public, but it also encompasses aesthetic acts that bring daily, domestic, and "private" life more generally to the surface of public discourse and that play with the affective resonances that—in Ahmed's term—make us "stick" (Bystrom and Nuttall, "Introduction"; Ahmed *Cultural Politics*).[6] To explore further how representing home and family life can offer more open visions of the social and potentially yoke people together around them (as well as some of the difficulties of this process) I address a short story by David Medalie, photographs by Jean Brundrit, an exhibition called *Home Affairs* initiated by Mark Gevisser, designed by Clive van den Berg, and curated by Sharon Cort, Angolan refugee Simão Kikamba's semi-autobiographical novel *Going Home*, and Terry Kurgan's participatory public art project *Hotel Yeoville*. Together these works create a fuller picture of the politics of the personal in transitional South Africa. They show from a different angle than those explored in previous chapters how family and home were redefined and redeployed in the first 15 years of democracy, what kinds of psychic work are accomplished by sharing the details of intimate and domestic life, and how such affective interventions impact wider conceptions and feelings of relation—not only creating rifts between people but also perhaps enabling political connections.

Does Your Lifestyle Depress Your Mother?

Apartheid law criminalized gay and lesbian sexuality in both public and private life, with amendments in the 1980s meant to tighten the regulation of homosexual sex acts and identities even as laws against interracial sex were being taken off the books (Hoad "Introduction" 16–18). Queer

life was often only acknowledged through scandals in a society ruled by the conservative National Party (NP), and it was associated with morally suspect categories such as pornography (see Brundrit in Josephy). In large part because of activism leading up to the Equality Clause in the 1996 Constitution and because of the Constitution itself, the 1990s saw an increased assertiveness of gays and lesbians in public culture. Both straight and queer writers and artists engaged in what Xavier Livermon calls "cultural labor" aimed at making queer life "legible," "visible," and indeed "livable" (299–300). I focus here on how revealing the details of "ordinary" or everyday domestic life, a trope familiar to us from chapter 2, configures this legibility and visibility. This is not the only mode of representing nonnormative sexualities seen in the extended transition, as the camp performance art of Pieter Dirk-Uys and Steven Cohen demonstrate. Nevertheless, and as I will argue in readings of David Medalie's short story "The Wheels of God" and Jean Brundrit's photographic series *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?,* both from 1998, the mining of home and family life is interesting in terms of the role it allots to gays and lesbians in the "new" South African imaginary and for the kind of queer politics to which it points. These texts offer different insights into what it means to make queer home and family life "ordinary," as they help us begin to map the forms of relation opened up through this strategy.

Medalie's fiction—including his novel *The Shadow Follows* (2006) and the collection *The Mistress's Dog: Short Stories, 1996–2010* (2011)—shows a sustained attention to the dilemmas of gays and lesbians as they live out the transition to democracy. Such attention places the work of a presumably straight author without an overtly "activist" orientation within the larger political project of validating same-sex sexualities and gestures to the modes in which homosexuality becomes imaginable and acceptable to straight publics. According to Michael Titlestad, *The Mistress's Dog*, which contains "The Wheels of God," is comprised of stories that "tack between public and private," focusing on "the quiet inner and domestic lives of those formidably haunted by memory" in order to "present a portrait of contemporary South African experience" (xii). "The Wheels of God" is no exception, as it brings a "quiet" story of queer domestic life home to conservative white South Africa. Specifically, the story depicts the visit of Sue and Sello, a white lesbian and her adopted black son, to the childhood home of Sue's deceased partner Glenda and to Glenda's mother Ina. Ina has never accepted Glenda's sexual orientation, her partner, or her son. The narrative unfolds in one afternoon, and charts Sue and Sello's arrival, conversations between Sue and Ina, a luncheon, and an afternoon nap. It is told in the third person but takes on Sue's narrative perspective.

Ina's town and house are obviously aligned with apartheid South Africa and its diminished horizon of normal and acceptable domestic life. Sue points out that the town was created specifically in the 1960s and 1970s to fulfill apartheid economic needs: "A whole town, summoned with a click of the fingers out of the empty veld, as meek as if the mandarins of the old Nationalist government had been as omnipotent as God" (69). The decoration of the house indicates its related role in protecting the central ideologies of apartheid, calling to mind Rita Barnard's comments on "the house of the white race" in *Apartheid and Beyond*, explored previously, and extending the interpellative work of the suburban home described there to encompass heterosexuality as well as whiteness. While the walls are full of pictures of Glenda, her life with Sue and Sello (and thus as a lesbian and mother) has been carefully excluded by dint of Ina's curatorial work:

> There were no photographs taken during the last ten years of her life, nothing from the period in which she and Sue were together, nothing from the years in which they lived together with Sello as a family. Ina had kept with her only the Glenda she had approved of. It was as if the Glenda who had loved another woman and who had adopted a little black boy had been wiped out. (75)

It is perhaps not surprising that the house is a place from which Sue has been shut out, and, from another perspective, feels lucky to have escaped.

Escape from a confining, heteronormative home is a key queer narrative that usefully draws attention to the limits of older notions of home and family. As Judith (Jack) Halberstam puts it, "queer uses of time and space develop in opposition to the institutions of the family, heterosexuality and reproduction, and queer subcultures develop as alternatives to kinship based notions of community" (313–14). The fact that this story stages a return to the family home puts it within a more conservative vision of gay politics, but one that may nonetheless have positive outcomes. One such outcome represented in the story, and enabled by the delving into complex, uncomfortable relationships that it charts, is a kind of healing for Sue. Sue is rent by memories of Glenda and the physical and psychic violence Glenda experienced, from her estrangement from Ina to a violent rape and finally to her death in a car accident. These memories have long prompted a desire to see Ina suffer. Yet, Sue recognizes over the course of the afternoon that "the wheels of God" (a phrase she mistakenly recalls from the old aphorism about the "mills of God") is a multiply mistaken frame. Life, she comes to feel, is not just about punishment or

retribution as the proverb implies. In this sense, returning to Ina's house allows for a working through of the trauma of losing Glenda and the continuing trials she faces in her life with Sello. The story ends on a note of temporary peace, with Sue resting on the bed upstairs after eating lunch and playing in the garden: "Sello lay curled up next to her; his innocence seemed invincible. Sue had never imagined that there could be so much serenity in this house of old pain, or this town, stuck so hastily and with such gross expedience in the ground" (82).

Medalie's story also explores how personal revelations can shift affective orientations and moods in others. Sue's "serenity" stems in part from Ina, with whom she is entangled despite herself. As we have seen, Ina has largely refused to accept Glenda's choices. She not only physically blocked photographic representation of her daughter's chosen family, but also mentally shuts out the existence of Sue and Sello, to the extent that she doesn't even know her grandson's full name. (Sue points out with faux naivety: "His surname, of course, is Glenda's. Which means it is the same as yours" [73].) However, on hearing Sue speak about Glenda and her desires, as well as Sue's own struggle to come to terms with life as a single parent of a child who—it comes out—is infected with HIV, Ina feels her prejudices weaken. She begins to let go of "her" Glenda and to accept one that conforms to reality. Crucially, the visit of Sue and Sello solidifies, in the sense of making "stick," a decision that she had been mulling over for some time: the decision to make Sello her legal beneficiary, the inheritor of her estate. This decision means that Sello will one day own the structure in which he quietly naps, an eventuality that we can read as a takeover by a queer *and* multiracial family of the aforementioned "house of the white race." Such a trope of reparation through inheritance should be familiar to us from the readings of Brink's *Imaginings of Sand* in chapter 1 and (more ambivalently) van Niekerk's *Agaat* in chapter 3.

These positive changes make it tempting to read Medalie's story through the lens of what Brenna Munro labels the "queer family romance" of transitional South Africa. While Munro's definition is not strictly Freudian, her concept is an important supplement to the "'new' South African family romance" discussed in chapter 1, in which white South Africans and particularly Afrikaners claimed or "invented" ancestors of different races.[7] This "melanisation" process (to use Zoë Wicomb's term) seemed to provide a psychic entry point into democracy, along with literal family histories and domestic spaces from which one could learn to live differently. Looking at popular culture of the 1990s and at canonized novels such as Gordimer's *None to Accompany Me* (1994) and *The House Gun* (1998), and Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1998), Munro outlines a relatively widely circulating national allegory built around gay and

lesbian families—one that charts the collapse of the white, nuclear, and heteronormative family serving as a model for both colonial society and for the apartheid nation and offers the queer family as a metaphor for a seemingly new and liberated era (173–74). She further, and in a way that strongly resonates with the narrative forms described in chapter 1, shows how the "queer family romance" presents the work of coming to terms with a child's queer sexuality as a way for older, white South Africans to participate in the process of democratic transformation (189).

Written at more or less the same time as Gordimer and Coetzee's better known works, "The Wheels of God" clearly replicates aspects of the queer family romance in its depictions of Sue and Sello and of Ina's ethical awakening. Yet it also, and as Munro is equally careful to do, troubles any naively positive readings of it. Medalie consciously undermines superficial notions that people forming queer and multiracial families are the "pioneers" of democracy when Ina takes the opportunity of Sue and Sello's visit to introduce Glenda's old school friend Veronica and her husband Pieter. This couple is a parody of the "reformed" white South African. With overbearing enthusiasm, they applaud Sue and Glenda's choice to adopt Sello: "Speaking of pioneers, I hope you won't feel that we're being too personal if we say we admire you so. The adoption of this little boy is such a wonderful thing" (78). At the same time, they pick a fight with Sue about the validity of the ANC's affirmative action policies. What Gordimer once called the "special contact lens" put into the eyes of white South Africans remain in place for these two people who refuse to see that whites benefitted from their own kind of affirmative action.[8] Their considering Sue as a "pioneer" without wanting to accept that larger structural changes need to be made confirms all of the suspicions one might have about the queer family romance. It, like the multiracial family romance described earlier, can become a way of blocking out inconvenient truths—including both the way in which white and straight families continue to benefit from colonial and apartheid history and the violence unleashed on gays and lesbians in South Africa.[9] Veronica and Pieter model a pallid "rainbow" utopianism aimed at allowing them to retain their privileges while feeling good about other people making sacrifices. This is a model that invites, at least from Sue, anger and ridicule.[10]

One way to account for Medalie's ambivalent embrace of the queer family romance is to shift attention from the metaphorical register to an emotional and embodied one. It is plausible to argue that the democratic-nation-to-come is figured in this story as a queer family, and "queerness" represents a potential to subvert older patterns of oppression. Such moves risk emptying out the trauma of lived experience by turning it

into metaphor, as well as replacing material change with symbolic resolution. Medalie, however, seems less interested in creating abstract visions or symbols than in exploring concrete interactions—the way exchanges with those considered "other" can alter routes of affect and action, creating connective tissue or "stickiness" that helps people live in ways that feel right to them. In this sense, charting the daily realities and struggles facing queer families may forge new links between people and usefully destabilize notions of home and family to open up previously closed living spaces, both cultural and physical.[11] Importantly, such transformations are not only represented within the story but also offered out to the reader, who as the recipient of the intimate exposures recounted in "The Wheels of God" has equal access to their emotive tug. If some readers will empathize or identify with Sue and her struggles, others may be more likely to see themselves in Ina and to follow her process of accepting Sue and Sello as family and vesting in them the fate of her home. As Munro puts it, in part because of "the pleasures of reading realist fiction," queer family romance narratives "can help make legal recognition into shared structures of feeling about the nation and people's place in it" (174).

This process of challenging visions of what home and family mean by revealing the textures of queer home life is taken in a less scripted but more obviously activist direction by the lesbian artist Jean Brundrit, in a series that begs for analysis in conjunction with Medalie's story on account of its title: *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* (Or, we might add for Sue's sake: your mother-in-law?) This series depicts the daily or domestic life of white lesbian couples in Cape Town. Shot in black and white to create something of an ethnographic or documentary feel, the images show couples going to the grocery store, doing housework, lying in bed, and drinking coffee.[12] This, Brundrit seems to say, is that exotic species known as "the lesbian." The wry humor that animates the photographs comes across in the tongue-in-cheek title that the series bears, also inscribed in a retro font on one of the images itself. The images also have a serious edge, however, and serve as important interventions both for the implied queer spectator (the "you" who may well face the dilemma referenced in the title) and within wider publics.

Brundrit's earlier and well-known image "Portrait of a Lesbian Couple in SA" (1995) points to the marginal status of lesbians at the time of its composition, which is also indexed in Medalie's story through Ina's biased curatorial work. Brundrit gives us a portrait of a couple that is whited out and separated from a suburban background by perforated lines. The perforated lines make the lesbian couple something that can be "cut out"—like "paper dolls," Pam Warne comments (94), or disposable bodies in a more sinister sense. Warne classifies the image as an

illustration of the "invisibility" of lesbian couples, noting how it "speaks of the reality of living in our essentially conservative society" (94). *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* counters this invisibility—literally filling in the blank outlines of the earlier image—and it configures visibility through the tropes of ordinary or everyday domesticity even more obviously than "The Wheels of God." Annie E. Coombes nicely describes this aesthetic when she notes Brundrit's choice to "refus[e] a monumental or heroic scale that would have produced iconic images, setting these women up as somehow out of the ordinary. Instead, she chose the more intimate and quotidian scale of the family album, reinforcing the sense that any of these women could be one's sister, wife, or daughter" (266; see also Josephy).[13]

For queer spectators, this "ordinary" family album may serve as a necessary assertion of presence that confirms the validity of lesbian lifestyles in South Africa. Despite society's best attempts to cut them out, Brundrit seems to say, lesbians exist and thrive. At the same time, given the fact that lesbian couples are hardly in need of an *exposé* informing them about the life they themselves lead on a daily basis, one might emphasize the ironic and even comic elements of the photographic series. *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?*, and particularly the image with this caption imprinted on it above an intimate and joyful image of two women embracing, one with coffee cup in hand, seems to poke fun at the exclusions experienced by queer South Africans like Glenda and Sue. Doing so, it transforms a site of familial and social rejection into one of solidarity. In a way reminiscent of the performance art and punk music Ann Cvetkovich charts in *An Archive of Feelings* (1), Brundrit's images do not entirely overcome negative and even painful feelings (indeed, they remain present in the title) but their representation converts looking at them into an event around which spectators can confirm themselves and find connections to others in their situation.

Read "straight"—that is, by straight audiences and perhaps in the sense of without irony—the images in the exhibition have other pedagogical uses. *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* uses the depiction of performances of "ordinary" home life to construct forms of relation between gay and straight communities and to broaden senses of home and family in the latter in a way that brings to the visual realm that work of narrative unsettlement attempted in Medalie's short story. To recall, the images resemble snapshots from "family albums" and are designed to make spectators feel as if the women can be "one's sister, wife, or daughter" (Coombes 266). As Marianne Hirsch argues, looking at family photographs can trigger a set of "unconscious optics" and traditional beliefs about domestic life that she calls "the familial gaze" (*Family*

Frames 116–17). Brundrit both relies on and troubles this "familial gaze," drawing on stereotypes of domestic life to disrupt its optical parameters. Like her "Valued Families" (1995), a photographic image of two nude torsos overlaid with a set of lines connecting women with women, men with men, and (occasionally) women and men, the series enacts what Sue Williamson and Ashraf Jamal call an "inversion" of right-wing "family values" (96). However, the "alternative family tree" (Josephy) created in "Valued Families" gives way in *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* to a more robust visual depiction of what queer kinships mean and how different forms of intimacy and care are lived out. In other words, by staging, taking, and displaying images of lesbian home life Brundrit may transform what spectators expect to *see* when they picture home and family.

Does your lifestyle depress your mother? of course does not simply translate the "The Wheels of God" into the visual realm. As already noted, it is aimed much more obviously at queer spectators. For those spectators who do not identify with the queer "you" hailed by the title, the series forgoes the kind of moral development plotline seen in the short story to create instances of encounter with no scripted resolution. It simply asks heterosexual society to look carefully at a kind of home life often associated with immorality and corruption. This difference frees it from many of the difficulties associated with national allegory and specifically its queer family romance variant even as it opens the door to responses quite divergent from what the artist might intend. Indeed, Coombes documents how a Stellenbosch art show that exhibited the series was closed by the city council as a result of protests by the fundamentalist group Christians for Truth, and the reproduction of a selection of the images as illustrations for a 1999 article in the *Cape Times* led to the newspaper being "inundated with letters attacking the article's so-called promotion of homosexuality" (266). Such responses point to a failure of relation unable to be rectified—indeed, exacerbated—by artistic activism. Yet, there is also a way in which, as Coombes suggests, these attacks reveal the "paradoxical effectiveness" of Brundrit's approach (266). That their detractors credit Brundrit's photographs with threatening conservative conceptions of home and family points to the power of intimate exposure to estrange cherished visions of relation, and perhaps eventually to generate wider acceptance of queer kinships. The very claim to everyday, normal domesticity becomes a way of remapping family life—a stealth protest that productively contaminates heteronormative models. This is perhaps why the strategy persisted across the 2000s, in more general queer activism and particularly in response to the question of gay marriage.

Home Affairs, "Stickiness," Ambiguity

With the passage of the Civil Union Act in 2006, some ten years after the celebrated equality clause in the constitution, legal protection of gay rights in some sense became complete. This legal triumph could be seen as evidence of the secure place of queer citizens in the democratic South Africa if it were not for an increase in homophobia in political discourse as well as the continued exclusion and violence experienced particularly by certain parts of the gay, lesbian, and transgender community as the extended transition wore on. The struggle has been one with differential gains. Early activism and aesthetic representation, as many scholars point out, tended to focus on making visible middle-class and white lives like those of Sue and Glenda or the figures in Brundrit's images. Yet, increasing visibility for gays and lesbians did not always lead to increasing acceptance, especially for people of color. As Livermon argues, white homosexuality could be accepted as a symbol of modernity while blackness was seen to bear the burden of maintaining African "traditions" including heterosexuality (302–303; see also Matebeni 410). Livermon suggests that a "consistent representation of queerness as outside blackness and of blackness as heteronormative" may explain some of the violence directed against black queer bodies (303). It also works to define black queer culture through the lens of violence and victimhood.

Livermon ultimately calls for more "cultural labor" focused on queer black lives and specifically aimed at creating "black queer visibilities" that destabilize linkages between blackness and heterosexuality and give embodied meaning to legal protections (299–300). Such a task has occupied the more recent activism of Brundrit, who together with Zanele Muholi organized a workshop in Johannesburg in 2007 for young photographers meant to "begin to gather diverse opinions and diverse experiences of what it means to be a lesbian in South Africa."[14] Muholi herself, as discussed in the previous chapter, is one of South Africa's most active and recognized participants in this labor. Since 2004, Muholi has mobilized her talents to make the haunting psychic violence and the literal scars of hate crimes inflicted on black lesbians visible to various and far-reaching communities, from those targeted by this violence to national and international policy makers. She has also shown a less anguished side of black lesbian life. Munro, Kylie Thomas, Zethu Matebeni, and others have eloquently described how Muholi's images both depict deep pain and create an alternative vision of queer life that is homely, playful, and erotic. Her images often focus exclusively on the black lesbian community but, as we have seen, projects like *'Massa' and Mina(h)* also suggest a need for working across lines of class and race, in order to bring

different communities together and interrogate their existent points of intersection (see also Matebeni). Such images imply that Livermon's call for more cultural labor remains crucial both within black communities and for wider publics.

The exhibition *Home Affairs: About Love, Marriage, Families and Human Rights* can be usefully situated in this context, as it engages in precisely such expansive and necessary cultural labor. Mark Gevisser of the research, design, and exhibition company TRACE initiated a collaboration between the NGO Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA) and TRACE which resulted in the exhibition (Gevisser). It was curated by Sharon Cort and designed by Clive van den Berg, a founder member of TRACE and himself a gay artist famous for challenging the invisibility of queer domestic life and troubling the colonial and apartheid histories that have worked to bury interracial homosexuality.[15] First mounted in the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg in 2008, before heading out to other locations, the exhibition was designed to extend the general acceptance of the Civil Union Act, addressing what has already been noted as a gap between legal rights and people's ability to exercise these rights. According to Cort, it aimed to show South Africans—and especially pupils who visited with their school classes—that gay families are families "just like everybody else."[16] The notion was in Cort's words "to normalize same-sex marriage" or to make civil union "more accessible" by showing it as one among many diverse forms of families that exist in contemporary South Africa. Van den Berg created a relatively simple design that drew on its location and its different materials to help achieve the desired goals.

The exhibition's initial positioning within the Apartheid Museum is a key starting point. Opened in 2001, this museum is a premier site for the display of the history of the liberation struggle. The main exhibition traces the development of apartheid law in South Africa, its effects on the black population, and the resistance it inspired. Touring the museum can be an overwhelming experience. Visitors are given a ticket assigning them a race at the entrance and then follow different paths, simulating the differential treatment they would have received under apartheid policy. They learn about the traumas of state violence and the daily indignations of segregation through a variety of documentary materials including images from Ernest Cole's *House of Bondage*. While one can easily get lost in these testaments to oppression, the museum attempts to plot a progressive movement toward freedom and equality—literally from the racial classification reenacted at the entrance to the pillars of the 1996 Constitution soaring outside the exit of the building. Its website clearly articulates this architectural self-conception: "A journey through the

Apartheid Museum takes you into the heart of darkness of evil, and out again into the light. It is an emotional journey designed to encourage visitors to empower themselves with knowledge to prevent such horrors from happening again."[17]

In other contexts I would be quick to trouble this teleological "emotional journey," but what is most interesting to me here is how positioning *Home Affairs* in this space allowed queer activists and artists to link to the struggle against racial oppression. This tactic was successfully deployed in the 1980s and 1990s (Hoad "Introduction" 17–18), and is made explicit in the exhibition through information comparing the suffering provoked by the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts to that caused by the denial of gay marriage. Such comparisons allow for a channeling of feelings of empathy and moral indignation caused by racism to homophobia. Viewed in dialogue with the larger museum, *Home Affairs* can be seen to invite spectators into an exhibition that might also be "progressive." Though Cort, van den Berg, and others involved in its production would be unlikely to use such grandiose language, it too aims to move from "darkness" to "light," or from rightlessness and exclusion to rights and acceptance.

Within the Apartheid Museum, visitors found a circular exhibition space with one display going along the outer wall and another set up in the inner core (see figure 4.1). The outer circle tells the stories of seven South African families that challenge the white nuclear heterosexual

Figure 4.1 View of the *Home Affairs* exhibition as installed in the Apartheid Museum, 2008. Image courtesy of TRACE.

model privileged by Western modernity in general and the apartheid regime in particular. The families include female-headed households, interracial couples, adoptive families (including adoptions of HIV positive children, seen also in "The Wheels of God"), and groups of friends who raise children together. While as Cort pointed out all but one of the seven families have at least one queer member, the outer circle privileges a broad kind of unsettlement of what love, family, and home mean. As the introductory panel on the outer wall states:

> This exhibition is a journey into the different ways that people love, make homes and create families. Not all families should be the same but all families should have the same rights and opportunities. Even if a family does not involve blood ties or marriage, it may be long-standing, committed and supportive.

Lindi Malindi, a black university student featured in the exhibition placards, agrees: "For many people the idea of family would be a mum and a dad and children. But it doesn't have to be a mum and dad; it can be a mum and a mum or a dad and a dad." She continues: "It could be a single parent, or a grandmother could take on the maternal role. There don't even need to be children. A grouping of people who are related, not necessarily by blood, is a family."

Perhaps the most poignant aspect of this outer display, and one which gives visible depth to Malindi's expansive definition of family, is the family portrait. One member of each of the seven featured families was asked to gather those she or he considered to be kin for a family portrait, which was then displayed on the placards in the context of quotations of family members about their kin and about what makes a family. With these portraits, *Home Affairs* poses family as a universal human experience with which others can identify on a personal, one-to-one level. The assumption is that we all have parents, lovers, and kin, and therefore can empathize with how other people feel about their parents, lovers and kin—since the photographed individuals must feel something akin to our own emotions. Such assumptions, while repeating problematic "family of man" narratives (Barthes 1957), are here invoked to trouble what, as we saw above, Hirsch identifies as a conservative "familial gaze." Like the images that comprise Brundrit's *Does your lifestyle depress you mother?,* these portraits invite spectators into a shared interplay of glances and affective charges that both draw on stereotypes of family and disrupt visions of what it should look like, potentially creating ties across apartheid's sharply demarcated and perilously resilient racial classification scheme and strictures regarding sexuality.

The inner circle of the exhibition was a round table stacked high with photographs and objects chosen by ten queer couples who had been or were considering getting married, and ringed with framed posters containing another "family portrait"—in this case, an image of each particular couple—and giving a short history of the pair at hand. If the inner display replicates the family photograph dynamics discussed above, it also deepens the affective pull of the exhibition by combining photographs with objects, or what Bill Brown theorizes as "things." "Objects," he claims, are something we "look through" in order to see something else, while "things . . . can hardly function as a window . . . We confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us: when the drill breaks, when the car stalls, when the windows get filthy, when their flow within circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily" (4). The various "things" on display are items that anyone might keep from their wedding day or from their lives with someone they love: framed images and legal certificates, or clothing or accessories worn as part of the ceremony including hats, traditional blankets, and shoes. Seeing them taken out of the flow of daily life asks us to consider them anew, if not always in the sense of thinking of their actual material provenance as suggested by Brown. I would suggest rather that the force of "things" in this exhibition lies in their capacity for creating "stickiness" or senses of relation between the holders and viewers of these items.

One example is that of Thulile and Ponie's shoes. In a glass case above pictures from their wedding day, which show the black lesbian couple dressed formally in what is only a slight inversion of traditional Western and Christian wedding costume—a long white and puffy white dress for one and a sleek white pantsuit for the other—two pairs of white shoes are stacked carefully on top of each other. The bottom shoes are white leather moccasins with a firm black rubber grip, and the top pair open-toed white heels with a wooden platform sole and a leopard print interior. A note affixed to the shoes and written by Ponie reads: "We went shopping for shoes. I choose shoes for Thulile and she chose shoes for me. We know what each other likes very well." The shoes, perhaps the least noticeable part of the wedding ensemble, here are posed by Ponie and Thulile as an example of the strength of their relationship, the way in which they know and support each other, understanding each other's unique (even leopard-print) interiors. Taken out of their initial context, made into "things" that are no longer transparent, the shoes may also help to redraw relation. Ahmed argues that objects or things can be sites for shaping emotion, which flows between objects and people as well as between people. Objects "impress us" in the sense of "pressing into" us,

leaving a "mark or trace" (Ahmed *Cultural* 6). As described already in the Introduction and elsewhere in *Democracy at Home in South Africa,* in Ahmed's theory emotion can adhere to things as it moves or circulates, making them "sticky or saturated with affect" (ibid. 10–11), as, in turn, it can stick to us and stick us together with these things, "attaching us" to them or giving us a "dwelling place" (ibid. 11). If the shoes symbolize what makes Ponie and Thulie "stick," they may also attach spectators to this couple and their experience, creating at least a momentary sense of what Ahmed calls "withness" or "relationality" (ibid. 91).

By creating space for photographs, texts, and objects to "impress" and press on or into spectators, van den Berg and Cort shaped an exhibition that not only "celebrates our democracy and the right to love whom you choose and marry if you choose" but also enlarges the group of people who would celebrate such rights. This is crucially important work. One could argue that the design of this exhibition, which encloses the experience of queer South Africans within the stories of many different kinds of families and further within a specific narrative of the antiapartheid struggle, blocks out many stories that do not resonate with these perhaps more widely accepted cultural narratives. Similar arguments (minus the apartheid struggle framework) are made against gay marriages, more generally. "Assimilation" and "resistance" to hegemonic norms mark the poles of the extensively argued debate around gay marriage to which I can only refer cursorily here.[18] Resisting assimilation or becoming "normal," Michael Warner for instance has urged a rejection of gay marriage and a return to the activist agenda of decentering this institution as a site for sexual regulation and the dispensing of state benefits. Accepting standard legal forms, never mind calling upon South Africans to accept queer families as families "just like everybody else," in this reading becomes a rejection of the possibilities queer life and queer theory offer for radical change.

These arguments must be taken seriously. Nevertheless, there is a way in which this kind of argument may not pay enough attention to the lived realities of and cultural labor done by queer families. Ahmed suggests that inhabiting the "normal" through forms of family and domestic life can be a way of expanding and reshaping it from the inside, thus creating more space for public comfort (152–55). She notes that the "not-fitting or discomfort" experienced by queer families as they inhabit hegemonic norms "opens up possibilities, an opening that can be difficult and exciting" (154). As with Mary Sibande's circular exhibition described in the previous chapter, this exhibition can then read in multiple ways. Here, the flipside of the containment or enclosure description is one in which the daily experience of gays and lesbians in shaping kinships or families

of their choosing comes to the heart of South African democracy. Its very placement there, as it exposes people to personal stories, images, and objects associated with queer families, might allow the "normal" to accommodate different forms of living rather than necessarily forcing people into its old shape.

The ambiguity I have noted about the circular design thus opens the door to productive conversations both within queer communities and in broader ones. The same applies to other ambiguities inhabiting the show. I think back to Ponie and Thulie's shoes, part of a wedding ensemble indebted to Western and even Hollywood norms but chosen by a black lesbian couple in South Africa. As Cort noted in a personal interview, this desire for a "*The Bold and the Beautiful*" wedding was seen only among the black couples they interviewed, and became perplexing in terms of the exhibition's relation to traditional African forms of family and marriage, which were underrepresented.[19] In such a context, pictures and objects from a "white wedding" can be seen as items that both reiterate and resist oppressive tropes, much like Sibande's Victorian gowns and the Victorian attire of the people in Santu Mofokeng's found family portraits, discussed in previous chapters. A different kind of ambiguity is seen in the title, *Home Affairs*. This title is wonderfully double. It refers to the space of daily life, to what (in liberal understandings) should be left to one's own devices, and which we may choose to, but do not have to, share. At the same time, it references the governmental department dealing with South African citizenship and its borders. If the first reference reveals what I have argued is the exhibition's project of intimate exposure, its hope that sharing private stories and emotions may change public opinion, the second works to combat the myth discussed earlier in this chapter that gays and lesbians are "Un-African" or "foreign." Shifting the register from "private" to "civil" questions, the title asserts that queers belong, that they are citizens of South Africa and cannot be pushed outside or divorced from their rights.

Interestingly, by appealing to South African citizenship in this way, the exhibition marks a limit to the claims for inclusion of actual foreigners, including the many asylum seekers and other migrants lining up outside the doors of the Department of Home Affairs. The basis for queer activism in *Home Affairs* is the protection afforded by national citizenship and national laws like the Civil Union Act, with the desire (as noted above) to give this law life in different communities across South Africa. The exhibition tags civil law as "human rights" in the title, and thus gestures toward an expansive vision of inclusion undoubtedly shared by its creators. The spirit of the exhibition is to increase acceptance of all forms of domestic life, and all the people living it (and we could note here that

at least some of the family portraits do include non-South Africans, such as the children born in exile to a South African father and a Tanzanian mother).[20] However, and beyond the *Home Affairs* exhibition, it remains the case as Hannah Arendt argued long ago that only national ("civil") law provides real guarantees of human rights ("The Decline"). If human rights exist by virtue of national citizenship, then celebrations of citizenship in turn depend upon and reinscribe the category of the "foreign"—that which lies outside the boundary of the nation and which gives citizenship meaning (see also Munro xxv). Citizenship from this perspective becomes a barrier that blocks certain groups from either claiming rights or shaping homes. While (as we will see) many migrants stake claims for inclusion through strategies of intimate exposure, pointing to what are kindred experiences of people labeled queer and *makwerekwere* and to similarities in the "cultural labor" crucial for both groups, they must do this outside of the discourse of citizenship and find alternate bases for feelings of relation.

Going Home?

As legal rights for gay and lesbian citizens of South Africa were consolidated in the 1990s, the country concomitantly saw a rhetorical commitment to protecting the human rights of "all who live in South Africa," including refugees, immigrants, and temporary migrants, and legal measures to restrict immigration that made "migrants" vulnerable to abuse (Peberdy 16; Albertyn; Hassim et al. 10).[21] Sally Peberdy has shown that the immigration and border control policies of the 1990s were rooted in legislation left over from apartheid, with the Aliens Control Act being updated through amendments in 1995 and 1996 to more vigorously restrict movement across South Africa's territorial borders (17). These amendments increased visa fees, enabled the development of the computer-based National Movement Control System, and instructed state institutions such as schools and hospitals to exclude migrants from their services (ibid. 21–23). Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Minister for Home Affairs for the first decade of democracy, went on public record regarding the importance of preserving the goods and services of South African democracy for South African citizens (ibid. 15; Danso and McDonald 116). Such attitudes in the government spread rapidly throughout the population, prompting many to fear that black Africans from elsewhere in the continent would negatively impact their access to resources and their quality of life (Morris 1117). Working with nationwide surveys from the Southern African Migration Project, Ransford Danso and David McDonald found that in the late 1990s South Africans of all races "had strongly negative

views" of African migrants, whom they associated with stealing jobs, causing crime, and bringing HIV/AIDS to South Africa, and further that in 1998 over 50% of South African citizens supported a complete ban on immigration (115–16).

What Peberdy suggests is the dark side of a "new" South African national identity based on a shared history and a common citizenship rooted in territorial borders—that is, the aggressive exclusion of those considered to be "foreigners" or *makwerekwere*—only slowly became an issue in imaginative artwork (27–28). One turning point was the publication of Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2000). This text, now firmly embedded in the canon of postapartheid literature, makes visible the forms of xenophobia circulating within and between South African urban and rural spaces and the damage that results from them, as it charts the intimate relationships and shifting emotional states of two South African protagonists. Against widespread local visions that "dirty" foreigners brought HIV/AIDS to South Africa, it is both a tribute to those who have lost their lives to the disease and a prophetic call for what Hoad calls an "African cosmopolitanism" based on the shared vulnerability of our bodies to desire and violence, and formed through the act of mourning (*African Intimacies*). Such cosmopolitanism, if it had taken hold, might have prevented what David Everatt terms the recurring "low-level violence directed at African migrants" that marked the 2000s and found its most "lethal" form in the 2008 attacks (8; see also Hassim et al.). In its absence, writers, artists, and activists, both South African and otherwise, have forged ahead in the "cultural labor" of drawing attention to these issues, with some of the most engaging works using the lens of intimate, domestic, and embodied life—we might even say, home affairs—invoked by Mpe and also seen in the examples of queer homes above.

"Home affairs" here, as in the previous section, can take a double meaning as the space of private or domestic life and the legal, civil, and bureaucratic dimensions of citizenship. Certain works, like the Zimbabwean author Thabisani Ndlovu's 2008 short story "The Sound of Water," map the complex texture of private life strained by the demands of migration and draw attention to the pressure it puts on the psychic and sexual life of couples (see also Ndlovu "Where" 126–27). Others target the Department of Home Affairs itself, such as the Nigerian-American Deji Olukotun's 2009 short story named, simply, "Home Affairs." This story focuses on the tensions created between a father and his son during their visit to this office. Among the best known, nationally and internationally, of the stories of migration to South Africa is the Magnet Theater Company's physical theater production *Every Year, Every Day, I am Walking*. First devised for a festival in Cameroon in 2006, this

award-winning piece tells the story of a mother and daughter uprooted during a violent invasion of their village in an unnamed Francophone African country and their attempt to build a home in South Africa.

Angolan immigrant Simão Kikamba's *Going Home* (2005), winner of the Herman Charles Bosman Prize, tackles this topic in greater detail as it traces the voyage of the character Manuel Mpanda from what was then Zaire through Angola to South Africa. Lured out of Congo where his family had fled in 1968 by promises of peace in Angola in the early 1990s, Mpanda returns to the country of his birth in search of opportunities to better his own future and to help his country rebuild. Under a new set of accords signed in 1991, the government forces of the MPLA and those of the rebel group UNITA, who had begun by fighting the Portuguese colonial rulers in 1961 but turned to fight between themselves for control over the independent state formed in 1975, were meant to end the civil war and move toward multiparty democracy. In this context, and despite many hardships, Mpanda builds a new life. He becomes a teacher of English in a local primary school before finding a job as a translator at the Namibian embassy, and he meets and marries an Angolan woman named Isabel, eventually becoming father to the young Mansanga. This carefully constructed home is ripped from him when, after the 1992 elections, he is targeted by the MPLA as a UNITA spy and in 1994 forced to leave the country. South Africa seems a good destination. As Mpanda explains to his wife: "South Africa is an ideal place. It's a country with a lot of opportunities. They've just held their democratic elections. Apartheid is no more. I will get a good job, and you and Mansanga can join me . . . Our daughter will go to school there and learn English" (121). His experience in South Africa, however, shatters these dreams and reveals the country as a site of doubled loss—that of a national home and an individual one.

The narrator's inability to find a place in South Africa, and more particularly in Johannesburg, can be summarized by the blunt insults lobbed at him as a group of South Africans steal from and destroy the informal food stall in Yeoville that Mpanda has set up to support himself: "You are an illegal immigrant. You have no right to be here. Go home to your own fucking country . . . Go home, *kwere-kwere*" (164). Home as homeland, as the country in which one is born and supposedly belongs, is here called upon to emphasize Mpanda's "foreignness," to show that South Africa is not for him and will never be a home. Such statements form a grotesque inversion of Mpanda's expulsion from Angola by the secret service and police, and show the extent to which the loss of a refugee's original homeland or country is blocked out or repressed by both the general public and by South African authorities. Yet, Mpanda's rejection is frequently repeated. Although his official refugee status offers him

theoretical protection, this protection is often ignored and Mpanda faces the hostile attitudes and actions directed at all those seen as *makwerekwere*—with documents and without. In a bar in Yeoville, a welcome is twisted into a warning as a Zulu man exclaims in a threatening tone: "Welcome to South Africa, dear stranger!" (148). In a job interview, Mpanda is sent back to the Department of Home Affairs even though he has a valid work permit (153). Home Affairs itself becomes a "cell-like" place where power is exercised to its utmost over its uncertain petitioners (143). Each experience makes it clear that Mpanda, because he is not a citizen, will always be separated from "real" or "authentic" South Africans.

Mpanda's lack of fit within the South African nation makes it impossible for him to create a personal home, whether this means a physical space of shelter or an emotional place for the regeneration and sustenance of his closest relationships. As he cannot find steady work, Mpanda is forced to move from flat to flat, each one smaller, with less privacy and more subtenants, and less his own. This lack of control over his living space becomes symbolic of his inability to sustain his family, who embody the essence of "home" for him. Mpanda both desires and fears his family coming to join him in South Africa, because he is ashamed at his poverty, his lack of work, and his lack of control over his own position: "I knew that to prevent my new home from being destroyed again, I would have to build it with a foundation of concrete. I would have to make a pact of love and trust with my wife, but the longer I waited for a proper job to make that dream come true, the more I despaired" (195). When Isabel and Mansanga finally do join him, they are unable to stay because of bureaucratic restrictions that make it impossible for Mansanga to attend school. One of the most painful moments in the book is when Mansanga, unable to understand the meaning of being a "foreigner" or "refugee," pleads with her father to find a way to put her in school like other children. "How different am I from them, Papa?," she asks, "I have two arms, two legs and a head like them" (209). Even with this profound logic, Mpanda cannot obtain the right certificate to allow her entry.

The book's structure and ironic title *Going Home* underscore the linked losses of the old homeland and the possibility of making a new home. Home is a term that applies to multiple places, from property in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo where Mpanda's birth family remains, to Angola, the house he shared with Isabel and Mansanga there, and various living spaces in Johannesburg. It refers, as Ndlovu writes in relation to Zimbabwean migrants, to an imagined "haven" and to spaces that can "disappoint, constrict, [en]danger, indeed, kill" ("Where" 119). I suggested above that it ultimately means

for Mpanda not a fixed location but the space where his wife and daughter live, wherever that might be. Yet, failing the option to be together physically, Mpanda wishes to make some kind of home in South Africa where his family can be with him in at least a symbolic sense, as can be seen in the frame narrative about his flat in Yeoville. Told in the third person instead of the more direct first-person perspective seen in the inner story, the frame begins with Mpanda being detained while on a neighborhood walk. His permit is ripped up in front of his eyes and he is taken to Lindela Deportation Center. There, he shares the testimony that makes up most of the novel. But the book ends by closing its frame. Mpanda—after having petitioned the South African Human Rights Commission on a piece of toilet paper together with seven other detainees—is finally released and sent back to Yeoville. He takes the train back to town

> longing to be surrounded once more by the simple decor of his flat: his plastic chair, his single bed and his old black-and-white television on top of which stood a framed picture of his family—Isabel and himself, both seated on a wooden bench on the lawn of Cine Miramar in Luanda, with little Mansanga cradled in their arms. (219–20)

These objects constitute his local home, with the highly symbolic family portrait taking the position of honor in his makeshift domestic world. But in one last twist of displacement, Mpanda returns to find his flat locked up with all of these precious objects in it. The landlord has blocked access in response to his failure to pay rent. This final eviction draws together, or serves as metonym for, all the other forms of being locked out that he experiences.

In both its frame and inner narratives, then, Kikamba's novel can be seen as a testament to displacement, unsettlement, and dispossession. "Going home" becomes an endlessly deferred project—one, as Samuelson puts it, "appended with a question mark" ("Walking" 133). We might think of Arendt's comments on stateless people, written when she herself was a recent exile: "the first loss which the rightless suffered was the loss of their homes, which meant the loss of the entire social texture into which they were born and in which they established a distinct place for themselves in the world. This calamity was far from unprecedented . . . What is unprecedented is not the loss of home but the impossibility of finding a new one" (293). At the same time, though, there are also ways in which the novel works positively to process this loss and to recreate a "social texture" in which migrants like Mpanda can establish a "place for themselves."

On one level, the text can be seen as a kind of working through of very personal and likely nonfictional traumas. The author biography that appears on the final page of the Kwela edition notes that Kikamba, like Mpanda, was born in Angola, moved to what is now the DRC when he was two years old, returned to Angola in 1992 and was forced out again in 1994. It was then that he "left for Johannesburg, where he has been ever since" (224). Such details suggest that the distance between Kikamba and Mpanda is slight. As with other semi-autobiographical pieces that we have seen, such as *Original Skin,* the telling of the trauma may help bring it to some kind of order and create coherence for the author. Such a process of working through in the sense of "coming to terms" with events can be located not only in their reconstruction but also in the decision to place their narration within a third-person frame narrative. Mpanda telling the story in first-person can then be separated from Kikamba himself, a distancing which may allow space for a new approach to painful events.

On another level, the work is aimed not at putting things to rest but at protesting continuing injustice. More so than in "The Wheels of God" and certainly than in *Does your lifestyle depress your mother?* or *Home Affairs,* which I have suggested attempt to bridge the schism between law and lived experience by shifting the focus from the suffering that gays and lesbians have experienced to revealing the texture of the homes that they have built; *Going Home* stresses eviction and alienation. (In this sense, it has affinities with Muholi's portraits of the victims of hate crimes.) To redress this situation, Kikamba shares the private struggles with friendship, love, and dignity that constitute his protagonist's homelessness. Exposing the strains of exile on family life becomes a claim for acceptance in Yeoville and in South Africa more widely. The novel asks its readers to see and to feel the struggle of Mpanda, to experience his dreams, and to feel his shame at not being able to provide for his wife and child; and on this basis to recognize his belonging or to become "stuck" to him. It claims the right to build a home, or multiple homes in different countries, not on the basis of citizenship but on an almost tactile sense of solidarity that should be extended to all immigrants and indeed to all humans.

If strategies of intimate exposure link *Going Home* and *Home Affairs*, for instance, it is worth pointing to a few more of their divergences. As is perhaps already clear from this discussion, home in Kikamba's novel is idealized and gendered in ways that the exhibition tries to subvert. Reiterating an old conflation of woman and homeland, all of the forms of home desired by the Angolan refugee are anchored by wife and child and represent more or less traditional "family values."[22] Queer life is

hinted at in the character of Mpanda's one white friend John Smith, who claims "[w]omen are not for me" (156), but never explicitly brought within the universe of narrative possibility. The "ordinary" or "normal" family Kikamba relies upon to generate sympathy and engagement from his readers is emphatically a family of husband, wife, and child. This reliance on traditional visions of family comes across even in the book cover, which depicts "going home" in the image of a rural black woman. The novel's claim for inclusion thus works through accessing and reinforcing a dominant patriarchal and heteronormative vision of family and home, and one could argue that the novel's call for the right of migrants to build a home inadvertently pulls against the rights of other "Others" attempting to do so and against a needed redefinition of home itself. As the cover image also suggests, the universal humanism that Kikamba articulates in his novel—here based on conceptions of a nuclear family life and also on the "universal" desire to work hard and earn a decent living—can open into an investment in more traditional African racial identities that rubs against the imagination of a nonracial South African citizen at the heart of the Constitution and animating much queer activism.

Homes, Hotels, and Hospitality

In a short video clip called "My Story from DRC to Yeoville" and recorded in 2010, Congolese migrant Frank Assimbo recalls his arrival in South Africa:

> I've been living in South Africa for nine years now. I left my country especially because of social and political atmosphere and the lack of proper economic infrastructures. There wasn't hope for a better future. So I decided to leave the country . . . At my arrival, it wasn't that easy to get settled . . . but I try myself to socialize with the people around me, to get involved with the people inside the community, so I made myself some friends, from South Africa, from Nigeria, from the people I find on the ground. By doing so, I thank you God, I found a job. Until now, I'm not that better, socially and economically in point of view, but I can say I did manage to get my way . . . After five years, I called my wife to come and join me and we are together, I've got two kids now. My advice to the young people who are [inaudible] South Africa. In this country, life is not easy, but we must have courage and struggle and fight. Try to socialize to get [inaudible] out and to move forward. Mostly we should consider ourselves as African, not from Congo, and doing things separately. We must involve the other people around us. This is my advice.[23]

This video testimony is a performance that both replays and inverts Mpanda's story in *Going Home*. Assimbo's is not a rags-to-riches story. He clearly points out the lack of progress he has made in economic terms: "until now, I'm not that better, socially and economically." Yet, he has carved out enough of a space for himself that his wife has been able to join him and they have had two children in South Africa, creating the stable family life that remains out of Mpanda's grasp. In this sense and despite his continued struggles, Assimbo approximates a successful immigrant or "migrant made good" theme that underpins a long tradition of visual representation of migrant laborers in South Africa, from the upbeat image of Sizwe Bansi heading into the future which closes *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* to the portraits taken for absent family members highlighted in Terry Kurgan's "Park Pictures" (Dodd "A Public" 7, Kurgan 31). Such positive representations also connect us back to the family portraits and township albums discussed vis-à-vis Santu Mofokeng in chapter 2. Aware of the eyes of others in multiple locations for whom he is performing (Kurgan 44), Assimbo presents himself as at least moving closer to achieving the dream of finding a home in Yeoville, and then offers advice as to how others can do the same.

The key element in Assimbo's provisional success, as he portrays it, is his ability to connect with the people around him. His friendships with South Africans and others allow him to find a job and to begin creating stability. Understandably, struggling to create meaningful community then becomes the core of his advice. I would note here that this community is, for Assimbo, coded as an "African" one. When passing on to viewers the need for solidarity, for creating dense social ties, he does so by advocating an African identity that can encompass multiple national groups and cut across borders of "home" and "away" (even as it, as we see in his invocation of wife and child, remains bound up with a conception of a traditional, patriarchal family). This rhetoric of African identity and unity constitutes a rhetorical shift from *Going Home*, which focuses more on the universal than on the African—a shift that may reflect not only personal approaches but also changes in social conditions in the five years between the publication of the novel and recording of the video. Invocations of a shared African identity were already circulating in the early 2000s, as seen in interviews conducted by filmmaker Khalo Matabane in the Lindela Deportation Camp (where, to recall, Mpanda was held).[24] Here, and echoing the abolitionist tradition, detainees specifically argued for freedom of movement because "we are all Africans and brothers." Such pleas for African solidarity however gained urgency in the wake of the 2008 xenophobic riots, which incontrovertibly revealed South African xenophobia to have racial rather than purely

national dimensions. In this context, finding persuasive forms of claiming commonality became imperative. African identity was useful not only because it allowed migrants to recall the support given by various countries on the continent to South African exiles during apartheid—remember that Yeoville was the space of returning ANC cadres before it became the receiving ground for more recent immigrants—but also for the way it tied in to Mbeki's African Renaissance ideology and older pan-African identities.

Basing belonging in South Africa on an "African" identity can slide into racial or ethnic exclusivism that enables prominent politicians to wear "100% Zulu Boy" shirts. Yet, such statements can also open into what Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall have called "Afropolitanism." In its Afropolitan nature as well as in the video's focus on Assimbo's (relative) success and the need to strengthen social ties, this performance reflects the aspirations of the participatory art project that frames the video testimony: *Hotel Yeoville*.[25] The seeds of this project were sown in 2006, but it took new turns in 2007 and then in 2008, especially after the 2008 xenophobic attacks. Kurgan had long been interested in how the community of Yeoville worked and what the stories of its inhabitants were (Kurgan 32–33). Faced with both the reality of the xenophobic riots and then a series of images in the news media that portrayed migrants as abject, suffering bodies, Kurgan began to think about how to create or enable counter-representations that might, in Alex Dodd's beautiful formulation in the book that seals and accompanies the project, "forge a healing response to the bruised atmosphere of muted hostility that has lurked beneath the surface of South African public culture" ("A Public" 7–8). Kurgan's idea was to focus on "little, intimate" stories that "talk back" to stories of violence and horror and perhaps open up ways beyond it, in the process perhaps creating a more cohesive community (Kurgan 33–34; see also Dodd "A Public" 7–10). In a way that resonates with the project of making visible "ordinary" or everyday queer life discussed above and Njabulo Ndebele's call to "rediscover the ordinary" before it, Kurgan wanted to create space for showing domestic life and to foreground the dreams rather the despair of migrants—in the hope that such representations might not only positively impact migrant communities but also create stronger ties with South Africans.

Kurgan eventually materialized her vision in collaboration with many partners, from community facilitators in Yeoville like Godfrey Tshis Talabulu to the Forced Migration Studies Program at the University of the Witwatersrand (now African Center for the Study of Migration) and digital artist Tegan Bristow (Kurgan). While the initial idea was to construct a virtual community that people could access in the cybercafés of

Yeoville, *Hotel Yeoville* ended up having a physical and a digital existence when architects Alex Opper and Amir Livneh designed and installed a series of booths for Kurgan in the recently opened Yeoville Public Library on Rockey/Raleigh Street (see figures 4.2 and 4.3). The first was a Journey Booth, where people could locate their places of origin on a Google map and append images and stories. The second was a photo booth called the "Love Booth," where people took old-fashioned photo strips and wrote messages to accompany them. Participants kept one set of the pictures and put a duplicate set with a note on the message board across from the booth. These were also uploaded to a Flickr page. The third was the Video Booth where people like Frank Assimbo could make three-minute videos for *YouTube* responding to a range of prompts, including the question "What does HOME mean to you?". Next came the Directory Booth for asking and answering questions, advertising businesses, or soliciting informal services. Finally, the Story Booth was a site where people could write and upload short stories, essays, and poetry (Kurgan 36–40, 72–73). The content generated in each of these booths was then housed in a specific section of the website: directory, photos, video, map, and stories. To this was added resources including the Community Directory and a Refugee Survival Guide.

What draws together the majority of the booths and applications is a focus on eliciting personal stories, details from daily life, and questions of affect or feeling; as well as engagement in the work of disseminating

Figure 4.2 "What is Love? *Hotel Yeoville* visitor in the Photo Booth." Photograph of the *Hotel Yeoville* exhibition, 2010.

Figure 4.3 "*Hotel Yeoville* visitor adding his image to the photo wall." Photograph of the *Hotel Yeoville* exhibition, 2010. Photo © Terry Kurgan.

these stories within the Yeoville community. Such processes of intimate exposure—a term that Kurgan has actively embraced (30)—here become a kind of "glue" meant to "stick" members of a distressed and diverse community together, as they allow space for migrants to create affirmative representations of themselves and for migrants and others to engage with, or to respond to, them. "A utopian attempt to bind a community through a kind of inventory of personal and collective relations," as Kurgan describes *Hotel Yeoville*,

> the project was forged on the premise that we do have time for each other's stories, that we are capable of enjoying each other's differences, and that we are interested in knowing where people came from and how they grew up, what is precious to them. Rather than enumerating and describing the ways in which migrant communities have been excluded in South Africa, the exhibition attempted to sculpt a parallel space (both real and virtual) of inclusion, welcome, hospitality, acceptance, interest. (cited in Dodd "A Public" 10)

This "parallel space of inclusion" finds it weave in the production, circulation, and reception of domestic, everyday, or "ordinary" narratives.

Picking up on the term "hospitality" in Kurgan's statement, and connecting back to the theme of home that runs throughout this book, we might say that, in addition to telling stories about self and home, the project aims to make Yeoville, if not home, then home-like in a

certain (if unconventional) sense—that is, in the sense of being a place where one can find acceptance and security because the logics of exclusion have come undone without being reassembled in other forms. In relation to *Hotel Yeoville* among other works, I have argued elsewhere that sharing private spaces, family stories, feelings, and other personal experiences with the public may be a way of inflecting public space with the positive forms of hospitality we tend to associate with "interiors" (Bystrom "Johannesburg"). Shaping what Ndebele calls a "public home" (see chapter 2) is particularly necessary for migrants in Yeoville, who are both away from their original home countries and do not have an easy time in South Africa.

Comments from the "Love Booth" perhaps best illuminate how the project created a kind of hospitable space (see again figures 4.2 and 4.3). Painted in bright colors and a typical Congolese font on the booth itself stands the question: "What is Love"? This space was set up for reflecting on the question of relationships, on the people who are meaningful to the participants, and the things that bind people together. All the texts explored in this chapter point to the role of photographs in defining and asserting kinship, so it is perhaps not surprising that many of the images made in the Love Booth spoke to family themes such as the love between couples and that between parents and their children. Another strong theme is that of friendship. Yet, one remarkable submission made by the facilitator Godfrey Tshis stands as a love letter to the project as a whole. The text next to Tshis's image reads: "This is a wow!!! Hotel Yeoville opens a space for me to feel at home. Feel at home is all about smiling, listening, receiving and giving... Yeoville is that place I've experienced what I am missing: Feel@HOME. Godfrey Tshis DRC 02/03/2010."[26]

Importantly, the community of people sharing intimate stories and performing their everyday selves is not confined to migrants, but includes a diverse group of South Africans. One Love Booth photo strip tells the story of a white couple: "We met and fell in love in Yeoville in 1993. It still feels like home." Another white couple named Tanya and Phil also speak to this feeling of connecting back to a home: "Hotel Yeoville. My old home. I'm back here. It's great!—Phil (ex Helvetia Court). My first date with my husband—in Yeoville. He proposed to me in the train restaurant in Rockey Street. Yeoville rocks!—Tanya." This recounting of Tanya and Phil's literal engagement suggests the possibility of their finding new forms of affective "engagement" with the neighborhood and its new immigrant majority through participation in *Hotel Yeoville*, and enacts a kind of suturing of old and new homes as the feelings tied to memories and spaces become superimposed onto a changed community.

Such social work, weaving together older circles of Yeoville dwellers who have since moved to wealthier areas of the city on an equal footing with newer inhabitants who are forging their own ways forward, may be precisely what is necessary to bring the concerns and experiences of immigrants into the texture of democratic South African life in ways that do not objectify or victimize them. Further, and perhaps most relevantly for this chapter, the new public convened through *Hotel Yeoville* also includes gays and lesbians. While queer identity was not a central thread of the project, a small number of people did take the opportunity offered by the Love Booth to carry out the "cultural labor" of drawing attention to queer life. The photo strip and message from a black lesbian couple reminding spectators to "fyt for ur dream, thats wat we r doing [sic]" and signed "Proudly Dykes" is one powerful example.

There is no guarantee, of course, that feelings of being "at home" in the project and Yeoville more generally last beyond the flash of the bulb in the Love Booth or the few minutes it takes to write a note to accompany the pictures. Affect, like memory, is notoriously difficult to control and can be deflected, redirected, or snuffed out. The "parallel space" of Hotel Yeoville can only be vulnerable to such flows. As such, basing the regeneration of community and the prospect of creating a desegregated society on feeling is open to criticisms of leaving untouched the legal and material structures that perpetrate divides—between migrants and South African citizens, between inhabitants of Yeoville and wealthy suburbs like Sandton, between straight and queer, and between white and black. While I have tried throughout this book to chip away at the distinction between feeling and material conditions, and between imagination and "reality"—suggesting rather that they work on and through each other—the precariousness of *Hotel Yeoville* as an intervention in transitional culture can be seen in its failure to thrive after the exhibition closed in 2010. The organizers had hoped the website would take on a life of its own but this did not occur. Nevertheless, a project that "failed" in the sense of creating a lasting virtual community can "succeed" in influencing the individuals that participated in it, leaving its traces on those with whom it came into contact. In this way the project adds another layer or film of "stickiness" to Yeoville's history, in the form of a set of memories and connections that may later be reactivated.

★ ★ ★

This chapter has focused on very different artistic projects that nonetheless come together in their collapsing of national and individual home spaces. They all represent the struggles and successes involved in building

an individual home as a way to appeal to a broader national community, with the unfinished or countercultural homes they reveal posing new visions of both family and homeland and potentially opening South Africa up to groups of people currently excluded from its social life. Home and homeland here reflect back and forth on each other in complex ways. While homes and families depicted are occasionally set up as allegories for a "new" nation, what comes across most clearly is that it is in the struggle to forge a home that many of the difficulties of the extended transition get felt and worked through. These works, like the ones examined throughout *Democracy at Home in South Africa*, play on long-standing metaphorical associations and deeply ingrained linguistic terminology that bind domestic and political spaces. At the same time, they channel the supposedly "universal" notion of family to focus attention on domestic spaces themselves as primary sites for social reconfiguration. Precisely because these are such layered or "sticky" sites, sharing stories and images from them with wider communities may help to reshape feelings about and even actions toward others. It is in this sense that forms of intimate exposure may create more democratic publics.

Hotel Yeoville seems a useful place to end this chapter and this book, as it more directly takes up the social work that I suggest can be done through intimate exposures by building into itself a feedback loop of audience participation. The (albeit temporary) virtual community the project convoked can be seen as one instantiation of how sharing personal and private stories can constitute a hospitable community. The project also shifts the meaning of home in ways that are instructive for thinking about *Democracy at Home in South Africa* more broadly. The project is not about creating a literal home, but about taking our memories of and feelings about what we wish a home to be—regardless of its existence in actuality, and in fact sometimes precisely by showing their lack of correspondence to reality—and opening them to others through processes of territorial and temporal unfixing. We have seen that *Hotel Yeoville* contains (stereo) typical visions of home like that seen in Kikamba's novel, in which home is the village or house in which someone is born, or the space of wife and child. Yet, the notion of the hotel helps to switch the project in a different direction. Allowing participants whose lives are often beyond reach of each other to share their stories and images of home with each other, the project creates a "minor" public sphere where the sense of security and belonging often associated with home may be possible to achieve. Home in this sense ceases to be rooted in a conception of domestic space and becomes something that exists in-between bodies, in the way in which people reveal themselves and respond to others both physically and virtually. The figure of the hotel also allows a shift in relation to time, which

as suggested above complicates notions of failure.[27] Hotels are sites of temporary privacy or refuge, but they are spaces to which one can return from different moments and places, much like the reservoirs of feeling and memory created through the project.

In its orientation toward cracking open notions of home, instead of sealing them shut, *Hotel Yeoville* also allows us to circle back to streets of Yeoville and Daisy Dube's murder, with which I began this chapter. There is of course no guarantee that this project or others like it could have stopped Dube's killing. The makers of *Hotel Yeoville* were generally more interested in migrant than queer identity; and indeed, we have seen how the discourse of a shared African racial identity or "brotherhood" can become a claim for inclusion of "foreigners" in South Africa that works precisely by excluding those who seem insufficiently heterosexual or African (the "queer"), even as, inversely, claims staked on civil rights for gay and lesbian South Africans may depend fundamentally on a concept of the foreigner or stranger to have meaning. More generally speaking, expanding senses of belonging can encompass certain groups and not others, defining new out-groups as they stretch and bend. At the same time, shaping a shared spoken and visual language that does not include terms like *makwerekwere* and where immigrants as well as gays and lesbians feel comfortable enough to make their identities known, to tell their stories, and to encourage others to follow their own desires and dreams seems like an important step toward making the streets of Yeoville not only safe but also cosmopolitan and democratic in a deep sense of these terms. Could this not be the case as well in South Africa more widely?

CONCLUSION

This book began with the question of what to make of the swell of imaginative work across a variety of media in the extended transition concerned with home, family, and domestic life. These are the family fictions indicated by my subtitle. As suggested in the Preface, one answer is to view this work as responding to a second query—that of how to inhabit what Nadine Gordimer in her prophetic 1994 novel *None to Accompany Me* calls the "homeground of the present" (321). Gordimer's intuition (from her perspective of a white, middle class, and heterosexual novelist) is that fully inhabiting the then newly democratic present meant leaving behind the comforts of white, middle-class, and heteronormative domestic spaces for "home of a new kind entirely" (314). As we have seen, similar desires to trouble the meaning of home and family both clash with and complement equally deeply felt needs to restore the homes and families of those who were the victims of apartheid policies and of the postcolonial state's continuing exclusions. The tensions between these two crucial ethical projects surface throughout the book and are particularly visible in the last chapter.

Gordimer's figure of speech, however, also underscores where these projects come together in transitional culture. The diverse struggles to restore, reshape, and reinvent homes and families explored in this book all show how emotion continues to be invested in domestic space and position it as a primary location for confronting the challenges of democracy. Arriving at home surfaces again and again as a dream of the transition, even as this very intensity—this energy lavished on representing family and home life—also suggests an unease, a sense of not quite or not yet being there. As we read the micropolitical in the extended transition, then, we are left with continuing questions. These are questions, among other topics, about how to find the way home and about to what kind of home we wish to arrive.

Capetonian Muslim poet Gabeba Baderoon speaks to the deep and shared desire to return home charted here and provides a vision of

what this process might entail in her short but lovely poem "The Way Home." The central trope is that of teaching someone, presumably lost, how to read a map:

> Find an intersection.
> Turn the map to match
> the angle of the street.
> This might mean
> the book will be upside down.
> Find the way home. (*A Hundred* 49)

Striking here on a first reading is the sense of tranquility that suffuses the six lines. Unlike for many disoriented travelers, and perhaps for members of a new democracy, there seems to be no question that the way can and will be found. It is merely a matter of learning how to recognize your current location, finding it in a book of maps, and turning the book around until you find a "match." From there, the steps home are clear. The persona aims to reassure, to assuage any temporary confusion: Home is at hand. And then again, there may be something in that turning of the book around that opens beyond this certainty into unmapped futures. If "the book"—with its echo, beyond atlases, of literature, and perhaps culture in general—must be flipped "upside down," might not home itself require a similar upending? This second reading suggests a need for flexibility, the capacity to see yourself from different standpoints than the ones lying just before your eyes. It may eventually entail a move off charted streets and known pathways, and to encounters with the difficult, the unexpected, and the uncanny. The uncanny in particular, understood in Homi Bhabha's sense as a recognition that home, far from being a haven, is always the site of the same raced and gendered power differentials animating the world, is what Meg Samuelson offers as a model for rethinking home in the transition (*Remembering* 198).

The readings of literature and artworks I have done across this book suggest similarly that—despite all desires for restoration—finding the way home or understanding home itself, like understanding and coming to terms with our families, is far from a simple undertaking and creates far more than temporary confusion. They emphasize the unfinished business that haunts domestic spaces and memories, creating rifts as well as strange moments of attachment between people; and the way bonds of kinship, formed through blood or through acts of care and the habits of daily living, are both ties that hold people together and unwanted chains of dependency and tradition. They emphasize how a close analysis of domestic spaces and family histories reveals encounters that, from the

bosom of what we imagine should be familiar and reassuring, challenge people to rethink their selves and their relationships with others. This latter point, of course, opens out into what I have argued is the most productive possibility of the imaginative representation of home spaces and family life: its ability not only to probe the damage done by the past and the way it lingers in the present, but also to explore, in concrete terms, the ways in which people may think and feel their way towards new and more equal forms of relation with others.

The question of how texts and images of home and family can move outward, working on and in society in addition to reflecting the challenges of the democratic transition, is often at stake in the chapters, if sometimes implicitly addressed. I have specifically foregrounded analyses of how strategies of intimate exposure may allow writers and artists both to model processes of working through personal traumas and to impact existing (or even convene new) publics around feelings and ideas. While the last chapter ended with a vision, via *Hotel Yeoville,* of how certain kinds of intimate exposure can make public space feel more "homelike" in a positive sense—more secure, more densely connected, more enabling of hospitable relationships between people—the point overall is not to assume that "sharing" ourselves or the private lives of others always creates a warm, fuzzy feeling of welcome. Another useful function of intimate exposures can be to create discomfort (a feeling that also binds people) by putting on display those things that, in the liberal order, are often kept from view. Such work can break down the barrier between public and private that for so long has allowed homes to be the site of what Kelly Gillespie terms "intimate violence." There are obviously forms of exposure that are not productive, and one must seriously weigh the risks of revelation versus those of secrecy. I think here of the dilemma faced by Zaneli Muholi in her portraits of township lesbians, where revealing women as lesbians may expose them to further harassment and violence (Munro 222). One could add many other examples where opacity is a practically and ethically important goal. Nevertheless, I argue, and in line with Muholi's practice, that in the context of South Africa's extended transition, where people were struggling to find new ways of living after being segregated from each other for so long, the creation of windows into, rather than walls around private lives was often worth the risk.

Of course, the success of aesthetic strategies of intimate exposure depend on how audiences respond to them, and from this perspective even more important than exploring how (some) writers and artists attempt to impact society is finding and advocating for new ways to read imaginative representations and the world they represent. Sarah Nuttall offers "entanglement" as a "method of reading the social" in a different

manner than has commonly been the case in South Africa and elsewhere (*Entanglement* 28). In a similar spirit, this book asks people to read for relation—both in the sense of paying close attention to the stuff of intimate life and the complex relationships constructed through lines of kinship, in home spaces, and through the shared habits of "ordinary" or "everyday" domestic existence; and in the sense of focusing on the multiple and multidirectional relationships that exist between these and society as a whole. As I noted in the Introduction and in dialogue with Susan Andrade, this means neither prioritizing the nation or society and reading family for what it says about these larger groups, or looking at families and homes to the exclusion of wider social relationships, but threading between public and private spheres to capture their "interconnection" or "interpenetration" (Andrade 35). I argue that the demands and pleasures of intimate life, its frustrations and its daily routines, insistently press into the "macro-politics" of the extended transition, and for this reason I call for attention to "micro-politics" (Andrade ibid.).

The extended transition, or the first 15 years of democracy, frames this book because it constituted a time in which the possibilities and challenges of building a democratic South Africa were on the forefront of public imagination, and when achieving the dream state of a non-racial democracy was still a widely desired horizon. Achille Mbembe ("Democracy" 6) writes of the "affirmative politics" that marked these years, and I would hazard the assertion that many though not all writers and artists—especially in the early years, before the utopian horizon began to recede—felt themselves to be engaged in projects at once about personal change or repair and social change or repair. This moment has largely passed, and trajectories of re-racialization and ethno-nationalism that also have their roots in the transition years have come to the fore. Such trajectories are linked to the failure of large-scale economic transformation and the understandable frustration this failure provoked. The historical period of the extended transition simply did not bring the kind of democracy or freedom for which people hoped, largely because of a lack of widespread redistribution. Public cultures since 2009 seem more outwardly divisive and antagonistic as the government itself propounds a crass materialism and a narrowed vision of national belonging in response to anxieties about the seeming eternal postponement of material change. These shifts point to the limits of a reading practice invested in finding or creating notions of commonality. They point perhaps to a need for a greater emphasis on negative affects such as anger and fear and on understanding how imaginative works play into social and economic separation (see also van der Vlies, "The People").

Yet for these very reasons, paying attention to the kinds of micropolitics traced here may only gain importance as fractures among citizens and others living on South African soil grow wider. The continuing relevance of private life to and its symbolic power on the stage of national politics—indeed, the way it partly constitutes this politics—is clearly displayed when the stuff of private life becomes again and again a public scandal (see Bystrom and Nuttall). President Jacob Zuma has proved a generative figure for this dynamic, with Brett Murray's painting of Zuma's exposed genitalia ("The Spear") and its vandalization in 2013 raising debates about how racism and particularly denigration of the black body continue to circulate in South African culture, and the investigation of his Nkandla homestead bringing the spotlight on consumption and corruption. Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters, for their part, have challenged the ANC's aversion to radical social redistribution in an act reminiscent of Muholi's performance art intervention at the 2008 Association for Women's Rights in Development conference by sending their female delegates to Parliament dressed as domestic workers (the men wore the trademark red overalls of manual laborers). That a painting and a kind of theatrical performance feature so centrally in national dramas further speaks to the way imaginative representation, too, lies at the core of politics and can work to strengthen or to ameliorate social divisions themselves rooted in both material realities and in the world of desires, fantasies, and imaginaries.

In this context, imaginative artwork about families, domestic life, and domestic space—our "homeground" in a literal sense—continues to offer insights into the intricacies of private lives and the way these are both shaped by and shape public concerns. We can look here to the latest work of writers and artists examined in this book (for instance, Nadine Gordimer's 2012 novel *No Time Like the Present*—which strikingly conforms to the timeline of the extended transition and the emphasis on home seen here—or Zoë Wicomb's 2014 novel *October* and John Kani's 2014 play *Missing*) as well as to others now coming to prominence. One such artist is Usha Seejarim, whose 2013 exhibition *Venus at Home* allows me to bridge from the question of finding the way home to the question of what it means to be "at home" in the South African present. This exhibition brings us back to the topic of domestic work previously explored in this book, but shifts the earlier emphasis by framing domestic work not only as what Shireen Ally calls "intimate labor" done for others but also as work we do for ourselves in our homes, with corresponding psychic and social impacts. Beginning with its title, which asks us to consider the more "ordinary" and "homely" aspects of the goddess of love and infuses these very aspects with her aura, the exhibition

defamiliarizes quotidian experiences and objects. It then explores how these experiences and objects shape our selves and our communities, grounding old identities and routines and making new ones possible (personal interview; Seejarim "Artist's Statement").

Seejarim, whose prior works include drawings made out of breast milk, has consistently been interested in the leaky, uncomfortable, and most intimate aspects of domesticity as well as in the tension between being a mother and an artist. Her most recent riffs on domestic work or "keeping house" deepen this investment in the challenges, habits, and feelings of domestic life as they creatively reassemble used household objects. To recall, Sarah Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* speaks of the stickiness of emotion and the way it attaches people to other people and to things (see 4, 6, 10–12). Seejarim explores this kind of affective stickiness by collecting used cleaning implements (i.e., mops and brooms) from friends and neighbors and suturing them together in diverse ways. "Triangle" (2012) for instance, presents brooms turned upside down and fastened with found flooring to make a kind of phalanx. This arrangement asks spectators to come face to face with what we wish to sweep away. The heads of the almost personified brooms insistently press out towards us, their bristles bent through work and holding traces of dirt and grime, remnants of the mess of our domestic lives. The sculpture thus puts us into immediate if uncomfortable sensory contact with histories of labor and care, and asks for a recognition of the work that goes into keeping house. Being "at home" requires such recognition—a recognition that could perhaps be coded through the uncanny but that at core is an acknowledgement, beyond the associations of security and comfort often attached to it, of the underside of home life, its sacrifices, aggravations and moments of disgust and violence, the way it enacts and sustains inequalities. This holds both for our home spaces and our home countries.

Yet, while cleaning is often among the more unpleasant aspects of being a housewife (or househusband or housekeeper of another sort), the acts of sweeping, mopping, and washing are activities that can provide satisfaction and that constitute selves and homes. They also flow across them, connecting people through these everyday experiences even as they take certain forms based on class, gender, race, or ethnic identity. "Triangle" alludes to this in its collective nature. Such bonds are also clearly literalized in "Three Sisters in Law" (2013), which presents three brooms, this time right side up, with only the brushes visible and their handles held together and entirely covered by bright Indian bangles (see figure C.1). Here both people and the ties that link them to others are literally made out of household items; but rather than critiquing the objectification of people and relationships, the piece seems to ask more

Figure C.1 Usha Seejarim, Three sisters in law (2012). Sculpture: Donated brooms, bangles, 270 × 320 × 1320mm. Photo credit: Cliff Shain.

openly about "the relationship of oneself to all this 'stuff' that seems to define our existence" ("Artist Statement") and the way in which it configures our relationships. Indeed, according to Seejarim, the link to housework served as the common substrate or paste binding spectators to the exhibition (The Soapbox). "Three sisters in law" also points to the way Seejarim, much like Mary Sibande in *Long Live the Dead Queen*, refuses to dwell on drudgery but transforms objects of domestic work into ones of play, whimsy, and beauty. Permeating her artwork is an attitude of "not only an acceptance but finding a sense of joy and inspiration in mundane, everyday tasks and chores" (The Soapbox). This "joy" can be seen in sense of humor that infuses "Three Sisters in Law," in the lotus flowers she makes out of irons, and in the "Hair" series, where mop brushes are trimmed and recast a variety of pubic "haircuts." Such artistic interventions turn sediments and sedimented patterns of interaction into something quite different, shifting tones and opening into the unexpected. They show us how this capacity for invention, indeed transformation, is also something we can find "at home." This inventiveness is something necessary to hang on to, and from which we can think outward towards different South African presents and futures.

To end on a note of creativity and invention is not to call for a present and a future that turns a blind eye to history. Memory has been another key theme throughout this book, and it is one recalled implicitly in the literal vestiges or particles of the past held within Seejarim's used brooms. To circle back to an important analysis of democracy in South Africa by Achille Mbembe already referenced above: There is no escaping the injustice that marks South African history or what Mbembe calls its politics of "waste," in which some humans marked on the basis of race were treated as disposable. This is a politics that is currently being reconfigured to define new objects of waste (such as the poor and the African migrant) rather than being transcended (Mbembe "Democracy" 7, 9). Mbembe asks the question of how to imagine a future that comes to terms with this past without being entrapped by it, and where democracy leads to "*commensality*" and becomes "a community of life" (italics in the original, ibid. 9–10). Remembering the ideals of the extended transition—those of establishing an "affirmative politics" based on "human mutuality" and providing equality, redress, justice, and dignity (ibid. 6)—as they themselves become history may be valuable work towards this end.

NOTES

Introduction

1. Mhlawuli's testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in East London on April 16, 1996, reads as follows: "[T]hat hand, we still want it. We know we have buried them, but really to have the hand which is said to be in a bottle in Port Elizabeth, we would like to get the hand. Thank you" (32). The transcript of the proceedings is available online at http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/hrvel1/calata.htm See also Krog (*Country* 45).
2. See, for instance, Krog (*Country*), Samuelson (*Remembering*), Sanders (*Ambiguities*), Slaughter and Liatsos, among others.
3. On Tutu and South Africa as the rainbow family of God, see Irlam ("Unraveling" 695). On the use of family rhetoric—and particularly the development of a "queer" family romance during the democratic transition—see Munro.
4. South African scholarship often defines the "transition" narrowly as the years between the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 and the first democratic elections in 1994, the establishment of the Constitution in 1996, or the end of the Human Rights Violations TRC hearings in 1998, although it can encompass the turn of the millenium. (See for instance Ronit Frenkel and Craig MacKenzie's definition of a "post-transitional" phase in English South African literature.) I propose a more extended frame in order to trace the reverberations of the policies of these earlier years as they get worked through in wider culture. It seems to me that the main goal of the early transition, which Mbembe ("Democracy" 6) suggests was the creation of a historically responsive political order based on equality and an affirmation of "human mutuality," remained the guiding principle through the first two administrations, with massive tears in the vision becoming visible by the end of Mbeki's rule. The idea of an "extended transition" is also implied in the ANC's 2012 "second transition" documents, referred to below, though the ANC focuses on the first 18 rather than 15 years of democracy ("The Second Transition?").
5. These comments and my project as a whole share an affinity with Susan Z. Andrade's important reassessment of Jameson and her vision of national allegory in the context of African women's writing (20–29,

38–39). Exploring African women's fiction from 1958 to 1988, she offers a palimpsestic rather than a "one-to-one correspondence" understanding of allegorical reading drawn from Jameson's *The Political Unconsicous* and focused on the way public and private "interlock" or "interconnect" (ibid. 35, 39). She argues that "reading allegorically allows one to elucidate new meanings in the domestic sphere of life and in intimate relations between people. The domestic, where women historically have set their novels, offers as sharp an analytic perspective on collectivity and national politics as does the arena of public political action. As readers of African literature, we must learn to read this realm more carefully" (1). While I do not employ Andrade's understanding of allegory in *Democracy at Home in South Africa,* I return to some of her language and concepts later in the Introduction and in the conclusion.

6. Ahmed argues that emotion is a point of conjuncture between a person and an "object" or "other," in which something or someone presses into us and we respond to it or to him or her (*Cultural Politics* 6); it can become a kind of glue sticking us to others in particular configurations. According to Ahmed, indeed, "it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces and boundaries are made: the 'I' and the 'we' are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others" (*Cultural Politics* 10). The phrase "imagined community" is of course Benedict Anderson's.
7. The "others" I refer to include, for instance, Yianna Liatsos's rich term "the family archive" ("A New") and Shane Graham's comments on the need to destabilize the public-private divide ("I WAS"). Andrade productively employs the term "micro-politics" as she reads "along the axis of micro-politics and macro-politics" (10), posing "the realms of intimate domestic life not merely as micro-political or insignificant but as interlocked with the macro-political, as that on which it depends" (35).
8. See, for instance, Edward Steiglitz's famous "The Family of Man" exhibition, which appeared in South Africa as part of the Rand Show in 1958, and which Roland Barthes critiques for drawing on common, sentimental notions of the universal family to produce a surface kind of togetherness ("The Great").
9. In his discussion of the quintessential Afrikaans genre of the *plaasroman*, J. M. Coetzee notes how novelists both constructed and pointed to deeply held visions of a "marriage" between Afrikaner farmers and their land, which was meant to legitimize ownership by specific Afrikaner families over the generations (*White Writing* 86). He also translates "lineage" as "*familie*" (ibid. 89).
10. Coloured identity and its naming in South Africa is a complex and politically layered topic, and the descriptor has a very different meaning than the racial description "colored" in the United States. "Coloured" was a legal racial category under apartheid assigned to a group of people from varied interracial, Khoi, San, African, Indian and Indonesian backgrounds, and which historically grew out of practices of slavery in

the Cape Colony. The legal positioning of this group in-between white and black (and defined negatively against both terms) made it a "buffer" category. Anti-apartheid practice was to put this term, capitalized, in quotation marks or to label it "so-called," in order to challenge apartheid divide and rule tactics and promote an expansive definition of blackness (see Wicomb "Shame" 91). As Munro points out, "the postapartheid generation often simply identifies as 'coloured,' with a more casual lowercase c" (112). As a way of engaging with this history, I maintain the use of "Coloured" when talking about this as a legal racial category during the apartheid era, but use the lowercase otherwise.

11. As Yvette Christiansë explains, "[the] historical record shows how, in the founding moments, black women were passed among men" (385). The group of male settlers who landed in the Cape in 1652 "established in its midst a large hostel of slaves, among whom were women who served as prostitutes to white men every evening while male slaves ran errands . . . This early history is also one in which Khoi women were indentured on Dutch farms runs by single white men who clearly availed themselves of these women" (ibid.). Of course, as she also reminds us, coloured children were also born as a result of love, in "a gesture of exuberant self-contamination, the gesture of abandoning identity" (392).
12. I refer here to actual words used in apartheid law. As with the category of "Coloured" discussed above, apartheid racial categorizations are difficult to translate across national contexts and political orders. I refer below to the categories of "Indian" and "black," as a kind of shorthand for the main racial categories (in addition to "Coloured" and "white") formalized under apartheid, recognizing that things were in practice more complicated than this—for instance, there were various subgroups of "Coloured" and other "Asian" identities—and with the understanding that at some level all racial classifications are constructed and fundamentally porous.
13. "The deformed and stunted relations between human beings that were created under colonialism and exacerbated under what is loosely called apartheid," J.M. Coetzee argued, "have their psychic representation in a deformed and stunted inner life" ("Jerusalem" 98).
14. See, for instance, Sam Durrant ("Bearing Witness") and Mark Sanders (*Ambiguities of Witnessing*).
15. Durrant uses the term "working through" in a slightly different way in the South African context and the work of novelist J. M. Coetzee in particular, approving of it only when it gets connected back to the materiality of the wounded body. While I do not disagree with Durrant's reading of the Coetzee novels, I find a more expansive concept of "working through" useful for the wider field of South African literature, performance, and visual art. In their special issue on "The Postcolonial Trauma Novel," Craps and Beulen suggest, via Laura S. Brown's notion of "insidious trauma," that in spite of its seemingly Eurocentric origins trauma theory can be usefully extended to address the "chronic psychic suffering" caused by structural violence common to postcolonial societies (3).

16. Mahmood Mamdani famously spoke of the need to broaden the TRC's interest in victims and perpetrators to the "beneficiaries" of apartheid (cited in Krog *Country* 146).
17. On the importance of having a flexible memory, see van der Kolk and van der Hart. On the ethics of melancholia, or the refusal to mourn, see Eng and Kazanjian.
18. Ahmed writes: "If we were to expand our definition of home to think of the nation as a home, then we could recognize that there are always encounters with others already recognized as strangers within, rather than just between, nation spaces. To argue otherwise, would be to imagine the nation as a purified space, and to deny the differences within that space: it would be to assume that you would only encounter strangers at the border. Given this, there is always an encounter with strangerness at stake, even within the home: the home does not secure identity by expelling strangers, but requires those strangers to establish relations of proximity and distance within the home, and not just between home and away. [. . .] There is already strangeness and movement within the home itself." ("Home and Away" 340)
19. In "Johannesburg Interiors," I pose "intimate exposure" as a term that "refer[s] to the 'risky' but necessary act of sharing oneself with others in public and which finds its point of departure in the work of Njabulo Ndebele and other contemporary South African theorists [including Sarah Nuttall and Neville Hoad]" ("Johannesburg" 335). Nuttall and I take up this term at length in our "Introduction: Private Lives and Public Cultures in South Africa" (especially 308, 311, 319–27), noting also its various "risks": "On one hand revealing personal spaces, images, stories or feelings in public or physically inhabiting new zones invites misunderstanding and rejection, and on the other focusing attention on the intimate, private or domestic can mean a turn away from urgent political and economic issues. They can also play into colonial and apartheid forms of spectacular exposure, seen for instance in the scandalous exhibition of the body of Sarah Baartman or in countless Immorality Act trials" (310). My interest in how texts create publics first came through our engagement with Michael Warner's notion of a "counter-public" and Lauren Berlant's conception of the "intimate public sphere" (*The Queen* and *The Female Complaint;* see also Bystrom and Nuttall 320–21). Berlant's work in particular lies in the background of *Democracy at Home in South Africa,* though I here foreground Ahmed's theories.
20. Ahmed writers that "[s]tickiness involves a form of relationality, or a 'withness,' in which elements that are 'with' get bound together. One can stick with a friend. One can get stuck in traffic. Some forms of stickiness are about holding things together. Some are about blockages or stopping things moving. When a sign or an object becomes sticky it can function to block . . . [or] to bind" (*Cultural* 91).
21. Along with Samuelson (*Remembering*, "Walking"), see Chipkin and Bongani, Gillespie.

22. As Zuma commented about his daughter Dudzile's marriage on the TV series *People from the South:* "I was also happy because I wouldn't want to stay with daughters who are not getting married. Because that in itself is a problem in society. I know that people today think being single is nice. It's actually not right. That's a distortion. You've got to have kids. Kids are important to a woman because they actually give an extra training to a woman, to be a mother" (cited in Pillay).
23. I thank Thabisani Ndlovu for this insight.
24. Andrade highlights the important of learning to read African texts differently: "As readers, we make it possible to read the realms of intimate domestic life not merely as micro-political or insignificant but as interlocked with the macro-political, as that on which it depends" (35).
25. I should note here how queer scholarship has led the way in rethinking or reconfiguring the relationship between these two approaches, seen for instance in Neville Hoad's comments on the way the vocabulary of affect can in some sense encompass and speak back against certain limitations of trauma studies (*African* xxxiii) and Cvetkovich's work to extend therapy beyond the privatized clinical realm to lesbian or queer public cultures.
26. See the ANC discussion document, "The Second Transition? Building a national democratic society and the balance of forces in 2012" (http://www.anc.org.za/docs/discus/2012/transition.pdf).
27. Concern that the ANC government was forgoing its commitment to radical redistribution, for instance, surfaced almost immediately during the 1990s and certainly accompanied the shift from the more ambitious Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) to the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy; while basing affirmative action programs on racial categories laid the ground for race to retain its centrality in organizing postapartheid politics.

1 A "New" South African Family Romance

1. The term "discover" can only be in quotation marks here since, as Gqola argues, the notion that the Afrikaner aristocracy was ever "pure white" can only be a "conscious lie" (126). While it has generally been associated with Afrikaners specifically, the way this tendency to "discover" non-white ancestors moves beyond Afrikaner to a larger or specifically Anglo white identity can be seen in Nadine Gordimer's tackling of this theme in her short story "Beethoven was One-Sixteenth Black," which I unfortunately do not have space to address within this chapter.
2. See articles in the *Cape Argus* like S. Marshall, "Ancestral Links Prove it is a Small World Indeed" (22 April 2004) and F. van der Fort "Helping Others Climb family Trees" (August 8, 2005). Samuelson points to the "amateur genealogical industry [that] spr[a]ng up around Krotoa-Eva," including on various Listservs, in the late 1990s (*Remembering* 19); while Gqola describes how New National Party MP Anna von Wyk cited "the

well-known fact" that "almost all white South Africans have slave ancestry" in her speech on Freedom Day in 2002 (114). I have previously in "The DNA of the Democratic South Africa" addressed in brief the problematic of Krota-Eva and the questions about genealogy and belonging raised by attempts to claim her as ancestor ("The DNA," 227–28). This chapter reconsiders the questions animating that previous article via a different textual archive.

3. Brenna Munro also uses the family romance as a frame for reading postapartheid culture and her compelling reading of the "queer family romance," while differing in many particulars from my conception, underscores its centrality. I return to her work in chapter 4. Samuelson draws attention to the difficulties of the term "the 'new' nation" because of the "remnants of the 'old' South Africa within the 'new' " (*Remembering* 10, 13).
4. As Rita Barnard argues, "Apartheid, to put it in Freudian terms, operated not so much by the mechanisms of psychosis (occlusion) as by the mechanism of neurosis (repression)" (*Apartheid* 47).
5. Please see note 10 in the Introduction on the legal racial category "Coloured" and contemporary coloured identities.
6. As Wicomb outlines, van Heerden's novel *Ancestral Voices* uses the trope of the "shame family" to critique Afrikaner ethno-nationalism and the discourse of shame it (along with the British tradition symbolized in Millin's *God's Step-Children*) connected to "Coloureds." Doing so, she argues, it reveals strategies used by Afrikaners to interrogate the meaning of whiteness and perhaps to "disaffiliate" from it in the early transition ("Five" 170–73; 180). "The narrative," she writes, "traces the demise of the Afrikaner whose only form of survival is through melanisation, in other words, assuming the condition of otherness" ("Five" 171). I will return to the term "melanisation" below, and have previously pointed to it ("The DNA," 227).
7. As Carli Coetzee puts it more skeptically, it allows them "legitimate access to the new rainbow family" (115). This line is cited also in Samuelson (*Remembering* 19) and Gqola (112).
8. See Gilroy (307) for a definition of identity as an "ongoing process of self-making and social interaction."
9. As coloured scholars such as Yvette Christiansë, Zimitri Erasmus, and Wicomb ("Shame"; "Five") point out, colouredness was configured by the apartheid regime as a site of deeply painful compromise rather than as a locus of "rainbow" togetherness; it was "a space rendered pathological rather than gloriously productive" (Christiansë 390). Wicomb, via van Heerden's *Ancestral Voices,* points to the imaginary of "the new hybridized Afrikaner, melanised through indigenous black blood" ("Five" 172). She also poses "melanisation" in this biological sense as part of a wider "scramble for alterity" among whites in the transition ("Five" 161). Irlam also discusses "melanisation" (and the "shame family"), arguing that

"Wicomb cautions us to suspect the 'scramble for alterity' and the self-conscious 'melanisation' of the Afrikaner visible in contemporary fiction" (701–702).

10. See for instance Soodyall's lecture "Genetic Heritage: Reflecting on the African Link," given at the University of Cape Town 8 September 2005, as well as her comments in the 2004 M-Net *Carte Blanche* documentary "So where do we come from?"—each containing the idea that ancestral mapping through genetics helps us see that "we are all African"; and Habib's "Conversation with a nation," which uses the trope of multiracial ancestry as an opening move to ask South Africans of all colors to think differently about redress (237–38). See Bystrom ("The DNA," 224–26) for further thoughts on Soodyall and the "We are all African" rhetoric.
11. Brink thus gestures to the tradition of the "political uncanny" described by Engle and given an explicitly architectural reading by Barnard when she discusses the way Gordimer figures the ground underneath the house as the repressed or unconscious of white South Africa (*Apartheid* 49, 56)
12. On "traditional genealogy" and its history in upholding male power and property rights, at the expense of non-privileged groups including women, see Julia Watson and Nash.
13. On the historical importance of domestic space in the production and reproduction of Afrikaner nationalism, see for instance Hofmeyr ("Building") and Gaitskill and Unterhalter.
14. Brink's first novel *Kennis van die Aand/ Looking on Darkness* (1973, translated by the author from Afrikaans 1974), centers on the coloured actor Joseph Malan, who is awaiting the death penalty after murdering his white lover Jessica Thomson in despair at the lack of options open to them in the 1960s and early 1970s. In the second section of the novel, Joseph considers his action in the light of his extended family history, portraying his impending death as the final installment of a long line of Malans tormented by their society: "every episode in it seems to have become a station on an endless *via dolorosa*—as if it had been destined that in each new generation all the sin and suffering of an entire society should find its sacrificial victim in our tribe" (35). Here, a number of the conceptions of genealogy seen in the later novel are prefigured, including the blurring of the boundary between "history" and "mythology," or "history" and "story" (36), though the tale is told chronologically and the dominant voices are male. The question of genealogy is taken up again in *An Act of Terror* (1991), and indeed a character from this novel appears in Kristein's genealogy in *Imaginings of Sand*. See Brink, "Reinventing a Continent"(244). Wicomb discusses the "tragic mode" of representing coloured identity via Millin among other literary precursors ("Shame" 100).
15. See Brink's "Author's note" in *Imaginings of Sand* and Brink's "Reinventing a Continent" (244). As Samuelson points out, Brink's name change from

Krotoa-Eva to Kamma-Maria heightens her symbolic potential as mother and originator. She argues that Brink plays upon the Christian mythology lodged in the name Eve, replacing it with Mary, "mother of God," and notes that the fact that Maria was also the name of Jan van Riebeeck's wife further underscores this character's potential as a "founding mother." Kamma, Samuelson adds, signifies water as the creative source of life, as well as, according to Brink, "the realm of the imagination, of illusion, and of fiction" (*Remembering* 23–24).

16. Pointing to Brink's transitional essays about the task of postapartheid writing (for instance, "excavating silences"), his emphasis on the connection between life and language, and the novel *Imaginings of Sand*, Sue Kossew also discusses the ethics of choice he sets out ("Reinventing" 114–17). She does this though from a more critical perspective, which I return to later.
17. Speaking specifically to the figure of Krotoa-Eva, Horn and Horn point out that: "[h]er inclusion in the female lineage is not only an appropriation of a genuine 'African' beginning for the lineage; she is also a figure with all the attributes of myth" (109).
18. I viewed the play in August 2010, as part of the Women's Festival at the Old Mutual Theatre on the Sqaure in Sandton. Thanks to Kathryn Lachman and Liz Gunner for drawing it to my attention.
19. Speaking of the work of Zoë Wicomb but also by implication of the sea in South African texts of wider authorship, Samuelson writes: "Presented as a fluid archive, the sea casts up into official, land-centred narratives the flotsam of lost, scattered, and repressed histories. Its encroachments on the shoreline erode territorially bound orders, such as those of the nation-state, while its ebbs and flows unsettle the linear temporalities by which such territorial orders delineate discrete eras and map their progress from past to present" ("Oceanic" 543).
20. As Nadine Ehlers writes, and following Judith Butler, there is a way in which race (like gender) is always a performance: "[t]hrough being read as 'belonging' to a traditional racial category—that is, visually appearing and conducting one's acts, manners and behaviours in accordance to disciplinary racial demands—*all* subjects are passing-*for* a racial identity they are said to *be*." In the case of de Villiers, however, what Ehlers describes as the older association of "a subject who passes for a racial identity for which they are discursively prohibited" is perhaps more appropriate—and it is clear why the artist would want to draw a distinction between an "original" racial essence which serves as her "real" identity and an inauthentic racial facade that she was forced to perform.
21. The "trauma aesthetic" is a model to which we return in chapter 2. As I have noted previously, Feldman describes the hegemonic "emplotment" of human rights testimony in which victim narratives follow a "medicalized syllogistic structure" of "identifying a pathogenic situation," giving an "inventory . . . of the aberrant situation, usually in the

form of critical life incidents," and obtaining "a set of prescriptions to address redress, cure and historical completion, a component of which is the very recitation of biographical narrative and its public dissemination for a forum of witnessing" ("Memory Theaters" 170). See Bystrom ("South Africa" 399).

22. De Villiers spoke about her continuing tense relationship with her relatives at a talk-back session after the performance that I attended in Sandton.
23. While the mass democratic movement called for a broad definition of blackness, distinctive coloured identities have persisted and even found new strength since the end of apartheid. I think here of coloured nationalist movements and the coloured vote for the National Party in the Western Cape in the 1994 elections (see Wicomb "Shame" 93–94, 102–103).
24. "Grandmother" becomes for Marion "a new word, naked and slippery with shame" (107). Citing this line, Kossew points out that this kind of shame—shame at denying coloured identity—reconfigures what Wicomb has pointed to as the powerful trope of shame attached to coloured identities during apartheid as a result of the link posited between "miscegenation" and "degeneration" ("Repositioning" 198, 204). Kossew also poses Tokkie's betrayal as the most acute symptom of the "dislocation from family and family histories" that results from Marion's parents' decision to "pass" (204).
25. Samuelson's comment on the relationship between Tokkie and the Campbell family foreshadows my discussion in chapter 3, as it shows Tokkie "taking on the servant role in order to spend time with her granddaughter in a painful reversal of the trite statement—'she's one of the family'—with which so many white South Africans have dismissed the violence of their domestic relations" ("Oceanic" 552).
26. I have previously used this theory of "multiple belongings" to discuss *David's Story*, showing how this earlier novel expresses a profound skepticism of rooted or essentialized narratives of identity (whether "pure" or "melanised") and offers instead through the multiple levels of genealogical fiction making it engages in a historically layered understanding of coloured identity ("The DNA," 231). *Playing in the Light* as I read it in this current chapter offers in some sense another example, or another form, of expressing the critical impulses seen in the prior novel.
27. Samuelson notes how the pictures point to a Khoi heritage that David, the protagonist of her earlier novel, cannot see ("Oceanic" 555).
28. Indeed, Samuelson poses "travel" as the end result of Marion's experiences, noting that "the genealogical search . . . is not one directed toward the denouement of discovering her mixed race; rather, it leads her to a historical understanding of identity and, ultimately, to the act of travel" ("Oceanic" 555). Samuelson also, if briefly, connects traveling to Marion "becom[ing] a reader, an interpretive textual subject" (ibid. 557).

29. As van der Vlies puts it: "Wicomb's author-narrator serves . . . to undermine the veracity of any project pretending to truth, an insight contributing to a re-assessment of narratives of nation (and of ethnicity, of ethnic purity) half a decade into the New South Africa" (The Archive" 596). Interestingly, van der Vlies also uses Brink as an example of a South African writer interested in question of meta-fiction but whose approach is less ethically rigorous than Wicomb's (ibid. 583–85).
30. As Kossew puts it, "this crossing of borders . . . was available only to a small number of "play whites" even during apartheid times" ("Repositioning" 199).
31. "Passing" and other "quotidian narratives of loss have," Christiansë argues, "themselves been lost by the official discourses" (375; cited also in Samuelson "Oceanic" 553).
32. Finch, building on David Morgan's *Family Connections* (1996), notes that families "are defined more by 'doing' family things than by 'being' a family. The most influential discussion of this is Morgan's (1996) work on family practices, which radically shifts sociological analysis away from 'family' as a structure to which individuals in some sense belong, towards understanding families as sets of activities which take on a particular meaning, associated with family, at a given point in time. 'Family' is a facet of social life, not a social institution, it 'represents a quality rather than a thing' (Morgan, 1996: 186)." Finch adds to Morgan's framework the useful dimension of "displaying" as well as "doing" family (66).

2 Remembering the Lost: On Family Members and Domestic Life

1. Lauri Firstenberg (60) and John Peffer (78–79) describe the Biennale installation. A digital version of the installation including accompanying text "The Black Photo Album" is available at the artist's website:http://cargocollective.com/santumofokeng/filter/work#661129/black-photo-album. A version of the installation, along with supplementary materials including the "Field Trip Report," was also recently published in book form by Steidel in association with the Walther Collection (2013).
2. Elizabeth Jelin develops the concept of "memory work" in her influential *Los trabajos de la memoria*. Here she points out that memory isn't just a static thing that can be excavated from the past but something produced through various forms of labor: it is a subjective process, a site of contestation, and a historically determined conversation between a range of parties (2–4). She argues that memory work "generates and transforms the social world" (14, translation mine) but that this process requires individuals to "work through" traumas—in LaCapra's sense—and to put memories to work in the context of wider social networks and collective forms of remembrance (14–15, 20). Shifting memory

from an object to a process also links to the way conceptions of making, doing and displaying family (Finch) unsettle static and closed concepts of family, as discussed in chapter 1.

3. For earlier versions of the arguments made in the following two paragraphs, see Bystrom ("South Africa" 398–400) and Bystrom ("The Public" especially 143, 146–48). As I have noted, family stories did not gain prominence in the public sphere only because of the TRC, but the production of family narratives in the transition to democracy was significantly helped by it (ibid. 148).
4. Shane Graham also nicely describes how "the TRC broke down fundamental divides between public and private spaces and narratives, and between the scale of the familial, the local, the national, and the international; that is, stories that were previously considered private and personal were told in a public forum, registered in collective consciousness, and mediated for a global audience" (*South African* 3).
5. For a brief overview of the structure of the commission and number of statements processed, see <http://www.usip.org/publications/truth-commission-south-africa>. This information is explained at length in the six-volume *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* (1998/2003), available online at <http://www.justice.gov.za/Trc/report/index.htm>
6. See Samuelson (building on Wilson) in *Remembering* 164. In his ethnographic work with family members of the disappeared in South Africa, Jay Aronson adds a further layer of the heroism story. Pointing to the entwinement of symbolic or social and economic reparation, he notes how family members desperately wanted their lost loved ones to be seen as military heroes, both because it helped to justify their sacrifice for liberation and because it allowed family members access to military death benefits.
7. See the discussion of trauma in chapter 1, where I build on LaCapra (2002: 186), Caruth (1995: 152–53), and van der Kolk and van der Hart 1995: 176–79).
8. I should note that Feldman argues that the operations of the TRC hearings produced experiences much richer than this narrative suggests (174–79)—a point also made by Sanders (10, 15–33). This is a point I return to later.
9. "Makhaya" in Xhosa means the (male) person in charge of holding the family together, or responsible for the maintenance and continuity of the family or clan. I thank Thabisani Ndlovu for this insight.
10. Graham convincingly describes Themba's "taking" of a wire toy bus as "a symbol of everything taken from Sipho (and, by extension, from his community) by his brother Themba, the apartheid government, and by the "Gucci revolutionaries" who have taken power in the new dispensation" ("I WAS" 70, 76)
11. Mark Gevisser, in his biography of Thabo Mbeki *A Dream Deferred*, carefully underscores the negative impact on family life that the commitment

to the freedom struggle could have—though he suggests that Mbeki represses such impacts in favor of channeling energy back into the revolution.

12. See Graham for a reading of the way this proposed library breaks down the spatial and epistemological logics of apartheid, and the status of Sipho's final words in articulating a "possible rout[e] that can be taken towards transforming South African cities and townships" ("I WAS" 80).
13. Interestingly, Kossew makes a similar argument about Wicomb in *Playing in the Light,* discussed in the previous chapter, when she suggests that Marion "replicates in the private sphere the process of "accusations and confessions" (74) of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission" ("Repositioning" 201).
14. As we will see, Samuelson (*Remembering)* points to two contradictory narratives set out in the text and balanced on the "fulcrum" of Winnie Mandela—the first is a regressive one about women and homemakers, and the second progressive in recognizing the uncanny or "unhomely", haunted, and open nature of home. She lauds the way the latter unsettles the former, even as both remain present in the text (211–12). The novel succeeds, she suggests, because it "self-consciously dramatises, rather than conceals, its own contradictory desires" (ibid. 217).
15. For clarity, I follow Meg Samuelson's model of using the name "Winnie Mandela" to refer to the character in the story and "Winnie Madikizela-Mandela" when referring to this historical person.
16. See Samuelson (*Remembering* 212–17) for a more extended reading of the relation between the novel and this essay.
17. While not foregrounding the question of memory, Medalie also points out the novel's investment in the work of excavating the past and its relation to trauma and mourning, noting that "within the recollection and re-experiencing of trauma . . . lies the possibility of recovery" ("*The Cry*" 62). He similarly suggests: "We need to relive trauma and confront fully our troubled past [. . .] in this confrontation, in the pain of it, lies the potential for a cure and a fuller sense of community" (ibid. 64).
18. Sanders identifies the man as the lawyer Dali Mpofu (*Ambiguities* 85). Interestingly, Ndebele's novel does not broach the other bombshell dropped in the letter, which was that Winnie had illegally paid Dali R160,000 from the funds of the ANC welfare department that Winnie headed and where she had found Dali a job. See "Letter to Lover."
19. In 1991, Madikizela-Mandela was convicted for participation in the 1989 kidnapping and murder of Stompie Seipei. In 2013, she was faced with further legal inquiry in regards to two other slain young activists, Lolo Sono and Siboniso Tshabalala. See for instance Laing, "Winnie Mandela," available at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/southafrica/9925845/Winnie-Madikizela-Mandela-facing-new-accusations-over-death-of-ANC-activists.html See also Munro for an analysis of the crimes stemming from the Mandela

United Football Club and the homophobic discourse Madikizela-Mandela used to justify them (178).

20. Footage of Madikizela-Mandela's hearing can be seen in the Truth Commission Special Report, hosted by Max du Preez, Episode 77 Part 02, 36:30–37:56. The video is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdJWX7kRC18>.
21. Medalie describes Winnie Mandela as "a site of contradiction and paradox, representing many of the ambiguities of post-apartheid society itself" ("*The Cry*" 59).
22. See also the Introduction, endnote 14. This concept both finds resonances with but also moves away from Lauren Berlant's notion of an "intimate public sphere" that she associates with sentimentality and women's fiction (*The Female*; see also Bystrom and Nuttall).
23. Both Hayes and Peffer explicitly position Ndebele's assessment of "spectacular culture" and his call to "rediscover the ordinary" as a context for Mofokeng's work.
24. The notion of showing one's "very best self" is one I take from Terry Kurgan's description of her "Hotel Yeoville" project, where immigrants to Johannesburg (in an echo of the snaps they used to have made by street photographers to send as evidence of their success in South Africa to their family back home) make photographs and videos of themselves as part on a web-based community (44). "Hotel Yeoville" is discussed in depth in chapter 4.
25. On the way these kinds of photographs serve as class markers, see Peffer (246). Laura Wexler points out in another context that sentimental family photos work to shore up middle-class identity by excluding those who cannot afford to conform (257).
26. While responding to Nuttall's writings on the need to reexamine "historical entanglement," this sentiment shares an affinity with Shane Graham's focus on the turn toward the excavation of the past as a major theme in postapartheid South African literature and his comments on its importance. "If there is a common consensus among post-apartheid writers about why narratives of the past must be kept alive in collective memory," Graham writes, "it is because these narratives contain forgotten modes of social existence that might enable the birth of true radical democracy—which demands autonomy and self-determination on the part of all South African people" (*South African* 20–21).

3 Keeping House

1. In her persuasive reading of Gordimer's fiction and its figuration of house and home, Rita Barnard shows how novels including *July's People* lay bare "the way in which domestic space, and especially the white suburban home, functions as an ideological apparatus for the reproduction of racial and gendered subjectivities in South Africa" (*Apartheid* 10)—or, to put

it differently, how "the ordinary enclosures in which we live shape, as much as they represent, dominant social relations" (*Apartheid* 44).

2. During apartheid, artists and writers supported and complicated Cock's focus on exploitation as they represented the lives of domestic workers and the impact of domestic work on society as a whole. Prominent examples (in addition to *July's People*) include Elsa Joubert's experimental collaboration with a Xhosa domestic worker, *The Long Journey of Poppie Nongena* (Afrikaans original 1978, trans. into English by the author in 1980); Athol Fugard's searing portrait of a young white boy trying to come to terms with his relationship to the "boy" who acts as his surrogate father in *"Master Harold"... and the Boys* (1982); Zoë Wicomb's tongue-in-cheek depiction of the "embarrassment" caused by domestic work and domestic workers within the coloured community in *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town* (1987); and Sindiwe Magona's descriptions of daily life as a domestic worker in her autobiographical *To My Children's Children* (1990) and the short story collection *Living, Loving and Lying Awake at Night* (1991). Such texts lay bare the challenges of domestic work, like the pain of leaving small children behind in order to earn the money for their food and school fees. But they also invite readers into a conversation about the subversive forms of agency claimed by domestic workers and the rich communities workers create among themselves, the strange intimacies that grow between workers and the families for whom they care, and the options for "masters" and "madams" to reject their social positioning.
3. Judith Rollins' concept of "maternalism" has been seminal to the field of study on domestic work and domestic workers in South Africa and beyond; as Bridget Anderson puts it in a more extensive definition of the concept, "maternalism" is a relation between madam and maid where "friendliness between the women works to confirm the employee's sense of her own kindness and of the worker's childlike inferiority" (110).
4. The stage version of that piece that I saw was directed by Malcolm Purkey at the Market Theatre in July 2007, and this script appears in the 2009 collection *At This Stage*. A newer version of the play, based on the international premiere of the show in England, was published by Oberon Books in 2010. I will refer to this new script briefly below, but base my analysis on the early script and staging, which I believe speaks more directly to the dynamics of South Africa in the extended transition.
5. Quotations from Higginson here and throughout and information about the genesis of the play noted here are drawn from two personal interviews conducted with the playwright in March 2011.
6. Quotations from Malcolm Purkey here and below come from a personal interview conducted with Purkey in March 2011.
7. Sigmund Freud famously defined "the uncanny" as "that class of the terrifying which leads back to something largely known to us, once familiar", and which at the same time "ought to have remained hidden and

secret, and yet comes to light" (241). Repression links these two definitions: "this uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old—established in the mind—that has been estranged only through repression" (Freud "The Uncanny" 242). For more extended earlier treatments of the uncanny in *Democracy at Home in South Africa*, see the discussions in the Introduction of Bhabha, Samuelson, and Engle (also taken up by Barnard *Apartheid*); and the discussion in chapter 2 of Samuelson's reading of home in Ndebele's *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*. Samuelson proposes a model for reading the postapartheid present that brings together Freud and Bhabha's conceptions in *Remembering* (195–200).

8. See <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/transition-archive/2010/dreamofthedog.php>.
9. Higginson notes that in the era of Jacob Zuma, Julius Malema, and xenophobia, the situation in South Africa "felt a lot darker" than in the Mandela and Mbeki years, and suggests that the "white sentimental, liberal voice was not listened to or was not credible among black elites." Higginson also points out that the new version responds specifically to requests of a new leading lady, Janet Suzman, and to the specific audience of the UK. He claims that he wanted to "wake British people up to the new reality in South Africa," which includes a "nascent Africanism" and "a nascent need for vengeance."
10. Stobie suggests a similar opening in a very short gloss on the maps: "Milla longs for Agaat to discern her desire for the maps . . . to be displayed for her so she can glory in the land she has farmed, in this way accounting for her life . . . However, having her formidable will thwarted . . . by Agaat force[s] Milla to see the past with deeper insight" (64).
11. Muholi is perhaps most widely recognized as the artist at the center of the 2009 freedom of speech scandal involving South African Minister of Arts and Culture Lulu Xingwana, who decried images by Muholi displayed in an exhibition at Constitution Hill on the grounds that the images were "immoral," "offensive," demeaning to black women, and "against nation-building" (Thomas 422, 425; see also Munro 219 and Matebeni 404).
12. Selections from Zanele Muholi's on-going project *'Massa' and Mina(h)* were available, through 2014, on her website <http://www.zanelemuholi.com/projects_massa.htm>. Information about the images and quotations regarding the project were drawn from the artist's short description of the project on this site. Unfortunately, as accessed on April 19, 2015, the site seems to have been taken over by another company. Muholi's text however remains available at the Brodie/Stevenson website: http://www.stevenson.info/exhibitionsbs/muholi/text.htm
13. See Ghassan Abid's 2010 interview with Muholi, "Südafrika—Land der Kontraste," available at <http://2010sdafrika.wordpress.com/2010/05/31/exklusive-interview-with-zanele-muholi/>

14. See note 12. The images remain available at Brodie/Stevenson's on-line gallery from the exhibition, <http://www.stevenson.info/exhibitionsbs/muholi/index.htm>
15. In comments that illuminate the structure of this image's composition, Matebeni notes that the series speaks to how "black female positions in white society have been the ones that are supposed to support and promote white women's positions (or as some black feminists have argued white women's success is at the sweat if black women's labour), black women's bodies remain in the background and almost invisible until needed" (412)
16. For further reading of the billboard project, and on Sibande's work in general, see Nuttall ("Wound," 426–27).
17. This information on the exhibition is drawn from a March 2011 personal interview with Mary Sibande and from the "Artist's Biography," "Statement on the Exhibition," and "Description of the Artworks" prepared for the exhibition by Gallery MOMO.
18. http://www.yinkashonibarembe.com/present.html. See also "Yinka Shonibare," Nancy Hynes, and John Picton, *African Arts,* Vol. 34, No. 3 (Autumn, 2001), pp. 60–73, 93–95. Thanks to Sarah Nuttall for first drawing my attention to parallels between these two artists. Sibande subsequently noted in a personal interview that Shonibare was one of her influences. This interest in revisiting Victorian history also speaks to Santu Mofokeng's *The Black Photo Album,* which, as we saw in chapter 2, equally unsettles easy definitions of colonial authenticity, mimicry, and "civilization."
19. It is relevant to note here that Sibande's first exhibition was called "My Madam's Things" and shows an obsession with fancy shoes (Personal interview, March 2011).
20. This figure is one that Sibande became familiar with during a trip to New York City during Black History Month, and who she immediately connected with her own mother, who was able to escape from servitude by finding a job in a hair salon (personal interview, March 2011). For information on Walker, see "Madam C.J. Walker: A Brief Biographical Essay" by her great-granddaughter A'Leila Bundles, available online at <http://www.madamcjwalker.com/bios/madam-c-j-walker/>
21. Sibande explicitly mentioned to me that Walker invented hair cream relaxer, though, according to Bundles, the idea that Walker invented the straightening comb and perm is a common misconception rather than a fact (personal interview, March 2011).
22. Dodd describes the way Sibande blends herself and her ancestors through the work of art in the following manner: "By assuming the working-class subject positions and dreamspace of her own kin . . . Sibande collapses the Self/Other dichotomy; she is both self *and* other, object *and* subject. At the same time, by dressing this Self/Other persona in the Victorian persona of a bourgeois lady, she is also, most productively, both maid *and* madam" ("Dressed" 473).

4 Queer Homes and Migrant Homes

1. On Yeoville's history, see Kurgan (32–33). On ANC exiles specifically, Mark Gevisser notes: "Many exiles returned with foreign spouses, and children who did not speak an African language. Those with some resources established themselves in the porous deracialized inner-city suburbs of Johannesburg—particularly Yeoville, which became the heart of the returning exile community." I believe "immigrant" is a better term for foreign nationals moving to South Africa in search of a better life—since it implies a measure of permanence, while the term "migrant" suggests a temporariness that smacks of a desire to make such people go away. Nevertheless, to engage with common usage in South Africa, I use both terms interchangeably in this book.
2. See <http://www.thefword.org.uk/blog/2008/06/shoot_lezitaban> and Kenichi Serino, "South Africa—Gay refugees meet hostility in liberal SA" http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=5d1_1219746347. Dube's case is also addressed in Swarr (542).
3. Swarr notes that "*stabane*" is "used in Zulu vernacular to describe an intersexual person—that is, to be called *stabane* is to be seen as having both a penis and a vagina" (525). She further points out that members of same-sex couples are popularly understood to be hermaphrodites or *stabane*, because of the typical "assumption" that "same-sex sexuality must have a physical explanation" (530–31).
4. Hoad provocatively suggests that Thabo Mbeki was pushed to embrace a black African national identity because of the backlash against gay rights in sub-Saharan Africa: "I think this deployment of rhetorics linking questions of homosexuality to African identity may have produced a corresponding need for post-apartheid South African leaders to assert authentic Africanness" (*African* xiii).
5. I thank Thabisani Ndlovu for drawing my full attention to the way migrants in South Africa have become associated with deviant sexuality and "moral panic." As Ndlovu notes in "Penises in SA—What's the Big Idea?," migrants (like gays in *stabane* discourse) are often seen to have a physical or bodily "deformations," such as an enlarged penis—which in this case makes them particularly attractive to women.
6. See Introduction and chapter 2 for earlier discussions of intimate exposure.
7. Interestingly, Medalie's *The Shadow Follows* shows an investment in the Freudian family romance, as it traces (among other plotlines) the search of an adopted white doctor for his biological parents. Here in a reversal of the desired discovery of "non-white" ancestry traced in chapter 1, he finds that his biological mother was a white extremist living in a community similar to that of Orania. We can read this as a parody of tendencies to pose the Freudian family romance as a psychic entrance point to democracy; yet, a validation of such narratives that I will also chart in

"The Wheels of God" is generated as he discovers a white aunt and the black son she has adopted as the new relatives he can claim.

8. Gordimer writes in her famous essay "Living in the Interregnum": "A more equitable distribution of wealth may be enforced by laws. The hierarchy of perception that white institutions and living habits implant throughout daily experience in every white, from childhood, can be changed only by whites themselves, from within. The weird ordering of the collective life, in South Africa, has slipped its special contact lens into the eyes of whites; we actually *see* blacks differently, which includes not seeing, not noticing their unnatural absence, since there are so many perfectly ordinary venues of daily life—the cinema, for instance—where blacks have never been allowed in, and so one has forgotten that they could be, might be, encountered there" (377).
9. I would note here that the queer family romance variant in which white parents adopt black children—seen in *None to Accompany Me* and "The Wheels of God"—is further flawed in the sense that it repeats imperial scripts positioning white citizens as the parents and guides of black "minors." On the ethical complexities of transracial adoption, see Bystrom "On 'humanitarian' adoption (Madonna in Malawi)."
10. Munro makes a similar critique via her reading of Gordimer's *None to Accompany Me,* where she shows how the queer family romance can collude with "(white) identity politics that does not take material (racialized) power relations into account" and presents transracial adoption as an act that "leaves larger systems of inequality unchanged" (192).
11. Such an interpretation connects back to a more positive interpretation explored in chapter 1, where sharing family history, domestic spaces, and intimate lives with people of another race can alter understandings of relation.
12. Coombes also points to the similarity with the documentary genre, but notes that "[u]nlike the documentary tradition [. . .] particularly in South Africa, these images specifically record activities that are incidental and mundane, despite being staged for the photograph" (266).
13. As Josephy describes it: "The 'ordinariness' of lesbian lives is the theme of *Does Your Lifestyle Depress Your Mother?* While researching her MFA, Brundrit discovered that the only images of lesbians commonly found in the South African media were porn images designed for titillating a heterosexual male audience. 'I wanted to show "real" lesbians,' explains Brundrit. 'By not showing anything hardcore, I've taken away the voyeuristic angle that might have otherwise been there for the viewer.' This series of small black and white photographs shows lesbians in domestic environments. They are shown laughing, talking, eating, washing the dishes, taking the dog for a walk, and generally behaving like anyone else, which is precisely the point."
14. Brundrit notes that the workshop was part of a broader investigation from 2006 to 2008 on "the dearth of photographs of lesbians," and

specifically foregrounds a photo-essay by Mmapaseka Letsike about growing up in the township as a lesbian as well as her experience of rape and the process of coming to terms with it. See "A Lesbian Story."

15. Both Coombes (263–65) and Munro (59–60) emphasize the importance of installations such as "Minedump" (1995), in which van den Berg placed and lit "braziers" perforated to show the outlines of "small icons of bourgeois domesticity" such as lamps and cups along the Johannesburg highways in order to "memorialize[e] the domestic and draw . . . attention to the discriminatory ways in which some experiences are clearly deemed inappropriate for national remembrance" (Coombes 263). Even more widely known is his piece "Men Loving" (1996) which consisted of busts of a white and a black head placed on a small artificial hill and, while as Munro notes modeled on himself and a lover, representing a Khoikhoi herder and a Dutch sailor executed at the Cape in 1735 for sodomy (Munro 59). This piece drew protests from the military, who owned the Cape Castle where it was exhibited, but they were unable to censor the work because of the new constitutional protections (Coombes 265, Munro 60).
16. Personal Interview with Sharon Cort, March 2010. I thank Cort as well as Mark Gevisser and Clive van Den Berg at TRACE and Anthony Manion at GALA for their assistance in answering my questions about the exhibition.
17. See <http://www.apartheidmuseum.org/place-healing>
18. For an overview, see Ahmed *Cultural Politics* 146–55.
19. I might also note that the exhibition did not draw attention to indigenous forms of same-sex sexuality outside the categories of "gay" and "lesbian," to which Henriette Gunkel draws our attention.
20. I thank Sharon Cort for this information.
21. The increase in "rights" may have in fact led to a desire to clamp down on migration, as David Everatt has suggested (16).
22. I should say that the novel does underscore the gendered abuse that takes place within households and even, with disarming honesty, portrays the start of Mpanda and Isabel's relationship as the night when Mpanda fears he has sexually taken advantage of an intoxicated Isabel (44–45).
23. "Migration Stories" on the Hotel Yeoville website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12Pfl-LKVuk&feature=c4-overview-vl&list=PL93D244A0C230836F). Last accessed April 1, 2015.
24. See Matabane's film *Conversations on a Sunday afternoon* (South Africa, 2005).
25. I thank Terry Kurgan for her graciousness in speaking with me multiple times about this project and in helping me sort through the photographic archive of the project. Much of the information in the sections below draws on interviews with the artist from March 2011 and April 2014.
26. While Tshis as a facilitator may have felt a particular kind of hospitality in the project, his sentiments are echoed by other messages, including

the following: "Thank u 4 the oportunity [sic], Yeo has gone with bad reputation, but people forget this is a place with diversities of culture. I might live where eva [sic], but Yeoville will still be my second home. Hotel Yeoville can help yeo be better. G4lord@hotmail.com"

27. I thank Eleni Coundouriotis for this point. See Wenzel for an inspiring treatment of how failure can be productive as a reservoir for future action.

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INDEX