
“Intimacy Is the Name of the Game”: Media and the Praxis of Sexual Knowledge in Nairobi

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Abstract: In the 1990s, new debates about sexuality emerged in the Kenyan media. These debates are embedded in a larger framework of personal aspirations and social transformations regarding gender, sexuality and culture that are characteristic of postcolonial Kenya. One group that embodies these transformations in a particular way is young middle-class adults in Nairobi. The focus of this article is on the presentation of sexuality and intimacy in print media, on the way people appropriate this knowledge, and how this interaction dovetails with the way sexuality has become symbolic of being a contemporary, or modern, person. The convergence between media and middle-class formation shows how modern subjectivities are created, embodied and naturalized.

Keywords: print media, sexuality, social transformations, embodiment, middle class

Résumé : Dans les années 1990, de nouveaux débats sur la sexualité sont apparus dans les médias kényans. Ces débats font partie d'un cadre plus large d'aspirations personnelles et de transformations sociales relatives à l'identité sexuelle, aux pratiques sexuelles et à la culture, qui sont caractéristiques du Kenya postcolonial. Un groupe qui incarne particulièrement bien ces transformations est celui des jeunes adultes de classe moyenne de Nairobi. Cet article s'intéresse à la représentation de la sexualité et de l'intimité dans les médias imprimés, à la manière dont les gens s'approprient cette connaissance et à comment cette interaction s'articule avec la manière dont la sexualité est devenue symbolique de l'incarnation d'une personne contemporaine, moderne. La convergence entre les médias et la formation d'une classe moyenne montre comment sont créées les subjectivités modernes, comment elles s'incarnent et acquièrent un statut naturel.

Mots-clés : médias imprimés, sexualité, transformations sociales, incarnation, classe moyenne

“Better sex makes happier couples” is a remarkable claim made in a widely respected local magazine in a society that generally shuns explicit references to sexual practices. In their November 2001 issue, *Parents* magazine offered suggestions for various sexual positions, claiming that sex is “a couple’s primary way to show love.” At the beginning of this century, *Parents* magazine’s weekly column on sexuality became a major source of information for people about sexual issues, from female and male sexuality to the meaning of sex and eroticism and practices of love and affection. More concretely, it dealt with topics such as sexual pleasure, foreplay, erotic dress and speech, the female orgasm, male impotence, female lack of desire, sexual practices and positions, and much more. Currently, this column is the most explicit medium concerning sexual matters that is accessible to Nairobians from all walks of life, as the magazine is for sale on the street and is reasonably priced. For Kenya, the unambiguous descriptions of sexual practices are remarkable. The magazine is quietly present in a society that generally shuns explicit verbalizations of sex. Whereas references to sex are often critiqued as “immoral,” the matter-of-fact descriptions in *Parents* are condoned. Significantly, this column is targeted at married couples and, in this way, legitimizes writing about sexual practices.

The publication and wide circulation of *Parents*’ (in)famous column does not stand by itself. Beginning in the early 1990s, the intimate has emerged as a public discourse. On the one hand, AIDS brought the topic of sexuality into the public agenda. AIDS-related stigma has given rise to its own discourse, a language of human relationships that relates self to other, normal to abnormal, health to sickness, and sex to death. Soon enough, AIDS became discussed in relation to “immorality” and the “loss of cultural or African roots,” which supposedly led to the current “sexual chaos” of which AIDS was seen to be the result (Nzioka 1996). On the other hand, as described

above, a much less volatile discourse became quietly discernable in a particular niche in the media. The way sexuality became addressed from this point of view was fundamentally different as compared to the dominant ways of conceptualizing sexuality in demarcations of right and wrong. Here, AIDS was not denied; instead, discourse led to broadened perspectives on sexuality by incorporating other subjects like love, trust and distrust and passion, and included the effects of the senses such as attraction, arousal and satisfaction in the experience of sexuality. Sexuality was understood as a natural element of a person that could bring pleasure, happiness or trouble. The focus was on how to increase the positive elements of sex and circumvent or solve difficulties.

This emergence of the intimate is part of a larger process in which a reconfiguration of gender and sexuality takes place as a result of decades-long labour migration, urbanization and education (Mutongi 2007; Robertson 1997; White 1990). For decades, a desire for a more personal approach to partner choice, based on growing values of companionship, egalitarianism, the couple's relative autonomy and, increasingly, the sexual satisfaction of women rather than reproduction and ethnic compatibility has been articulated (Mutongi 2000; Odhiambo 2003; Thomas 2006). The consequences of the shifts implicated by such transformations are epitomized in the media. The current debates about sexuality are therefore embedded in this larger framework of personal aspiration and social transformation regarding gender, sexuality and culture that are characteristic of postcolonial Kenya. One group that embodies these transformations in a particular way is young middle-class adults in Nairobi. It is difficult to speak of social classes in Nairobi, as it is not uncommon to find large differences in socio-economic positioning within families.¹ Therefore, I use the term *middle class* as a descriptive label for looking at cultural processes and as a place where a cultural middle ground is being pioneered by particular groups such as by those I label *young professionals*. In my study, I focus on young professionals between the ages of 20 and 30 and who see themselves as explorers of what they perceive to be a modern or "sophisticated" lifestyle in Nairobi.

Although young Africans have used various forms of media to reflect on their intimate relationships for generations (Behrend 1998; Fugelsang 1994; Larkin 1997), an important shift has occurred in the last two decades—at least in Nairobi. What is new in contemporary Kenya is not only the sheer volume of representations and debates about sexuality in the public domain, but also the introduction of a therapeutic ethos into those discussions (Spronk 2009b). Therapeutic discourse, with its emphasis

on reflexivity and self-understanding, offers young professionals a new way to understand the very foundation of their relationships. They engage a therapeutic ethos to reflect on their personal aspirations and decisions, and to gain skills necessary to enact lives that they hope will be different from their parents. The majority of (the few) studies on media and love in Africa have analyzed intimacy in relation to the ideology and practices of (romantic) love, thereby focusing on the way people experience the intensity of love, its endurance and how it strengthens lovers (Cole and Thomas 2009). In this article, I focus on the presentation of sexuality and intimacy in print media, on the way people appropriate this knowledge, and how this interaction dovetails with the way sexuality has become symbolic for being a contemporary, or modern, person. Whereas I agree with Parikh's observation about the "commercialization of sexual advice in the media" in East Africa (2005:148), I do not agree that (all) media separate notions of sexual risk and pleasure. I show how the popularity of columns such as the one found in *Parents* can be explained by the way they address people's concerns and aspirations. The mutually constitutive intersection between media and middle-class practice is crucial for understanding the creation, embodiment and naturalization of subjectivities.

Sexuality and Sensation

In scholarly debates about intimacy, corporeal experiences are often neglected, which is notable as intimacy and sexuality are mainly experienced through the body. The study of sexuality in anthropology has a tendency to ignore the sensorial pleasures of sexuality in favour of studying how sexuality relates to gender, identity, kinship or reproduction (but see Lyons and Lyons 2004). The study of sexuality in past decades can be divided into two main streams. The first stream, feminist anthropology, has a long history of addressing how the normative order structures gender roles and gender identities, and consequently sexuality (Moore 1994; Ortner 1997). These studies of sexuality focus on the *politics* of sexuality and how power relations frame gender and sexuality. The second stream concerns the study of transgender, same-sex relations, sex work, sex tourism or heterosexuality, which can be characterized as the study of *diversity*. Frequently such studies on sexuality conclude that minority groups—such as transgender persons, or transnational relations characterizing sex tourism, or concepts such as masculinity—can no longer be conceptualized as singular but must be understood in their plurality, as heterogeneity is dominant (Boellstorff 2007; Constable 2009; Gutmann 1997). Yet, the politicizing of sexuality and the celebra-

tion of diversity tend to ignore subjective erotic experience as the focus of ethnographic inquiry. When subjective sexual practices are the focus of inquiry, the tendency is to favour the relation between gender and identity (Kulick 1997; Rubin 2002; Valentine 2007), while it is less common to take up the study of erotic practices (see, for example, Parker 1991; Wekker 2006).

While there is no denying the enormous contribution these studies have made to the anthropology of sexuality, the focus on power relations and how these frame gender and sexuality removes us from studying the sensorial and emotional qualities of sex and sexuality. The neglect of the embodied experience of sexuality is largely due to the current constructionist paradigm in the study of sexuality (Vance 1991), which tends to overlook a more phenomenological approach to sex as a result of its epistemological position. By looking at the praxis—the process by which a theory, lesson or skill is enacted—of sexual knowledge among young professional adults in Nairobi, I argue for a more inclusive approach to sexuality. In this article, I incorporate the corporeal experience of sex in the analysis of culture.

Young professionals' explanations about the importance of sex relates to how sex is an intense corporeal experience, one which augments a gendered sense of self that is, in turn, related to particular notions of being young, modern and African. Sexuality is thus central not only to self-expression but also self-understanding, whereby "being modern" informs particular aspirations and practices. I focus on the appropriation from print media of knowledge about sexuality by centring the discussion on young adults' experiences and aspirations of sexual pleasure. I show how the meanings of social transformations and sexual sensations converge in the corporeal experience of intimacy among young professionals, in other words, how young professionals *embody* changes in intimacy.²

Sex and Sensibility in Nairobi

Kenya has become a society inflamed by sexual desire.
—Marjorie Oludhe-Magoye (1996:1)

Phrases such as this, about a society overwhelmed by lust and suggesting sexual chaos through invocation of images of rampant sex, are not uncommon in Nairobi. Such comments exemplify the almost palpable sentiments that have come to characterize the "AIDS era." Sexuality is a hot issue that provokes discussions about sexual ideology, practice and agency among (self-acclaimed) moral guardians such as elders, religious leaders, or politicians. Although sexuality has always caused explosive reactions

in Nairobi (Nelson 1987), the course that current debates take originates from specific responses to the AIDS epidemic. The presence and impact of AIDS have worked like catalysts on discussions about sexuality by linking sex and death (Nzioka 2000). AIDS discourses involve all those exclusionary and dichotomous contradictions that allow people to draw safe boundaries around the acceptable, the permissible and the desirable so as to contain fears and phobias about sickness, death and decay, and sexuality.

The fear of AIDS reveals a fear of the disease as well as a fear of even more inflammatory desire and the loss of control over youth by elders; as Nelson (1987) suggests, often when something is criticized as morally wrong in Kenya, the point is not so much that it is considered "immoral," but rather that it threatens gerontocratic and moral authority. The manner in which sex figures in public debates centralizes the issue of social control over individuals and their desires (Odhiambo 2007). For parents and religious and political leaders, the increase in the number of sexually mature young people outside the bounds of marriage is not only contrary to chastity norms but has become an issue needing public regulation. Sex, for the conventional order, is a permanently lurking menace as well as a necessity (in terms of procreation): the need to control it—as well as the fear of it—underlies social processes of communication and social construction in the Kenyan public sphere. Public debates decry societal disorder, with AIDS seen as a sign of the times and with sexual permissiveness, the breakdown of the family and shifting gender roles as its consequences. Public debates about sexuality in contemporary Nairobi are therefore mostly moral in nature; when they do deal with factual matters, information about health in relation to risky or safe behaviour are the focus.

All media have recognized that AIDS and sexuality are issues that need to be constantly addressed. AIDS is discussed as disease, as a social hazard for the individual as well as the family and community, and as something to avoid, though once infected, it is discussed as a way of life in which compassion and responsibility on the part of others should take precedence. Compared to the 1990s, when sexual behaviour was only discussed as the problematic activity causing AIDS, current debates about sexuality have been opened up to include the possibility of being infected and still having sex (in a couple relationship), and safe sex is taken for granted as much as possible. At the same time, or perhaps in reaction to it, another development can be discerned wherein the debate about sexuality is deliberately not linked to AIDS. In the turmoil described above, where public debates are mainly

instigated by actors who are predominantly older men in public gatherings, a new discourse articulated in the media has provided different ways of comprehending and signifying sexuality. This newly constituted public realm is made and eagerly adopted by young middle-class people. Young professionals in Nairobi form a social group of women and men who seek to forge intimate relations rooted in romantic and progressive ideals (Spronk 2009b). They actively engage with the media in their search for different ways of being and knowing.

A small group of young female and male professionals in Nairobi, including information and communication technology (ICT) professionals, accountants and junior NGO staff, represent an emerging social group that is not clearly defined but is nonetheless still recognizable. Born and raised in Nairobi, they have garnered the higher education necessary to take advantage of post-colonial opportunities and to pursue professional careers and middle-class lifestyles. Their lifestyles manifest a new cosmopolitanism that unites the cultural, financial and political flows within and between non-Western and Western societies (Appadurai 1996; Ferguson 1999). Their taste in music, fashion, humour and social concerns signals their appreciation of multiple modes of being (Nyairo 2005). They are cosmopolitans not because of a cultural orientation to the West, but because of their self-conscious interweaving of global and local perspectives (Spronk 2009a).

A characteristic pattern in these young people's background is that their grandfathers were among the first migrant labourers to Nairobi or to settler farms, while their grandmothers stayed behind at rural homesteads. Male labour migration considerably affected marriages, sexual patterns, family life and community participation. This grandparent generation was eager to educate at least a few of their children, and many sent children to mission schools in rural areas. These mission school-educated children, the parents of the young professionals in this study, were among the first group of Kenyans to receive formal education, which allowed them to work in the administration of the newly independent nation-state. Many of them migrated to Nairobi to work. Within this parent generation, the pattern of the nuclear family was introduced as they became more and more involved in life in the city while their bond with their rural "homes" weakened. For the children of this second generation, the young professionals, bonds with rural homes became even weaker. Their parents' efforts to incorporate them into activities at "home" diminished as the focus on city life grew. Urbanization, education and professionalization marked these families' lives. These young professionals were therefore

the products of particularly favourable circumstances that were only applicable to a small emerging middle class in postcolonial Kenya. As a result, they represent postcolonial transformations (Kanogo 2005; Mutongi 2007; Robertson 1997; Thomas 2003; White 1990), and in their ensuing lifestyles, constructions of gender, sexuality and culture continue to shift, engendering different modes of being (Spronk 2005a, 2005b). As such, they can be seen as being in the vanguard in terms of reconfigurations of gender, sexuality and culture.

During my research in 2001-02 and 2004, many young professionals explained their choices regarding courtship and marriage in relation, and sometimes in opposition, to the lives of their parents. Many described their parents' marriages as old-fashioned. Both female and male young professionals emphasized how they desired more egalitarian and companionate relationships. For example, Dorcas (aged 30 in 2001) explained that "We all have to accept that my generation of women is not like our mothers' generation." She had just ended a difficult relationship with a boyfriend who had urged her to accept domestic subservience by invoking her obligation to "African womanhood." Her ex-boyfriend's behaviour reminded her of her father's domineering presence and her mother's subdued manner. His insistence that sex was "her marital duty" especially infuriated her: it not only signified the "lousy lover" he was as he did not know "how to make love to a woman," it also showed his "backward" position as a man. Men expressed similar desires to craft relationships differently than their parents. I met Maurice (then aged 27) at a moment when he had just been approached by a woman who offered to be his second girlfriend, outside of his committed relationship. Some of his male friends encouraged him to take this opportunity. He, however, explained he could not start an affair with another woman because of his love for his girlfriend, Nyambura:

We, the men of these days, have to make choices. We cannot live any more like our fathers; I believe it's not right to be polygamous. I am a modern man. I love Nyambura and I respect her, our sex life is like ... a mystical thing, not just release ... the way you make love expresses ... makes me feel manly of course, it makes you feel alive, but also ... is crucial to what kind of man you are.

In other words, sexuality is crucial in the development of contemporary notions of selfhood among young adults such as Dorcas and Maurice.

Young urban adults consider the notion of companionate relationship to be the panacea for the tensions and struggles they face in their relations, which result from the

shifting relations between men and women. Their aspirations are in line with other young women and men around the world who take up the ideal of companionate marriage as a way to demonstrate their modern individuality (Hirsch and Wardlow 2006). More particularly, intimacy, monogamy and sexual pleasure come to be seen as values and life goals (Jankowiak 2008). A fundamental element in the crafting of modern relationships and personhood is the perception that intimacy is both a means to self-realization as well as an important criterion for a successful relationship. The shift in the postcolonial era from “arranged marriages” organized by families to “love marriages,” as well as other concerns typical for young professionals, are epitomized in the media. Media respond to young adults’ questions and, at the same time, enable new understandings of being and knowing, what Liechty has called “new epistemic understandings” (2003:181). In Nairobi one can observe the mutually constitutive intersection between middle class and media.

By focusing on the practices of the former group, the convergence between media and middle-class formation shows how modern subjectivities are created, embodied and naturalized. On the one hand, media constitute the representation of desire in webs of cross-referencing mutual publicity. On the other hand, I will show that this articulation of desire *always* occurs in response to people’s aspirations. The point is to focus on this dialectic in order to understand how new forms of social identification emerge from these processes.

Media, Sex and Sensibility

The development of mass media took off in Kenya during the 1990s as a result of the introduction of freedom of the press in 1991. The advent of a multiparty political system in 1992 led the government to liberalize press laws and, at the same time, liberalize the economy through privatization and fewer market restrictions. In time, more and more companies entered the market, and by 2001, there was a variety of different TV channels and print media alongside government controlled media. Furthermore, the widespread adoption of media technologies such as audiotape, telephone, television, VHS videotape, mobile phones, satellite television dishes and the Internet have increased communication locally and internationally. Their use and reception have greatly expanded the private, personal and family spheres.

From a commercial perspective, young professionals are an important market and much attention is directed toward this particular group. For many other Nairobians, young professionals also embody a certain ideal, and by way of local magazines and pullouts in newspapers fea-

turing young professionals, they are able to get a taste of their lifestyle. In other words, young professionals and their representation are the driving force behind a middle-class popular culture. According to Mark Kihinja, a Nairobi-based journalist, the media and “the trendy and hip [people] of Nairobi” are mutually dependent on each other: they follow each other as to what is “hot.”³ Young professionals—and other youth for that matter—are conscientious about style for aesthetic reasons and as a way to distinguish themselves (Nyairo 2005). At the same time, the media, via its style (see Meyer 2002), have become major providers of information covering a wide range of issues.

With the liberalization of the media in the 1990s, there was an explosion in locally produced magazines. Magazines are very popular and play an important role in the articulation of notions of “sophistication” or modern identity. The circulations of international magazines like *Elle*, *Marie-Claire* and *Men’s Health* have increased steadily, while more locally published magazines have been created. *Eve*, for example, the first Kenyan woman’s glossy, was launched in 2001.⁴ The South African edition of *Ebony* has been available for a few years, but according to street vendors, sales have significantly increased over the past decade. The increasing number of glossies is biased toward women, though “male” glossies covering topics such as cars and computers have also proliferated, although to a lesser degree.⁵ Less gendered, in fact gender balanced, are the popular pullouts from daily newspapers as well as the popular magazine *Parents* and a variety of Christian magazines.

The oldest and most popular magazine is *Saturday Magazine*, the Saturday pullout of the *Daily Nation*, one of the two largest dailies in Kenya.⁶ It employs a format utilizing recurring topics that typify the importance of an up-to-date lifestyle. Every edition shows a local female beauty as the cover model, with her name, surname, interests and hobbies. The “Saturday Regulars” is a column about travel in Kenya or East Africa, while another column, called “Cosy Home,” concerns “modern living” and advises on home furnishings. Other regular columns are the “Lonely Hearts Club” for dating advertisements, “Eating Out,” “Medical Notes,” “Image Matters,” “Relationships” and letters to the editor. Every edition has several longer articles on various topics including fashion or one of the numerous beauty pageants; gender issues like women in higher positions; family matters such as the sexuality of teenagers; social concerns like poverty, AIDS or death from disease, the many car accidents and murders; fitness and features on gyms in Nairobi; and many articles about relationships and marriages that have

broken up, are stalled, or remain happy after 50 years. Moreover, there is also a conscious attempt to discuss sensitive issues like bridewealth, multi-partner sexual relations, sexual abuse, depression, financial disputes, abortion, alcoholism and all kinds of problems couples might face. These items are mostly preceded by personal confessions or revelations.⁷ Discussions address topics and events from “modern,” “sophisticated,” or “common sense” perspectives that are weighed against “customs,” “old beliefs,” or “unrealistic” perspectives, while never losing sight of the “African perspective.”

For example, at the time of my study, the 19 January 2001 issue of *Saturday Magazine* scrutinized two “thorny” issues that needed to be discussed “sensibly,” without “condemning” them right away, as that “would not help any of the women implicated in these situations”: bridewealth and men marrying a second wife. They were described as “thorny” because they could “cause major personal distress and unhappiness.” Both topics were introduced through personal accounts from women living in these situations. The topic of polygamy was discussed as a practice victimizing women, while the practice of bridewealth was more or less taken for granted. However, it was recognized that bridewealth could cause unbearable suffering to a young couple when “families are asking for too much.” Sometimes, people were prevented from marrying and “it [was] saddening that the world is turning commercial.” Bridewealth was described as an institution or custom that should be seen as in the light it was “meant for”: it is “a parents’ blessing [that is] necessary for any marriage, when differences arrive, the couple does not stand alone but will be helped by their relatives to resolve the conflict.” The “African” perspective was that bridewealth is part of the African heritage; it should be seen as a “token of appreciation.” However, the contemporary or “modern” perspective criticized the practice when families demanded excessive amounts of money. This perspective emphasized how a young couple should start building their own family life instead of providing for the extended family. Such debates exemplified the type of conflicts many people were facing.

Similarly, in the 26 January 2002 issue of *Saturday Magazine*, the difficulties of “popping the big question” were discussed: “It is fairly easy for a new couple to agree on the use of a condom without insisting on knowing one another’s HIV status, but what happens when things get serious and the condom has to go? When do you pop the HIV question?” The article begins with how an imaginary couple starts dating: “For many, until recently, the custom went like this: The couple exchanged addresses. They went on a date. Soon it was romance, passion, sleepless

nights and finally—sex!” Several couples were interviewed about how they went about this “complicated” and “inevitable” issue “we all face.” Whereas the couples interviewed in the *Saturday Magazine* article were all HIV negative, in *Parents* issue 173 of December 2000, couples that had one infected partner were interviewed. These interviews were of a more serious nature and both the women and the men were invited to elaborate on the complications of desiring sex as “usual” (without a condom) as opposed to “safe sex.” The need for safe sex was underscored by emphasizing how “love” means “taking care of each other, of the children, even after death” and in this case “love” means “making love protected.” According to Rhoda Orengo, the editor of *Saturday Magazine*, local magazines were meeting the demand for information on delicate and complicated issues that people face in reality (Interview on 20 January 2004). Couched as “lifestyle” articles, they invited ongoing debate about contentious issues.

When I interviewed Ms. Orengo, she explained that the *Daily Nation* used to have a pullout that was more like an entertainment magazine for the family. According to their market research, women read more than men, so from a commercial perspective they decided to produce a magazine mainly geared towards women aged between 25-35 years and who were married and unmarried professionals. They anticipated that they would reach men through the women: either that men would read the magazine after their girlfriends or wives read it, or because the women would discuss what they had read. In contrast, the goal of *Saturday Magazine* was and is to be “inspirational”:

We intend to be inspirational by, on the one hand, providing information about all kinds of life situations like relationships, health and so on. On the other hand, we want to break up silences about, for example, divorce, single motherhood and so on. In fact, women have come to be pro-active when it comes to changes in society and we want to reflect that. You can say that society is male-centred and we are female-centred. Also ... we want to play into people’s, women’s, desires like travelling, a fashionable house, you know, things that are not so common in Kenya but that are becoming part of our lives. [Rhoda Orengo, editor, interview on 20 January 2004]

Moreover, writing about relationships was “of great importance”:

Rhoda Orengo: We *have to* [her emphasis] write about relationships between men and women because that is what preoccupies women most. I believe we play an important role because people don’t talk about the prob-

lems in relationships, but they are there so we write about it. We make people face their own situations, like ... sometimes people don't realize they are in an abusive relationship and when we have an article about it, we always receive letters from women who say we helped them to understand their situations.

Rachel: How many letters do you receive on a weekly basis?

RO: Well ... too many, I don't count them anymore; we have one secretary who stores them, I guess tens every week. Sometimes people come to the office to ask whether they can talk with an author; we have to send them to Amani then [a well-known counselling centre]. Like the other day a man came to see me because I wrote an article about women who became extremely religious and he told me his wife was like that and she was even neglecting their children. [Interview on 20 January 2004]

In other words, the print media are sites par excellence for the dissemination of information about relationships and sexuality.

Magazines occupy a special position with regard to the interactive character of media as they have become a major source of practical information regarding the intricacies of relationships. This is not a new phenomenon. From the 1960s on, but notably from the 1970s onward, popular magazines have included information on marriage and relationships, particularly for the elites. According to Mutongi (2000), the male staff of, for example, *Drum*, who have authored the magazine's "Dear Dolly" advice column since the 1960s, offered off-the-cuff advice that aimed to be both didactic and witty. In contrast, however, today's editors problematize love and sexuality and rather than offering clear-cut advice or condemning practices such as premarital sex, they encourage self-reflexivity and greater communication within relationships. Whereas previously, advice—whether from elders or the media—was directive (Njau 1993; Nzioka 1994), nowadays media experts encourage self-reflection as the most important first step to solving relationship problems.

As a result of the format, personal narratives in the form of confessional stories or real life events have become a common way to read and learn about the world. These publicized narratives of love, death, sex and happiness are extremely popular in Nairobi. Numerous testimonies of love enduring in the face of opposition—coupled with discussions about trust and cheating—elicit much debate and reflection. These magazines often provided a starting point for my interviews because people referred to what they had read in the latest issue and said they discussed topics from the latest issue on Mondays in the office.

The popularity of such narratives points to what Pels calls the confessional or testimonial ethic: these "modern confessions, from Rousseau to Oprah Winfrey, expect a moment of authenticity, of laying bare the facts about oneself" (2002:92). The attention to personal narratives implies a shift away from conventional narratives about relationships as familial unions. The new interpretation of love emphasizes a more personal approach to partner choice, based on growing values of companionship, egalitarianism, a couple's relative autonomy and the sexual satisfaction of women. Rather than accepting didactic and moralizing advice from others, the therapeutic ethos that marks these media debates insists that the solution to relationship problems lies in reflexivity and self-knowledge. This involves a dual relationship of simultaneous self-distancing and self-recognition; by reading other people's inner lives or columns, people become engaged in reflecting about their own expectations, desires, experiences and justifications.

The media, thus, subtly work at personal and interpersonal levels by popularizing a distinctive configuration of narrative, emotion and subjectivity. They advise on psychological well-being and interpersonal relationships through a discourse of love, which presumes a durable emotional tie that can be established with another person on the basis of qualities intrinsic to that tie itself. When love is essential in the definition of sexuality, sexual intimacy becomes a matter of the self, of the sexual subject, in a symbolic interaction with another subject. Romantic understanding of and sexual intimacy in relationships, then, become fundamental to self-identification as a contemporary person. The print media in Nairobi are both reacting to a particular need for information, and engendering new modes of subjectivity and new discourses of personhood. Media might be understood as technologies for the production of new kinds of selves (Abu-Lughod 2002:116). However, their popularity and, as a result, their influence, remain dependent on their ability to respond to the fact that people are seeking inspiration and advice.

A titillating observation is that a discourse has come into being praising the vitalizing force and bonding of love and intimacy that comes from sex in relationships. Young professionals consciously seek such lessons about love, sexuality and relationships from magazines.

"Intimacy Is the Name of the Game"

While most media address issues of "love" incorporating the whole range of matters of sexuality, some media are more explicit about matters of sexual practice and experience. The magazine *Parents*, for example, is a "magazine that cares for you and your family." The title suggests a

broad spectrum of significant topics for the contemporary family, which is indeed what the magazine features. Every front cover portrays young parents with one or two children. The couple portrayed is typically middle or lower middle class, implying an ordinary couple from next door. The articles focus on family matters, religion, finance, work, and so on. The focus on relationship issues is primarily on marital issues such as "How to Remain Faithful" (June 2001), "Whose Money Is It? Shillings and Relationships" (October 2001) and "The Cycle of Divorce" (May 2001).

However, *Parents* is known particularly among married and unmarried people for its weekly column called "Sex" or "Sexuality." It addresses sexual issues such as "Sex in Marriage: The Wife's Role" (May 2001), "Sexual Fantasy: The Games Couples Play" (September 2001) and "Vitality and Virility: A Man's Secret to Happiness" (June 2001). Sexual practices and principles are dealt with in explicit terms. Sexual positions and the type of gratification that can be expected are described, while the topics of foreplay, fantasy and sexual variation to enhance female pleasure are written about regularly. In one issue, for example, the writer explained how fantasies were "especially helpful to women who find it difficult to achieve orgasm" (May 2001). In another issue, men's attitudes were scrutinized by writing in the third person: "He sees a woman as being there to provide him with sexual satisfaction rather than having needs of her own." In this case, techniques on "bettering your foreplay" were discussed and explained as "enriching" for "him and her" (September 2001). Every week, another aspect of sexual relationships was discussed from a psychological, physical or emotional point of view. In these discussions, AIDS is mentioned as a reality from which people have to protect themselves by using condoms and being faithful. Contraceptives are portrayed as a useful tool in having a happy sexual life by avoiding HIV and planning the birth of children. The bottom line is that "sex does not come automatically, which might sound against common sense," but that "couples have to take their relationship as a project to work on" (March 2002).

The editorial rationale of *Parents* is reflected in the statements that "better sex makes happier couples" and sex is "a couple's primary way to show love" (November 2001). *Parents'* message is very clear: sex is "natural" and sex is positive. The articles only address sexuality within marriages and although they advocate for understanding teenage sexuality, they remain within the confines of the conventional discourse that emphasizes marriage as the only site for sex. Nevertheless, while remaining within this conventional boundary, which is defined by Christ-

ian morals,⁸ their articles are rather liberal and outspoken; they hint at the message that sex is a God-given practice, but never explicitly claim to advocate Christian morals.⁹ *Parents* has created a unique position. The magazine is protected from accusations of immorality by the fact that it counts married couples among its readers, and it is thereby able to fulfil an important need for information. As the magazine states, "intimacy is the name of the game" (March 2002), and many young professionals recognize this and seek out the knowledge and skills to bring this to bear in their relationships.

Parents' message that sex is "natural" positively connects with young professionals' desire to have a fulfilling sex life. Many of the people I spoke with said they read *Parents* as a teenager and learned much from it. For many women, the magazine was an "eye opener" at the time when they started exploring their sexual desire. Tayiani, for example, aged 28 in 2001-02, was married during our collaboration. She considered herself a staunch Christian, and she embodied the ideal of middle-class married wifehood, which would soon be followed, ideally, by motherhood. A few months after her marriage she said she was learning a "new kind of life, new feelings, I have never got to know a man so intimately and although I really have to adjust, I never thought it [sex] could be so great." She said that during these months "I have learned a lot about myself, I am too shy for no reason, I am also ashamed for no reason, I am learning that making love is okay, that I can express what I like." While she had always ignored articles in magazines about sexual matters before, she was actively seeking information. "I am illiterate about myself," she once said jokingly. She read *Parents'* columns as well as books she purchased through the Internet. In the Religious Bookshop in Nairobi she bought the booklet *The Wonders and Beauty of Sex* (Tabifor 1998), which describes sex as a religious "plight" and "pleasure" for "the younger generation." Sex had always been understood as a plight, but in relation to reproduction. By explicitly connecting it to pleasure, the plight comes to be understood in a different, and somewhat unexpected, according to mainstream Christian discourse, light. In this book, couples are "enlightened about the mystery of love and sex because they hold the fabric of society, as well as, a blessed marriage." Couples are also encouraged to "discover the spiritual purpose of sex" and to "enjoy this delight" (1998: 15, 27, 97). Tayiani found encouragement for exploring her sexual desire in such literature. It consolidated her sense of self as a woman and as a sexually active woman.

The period of being a newly married woman was a time when Tayiani began to appreciate that her sexual activity and reproductive capacities were an important

source of power. Although generally speaking, sex is considered a marital duty for a wife, Tayiani never spoke of it this way but instead formulated it as a self-discovered treasure. Since Kinyua, her husband, was not a man to reinforce gender roles, he did not insist on conventional female characteristics, such as that women have to show sexual neutrality or innocence. According to Tayiani, Kinyua encouraged her to feel free and would tease her by giving her sexy lingerie. Moreover, the Nairobi Chapel (a Baptist church that mainly draws from the middle class) encourages couples to work on their sex life; sex is portrayed as the key to a good emotional and supportive relationship. After being married Tayiani expressed a more relaxed attitude; she was less aloof and spoke more easily about intimate matters, although she continued to exhibit shame when speaking openly about her sexual life with Kinyua.

Other women were less concerned with their sexual reputation. Njeri was one of the few women who did not have to overcome a barrier or moral conflict to come to terms with her sexual feelings when engaging in sexual intercourse. She could not remember when she had had sex for the first time because it did not “impress” her. She said laughingly, “must have been one of the guys from next door.” Virginity never meant anything to her, but as a teenager she had soon discovered that she should not get pregnant. Since then, she has always used contraceptives: condoms, the pill or the IUD. For Njeri, sex was pleasure and to find pleasure was a continuous exploration. During her teenage years, she had had “mechanical sex, you know, the sex that happens to you and if you’re lucky you can enjoy it as well.” She “discovered” her own body and one lover in particular taught her the “tricks” of “real sex.” They would watch pornographic movies and then try out what they saw.

I don't think I have not tried out any act, we did it all, and you discover your preferences. I don't like anal sex so much but men just love it. Apparently you guys [whites] like this bondage thing but I never developed a taste for it. I don't need complicated acts, I like it when a man makes an effort and is creative; I want to be spoilt, kissed all over, treated like a queen.

Watching porn movies inspired her to search for more information and since then, she regularly reads about female sexuality: “Porn movies showed me variety, but not always how I can increase my own pleasure, as in ... you know, the importance of your clitoris.” Reading about female physical facts strengthened her to “have sex for my pleasure.” In a drawer in her bedroom she keeps a pile of books and magazines she has acquired over the years.

Several men told me that if there was something they would like to discuss with their girlfriend but did not dare, they dealt with the issue by suggesting that their partner read a particular column from *Parents*. For example, Eric, aged 24 in 2001-02, used these columns in his relationship with Mary, his girlfriend. He was a tall, well-dressed and fairly unremarkable man, with a slightly nervous manner. I met him when he had finished his first degree in social engineering with honours and was trying to secure a scholarship to continue with his master's degree. In the meantime, he was employed as a salesman, a job that frustrated him so much that he soon left, hoping to find a better one. He came from a less affluent background relative to the other men interviewed, and this was the driving force to “study hard and take every opportunity” that came his way. He always insisted on knowing my opinion about situations he encountered and wanted me to “explain women.” He was relatively insecure about love and sexual relationships and, without explicitly telling me so, came to confide his uncertainties by asking my opinion. Eric explained how he tried to persuade his girlfriend to be less constrained when having sex:

Eric: Ok ... She [Mary] was a little passive; I thought she could not enjoy sex as much because she was passive. So then I decided to get a few copies from *Parents* for her to read.... I couldn't talk to her about it, so one day I gave her the copies and asked her to read it. Then I left.

Rachel: And ... What happened?

E: Yeah, she eased up a bit, slowly ... I think you were right the other day about women needing to know their own bodies ... to orgasm, I think she did not know quite how to enjoy sex and maybe she got to know it, maybe through *Parents*, or maybe she got the hint and talked with her girlfriends.

R: So ...? Did you discuss it more in-depth together?

E: Naah ... I can't, I do sex, I don't talk about it [laughs]. But, I need to know how to be a good lover and I read a lot about it and ... it helps me, to know ... what to do.

Men especially are eager to read about women's sexuality, so they can apply the knowledge in their sexual relations, though increasingly the Internet also becomes a major source of information about sexual practices and experiences. Tom (aged 26 in 2001) claimed to read everything he could find about sexuality. He took pride in sexually satisfying a woman, and he made many efforts to “learn about women's bodies and their orgasms.” He measured the quality of a sexual encounter by his ability to sexually satisfy the woman in question. If a woman would get up within one minute after the climax to “do

her hair or make a cup of tea, I know she either faked [an orgasm] or I didn't manage to find the right spot." He liked to satisfy women orally, especially so because for certain women oral sex is somewhat of a taboo. "I love to see a woman grappling a cushion or the sheet because they are so, so hot, trying not to scream out loud." Having oral sex with a woman meant being unconventional to Tom, as it is generally perceived to be "filthy." He remembers clearly the first time he read about oral sex and it was such a discovery that he decided to "take studying sex as serious business ... not like you do [laughed], I want to practice it!"

In general, young professionals are searching for information about sex to improve their sexual lives. They want to avoid taking sex as an obvious act and want to give a positive meaning to sex in their premarital sexual relationships. Pamela, for example, said, "How can something be wrong when it makes me feel good?" Conventional discourse, however, insists that it *is* immoral; here, Christian morality and other patriarchal ideologies overlap. The normative social biography for a Kenyan woman mandates marriage, sexual activity and childbearing. Bearing and rearing children are considered central to a woman's well-being, and sexual activity and consequent reproduction serve to solidify the bond with her spouse, which improves her status. In popular definitions of sexuality, sex is linked to love instead of to reproduction, ethnic compatibility or marriage. What is most notable is that women, in contrast to conventional discourse, also recognize sex as natural, as an embodied element of growing into adulthood. They thus recognize sexual desire as crucial to their identity as women, instead of understanding sexual desire in relation to (married) motherhood. For men, sexual desire has always been understood as self-evident and "natural" in conventional discourse; sex is normatively understood as individual achievement. But there is now more to sex for men because their sexual potential is also connected to their partner's sexual pleasure.

The popularity of *Parents'* column is consistent with the "therapeutic" discourse on relationships (Illouz 1997:198). This reflective discourse plays a major role in the way romantic love and sexuality become central to self-expression. The discourse praising the vitalizing force and bonding intimacy that comes from sex in relationships is eagerly reflected upon and (selectively) appropriated by individuals. As such, media engender a process of acquiring self-knowledge, which leads to the development of particular skills in intimate encounters. To have a fulfilling sex life has become a symbol for a truly contemporary person. This does not necessarily imply that it

is perceived as a green light to sexual permissiveness. Depending on the person's morals, a sexual life is developed only in marriage, while for others it is possible in premarital relationships as well.

"Intimacy," therefore, is the name of the game. It has become a fashionable word in all popular self-help columns in Nairobi magazines advising on the art of good relationships. For young women and men, notions of intimacy are increasingly important criteria for selecting a lover or spouse. In this definition of sexuality, then, sexual intimacy becomes a matter of the self as a sexual subject; intimacy becomes an intersubjective experience. In contrast to the popular idea that "sex is a marital duty," which is interpreted among many young female professionals as enforcing the sexual subordination of women, the "modern" duty is the fulfilment of a mutual orgasm. It is remarkable how often *Parents* insists on female sexual pleasure and how mutual orgasm is mentioned in almost every column. I believe it has played a major role in the diffusion of the notion of mutual orgasm as a kind of norm; not simply because it has put it on people's intimate agenda, but because it responded to a desire among couples.¹⁰

Sexuality and the Sensuous Body

The emphasis on mutual orgasm is more than a titillating observation; it brings us to the debate about sex in anthropology. As mentioned above, in the scholarly debates about sexuality—and intimacy for that matter—corporeal experiences are often neglected. In recent years, the anthropology of the body has gained new impetus (Lock and Farquhar 2007). Embodiment has become an important analytical tool for looking at human participation in a cultural world. There are roughly two perspectives: the semiotic-textual view of the body as representation and the phenomenological view of the body as being-in-the-world (Csordas 1993). The first perspective is dominant in the anthropology of sexuality, as it provides a good starting point for the critical study of power relations and of representation. I am concerned with the second here.

According to Csordas, "embodiment as a paradigm or methodological orientation requires that the body be understood as the existential ground of culture; the body's role is to transform ideas into things; it realizes existence and is its actuality" (1993:135). In other words, the body mediates culture in order to make it real. This is in contrast to seeing bodies as objects that come into being as effects of social processes or structures (such as colonialism, globalization or media influences). The body is not a barrel that can be filled with social meanings but,

instead, the body is needed to bring those meanings into the world. This logic of embodiment is that people exist through their acts, affects, emotions and speech, and that embodiment is the moment of giving meaning, of signifying (cf. Merleau-Ponty 1958). Therefore, the focus of analysis should be on the process, the moment of acting. As such, embodiment draws attention to the self as an embodied and contextual process, highlighting the “essentially intersubjective and social nature of bodily experience” (Csordas 1994:14).

The body, then, is the productive starting point for analysing culture and self. The self, then, is an indeterminate process to engage or become oriented in the world; it appears through the interaction (embodiment) between bodily experience, cultural milieu or world, and habitus. This notion of the self relates to self-esteem, to a sense of belonging to a group or society, to how a person identifies herself or himself as “woman” or “man,” and it indicates the experiential dimension of personhood. The meaning of subjectivity I employ, therefore, is not the description of the “lived experience” of individuals (Zigon 2009). Instead, I wish to bring out the dialectic between cultural milieu and personal experience that constitutes subjectivity. Using embodiment as an analytical tool to elaborate on the process of how people constitute and define their personhood has helped me to grasp the experience of intimacy and sex in relation to people’s place in society. It has also directed my focus to how a gendered sense of self affects sexual desire and pleasure, as well as to how sex is constitutive of a gendered sense of self.

In other words, the corporeal experience of intimacy brings into perspective the significance of companionate relationships for young professionals. For instance, mutual orgasm as proof of success or intimacy in sexual relations has become an indicator among certain young Nairobi professionals:

Listen, I have had enough lovers to know what you can get in life. So when I meet a man who is only out for his own pleasure, or if a man does not know how to satisfy a woman, he can leave. I am not willing to accept such behaviour anymore; in the past I used to fake an orgasm in order to get rid of the man as soon as possible, but not anymore ... These days, we want our part of pleasure. I mean ... We women know what to buy in this world and there is no way I could make love with a man and be left unsatisfied. It sometimes happened [that a man did not know how to satisfy a woman properly], men are not yet [as] up to date as women, and then I was so, so disappointed. I mean, I don’t even consider explaining [to] him what to do with a woman. Imagine! Some don’t even realise! [Interview with Dana, aged 29]

OK, as a modern man you have to know how to satisfy a woman, there is no way to ... when you have sex, that only you get satisfied. You have to know what she likes, to postpone her coming, to tease her so that she begs you. Sometimes it’s disturbing when you cannot make it, when you cannot satisfy a woman. I once had a girlfriend and she never had an orgasm, it disturbed me to have mine whereas she was left ... nothing. Also, good sex is just ... once you have had good sex you know what you want in life, sex is not just release. [Interview with Ruben, aged 28]

It can be concluded that orgasm becomes an indication of a healthy individual, in two ways. First, experiencing orgasm was often explained to me as the primal urge to feel alive, to achieve the ultimate moment of self-awareness while simultaneously getting lost in the pleasure of orgasm. Second, as sexuality is an important realm for self-actualization as a modern individual, good sex became symbolic for being an up-to-date person. The importance attributed to mutual orgasm, moreover, signified young adults’ sense of empowerment. In their definition of sexuality, female sexuality became redefined as pleasure and not necessarily as procreation, and male sexuality became partly redefined in relation to female pleasure. This approach is new, exciting and more engaging for both women and men compared to conventional perspectives on sexuality.

By connecting intimacy, sexuality and pleasure, the notion of sexual pleasure was appropriated by individuals in interactions between lovers. Public discourse is right in a way; this kind of sexuality *is* anti-social. In the non-conventional discourse on sexuality, the couple reigns. This is not to say that in the past people did not have sex for pleasure. What has changed is that the meaning of sexuality as the motor of social well being has been redirected. The importance of mutual satisfaction as emphasized by magazines such as *Parents*—sex as love, intimacy and pleasure—is indicative of people’s desire to have a particular kind of relationship. Personal and mutual sexual happiness became an asset of individuals, as well as a symbol for a successful relationship. Media like local magazines played into these desires.

Conclusion

The 1990s saw love and sex becoming an important media topic in Nairobi. Media attention encouraged discussions about sexuality and opened new ways for reflection. Sexual conduct used to be, and still is, problematized in religious and AIDS discourses, while in the dominant religious discourses, sex is discussed only in relation to marriage. In contrast, talk shows on TV and radio have

begun to air views on various topics ranging from teenage sexuality to condom use. Soap operas have created opportunities to observe the ins and outs of people's love lives, and popular magazines have provided forums to learn about the blessings and burdens of love and sex. This non-conventional way of defining sexuality is not openly challenging conventional perspectives but instead subtly creating a niche in the media and in young adults' life-worlds. A discourse has come into being praising the vitalizing force and bonding of love and intimacy that comes from sex in relationships.

Over the last decades, changes in patterns of courtship, the growing importance of Christian wedding ceremonies, and trends toward establishing urban residences with nuclear household organization are reinforcing an emerging model of marriage that emphasizes the personal relationship between wife and husband. The emergence of practices of romantic love, defined as passionate, personal and erotic, as criteria for selection of a lover, implies the increasing importance of conjugality; the couple's personal relationship to each other becomes central, and is enthusiastically encouraged by the media. *Parents* magazine's philosophy that "better sex makes happier couples" is a reflection of this discourse in Nairobi. Both women and men are advised and encouraged to "work" on their sex life, as it "enriches" their personal sexual experiences as well as their partners'. Such media engagements dovetail with young adults' aspirations to develop mutually fulfilling sexual relationships. The media's engagement with people's intimate life is effective exactly because it addresses social realities and personal experiences. Young professionals actively seek knowledge about reliable relationships, the art of emotional openness and sexual intimacy, and how to manage their relationships. The media offer advice, knowledge and skills to build a sensible intimate life.

The development of a personal sexual life for young professionals always involves reflection about oneself, as a woman or man, as a Kenyan, an African and as a modern person. In other words, the way in which young professionals embody decades-long shifts in gender, sexuality and culture is reflected in their intimate lives. Their lifestyles manifest a new cosmopolitanism that unites the cultural, financial and political flows within and between non-Western and Western societies, and sexuality plays a particular role therein. The dual definition of intimacy—both as a close personal relationship between people and as a sexual relationship—points exactly at what is at stake: as modern individuals, they aspire to a companionate relationship in which sexual pleasure is symbolic for a successful relationship. From an analytical perspective, it is

interesting to consider the embodied nature of mutual orgasm and how it informs subjective experiences. The corporeal experience of intimacy epitomizes how the meaning of social transformations and sensations converge. Experiencing intimacy is the productive moment: in this experience the social meanings of shifts in gender and sexuality—being modern Africans—and their translation into bodily sensations—mutual pleasure as symbolic for a progressive relationship—converge. Viewing intimacy as embodied practice directs us to how sexuality is a sensory experience, how this experience is informed by social meanings, and hence how it mediates and constitutes cultural categories.

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Notes

- 1 Very often it seems that "vertical" links across apparent class boundaries impede the formation of horizontal linkages between those sharing the same "objective" economic situation. Links of kinship, religion, regional affiliation or ethnicity have all tended to be more powerful (Berman and Lonsdale 1992; Ferguson 1999; Geschiere and Gugler 1998), than links of class in Nairobi or throughout Kenya.
- 2 In this article, I will only focus on persons for whom sex and sexual pleasure have become or are positive experiences. It goes without saying that others, more women than men, are reluctant to engage in sex or cannot enjoy sexual intercourse for various personal, psychological or religious reasons. Elsewhere, I argue how the importance of new forms of sexuality for young professionals is ambiguous; it is both pleasurable and anxiety provoking (2009a).
- 3 Interview on 3 October 2001.
- 4 *Eve* is a glossy magazine for upper middle class, professional women aged 28-45 years that appeared for the first time February 2002. According to Carole Mandi, its editor, there was a "need" for a local glossy. *Eve* makes great efforts to publicize "African role models, such as career women, successful mothers, single or married, and dedicated professionals." *Eve* is aimed at a group that is "new, new in the sense that they are women who are not typical dedicated wives in the traditional sense. After society always favoured men, these women choose to fight and have a part of the cake. These women are ahead of what we can expect in the future, we want to be their voice" (Interview with Carole Mandi on 3 February 2004).
- 5 Aside from these, there all kinds of erotica and (soft) pornographic magazines sold in street stalls. They are more expensive and therefore sell in lower numbers. They are very popular though, and according to street vendors, bought mainly by young men.
- 6 See <http://www.nationmedia.com/dailynation/nmgmagazine.asp?categoryid=32&todaydate=9/3/2005> for the *Satur-*

day Magazine. *Saturday Magazine* was the only of its kind in 2001-02 and 2004. Many newspapers followed its example because of its success. As a result, every newspaper produces a variety of pullout magazines focusing on a range of topics like sports, fashion, education, youth, et cetera. In 2003, the *East African Standard* introduced a similar pull-out on Saturdays, which was clearly inspired by the success of *Saturday Magazine*.

- 7 An important contribution is the column by the Amani Centre, a centre for counselling and psychological help. Every week, they publish an anonymous letter along with their reply. The letters address a variety of issues from childlessness, to rape, to psychological illness. During a visit to the centre, I was shown the huge number of letters they receive every week as well as their archives; according to the director they meet a great demand for counselling and the demand is growing as they become better known. The letters as well as the centre itself are worth further study.
- 8 As Lonsdale states, the culture of contemporary Kenya is "soaked in Christianity" (Berman and Lonsdale 1992:217).
- 9 Besides *Parents*, there are a few Christian books on sexuality provided by the Family Life Counselling Association of Kenya, a collaborative Christian organization.
- 10 The term *mutual orgasm* means reciprocal sexual gratification, whether that is through intercourse or manual stimulation (and much less often through oral stimulation), and is mostly not simultaneous. Among my informants women expected men to wait with their orgasm until the woman was having hers.

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