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,
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 Unconscious* 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).

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.


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 multi-racial 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 Square 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 façade 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).


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.


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 describesThemba’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.”

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


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).


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


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.


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 Byström “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).


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 Tshipas 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 opportunity [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.


———. “Beethoven was One-Sixteenth Black.” *Granta* 92 (Winter 2005): 171–181


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