

INTRODUCTION

Holly Wardlow and Jennifer S. Hirsch

In Singapore, young women melt down the jewelry given to them by their in-laws, refashioning the gold into rings and necklaces in more modern styles—or else they sell it, using the cash to buy a computer so the couple can get ahead. In rural western Mexico, young couples walk hand in hand in the plaza, or even dance together in the dark corners of the town disco, rather than courting as their parents had, in secret whispers through a chink in a stone wall—and the intimacy these couples share during courtship is only a taste of what is to come later, as they luxuriate in the privacy of neolocal residence, newly accessible through hard-earned dollars from men’s sojourns in the United States as migrant laborers. Among the Huli of Papua New Guinea, young spouses often live together, rather than in the separate men’s and women’s houses of the past, claiming that “family houses,” as they are called, are the “modern” and “Christian” way for loving couples to live. In Nigeria, although marriage is still very much regarded as a relationship that creates obligations between kin groups as well as between individuals, courtship at least has been transformed into a moment for young men and women to demonstrate their modern individuality. Around the world, young people are talking about the importance of affective bonds in creating marital ties, deliberately positioning themselves in contrast to their parents and grandparents.

This volume discusses how women and men from Mexico, Papua New

Guinea, Brazil, Pakistan, India, Nigeria, North America, and Singapore negotiate courtship, love, and marriage. Collectively we show how people in a variety of settings are coming to emphasize emotional intimacy as the source of the ties that bind. The chapters explore similarities and differences in shifting expectations for marriage, the growing perception that intimacy and pleasure are fundamental elements of modern relationships and modern personhood, the cultural forms—popular videos, advertisements, Christian tracts—that facilitate the globalization of a companionate marriage ideal, and the ways that these claims of modern love relate to changing gender ideologies. Our intent here is not simply to show women and men doing the work of love but rather to link interpersonal experiences of intimacy to the surrounding social and political context.

This volume seeks to raise questions about why similar companionate ideals have emerged and been embraced in such different contexts. While we recognize the importance of a global *ideological* shift in marital ideals, the contributors also address what Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992) has referred to as the “political-economy of emotion”—that is, the ways in which the meanings, values, and very experience of emotion are shaped not only by culture but also by material structures of power. While the forms and idioms of modern love may on the surface appear to be similar around the world, those similarities are a product not just of cultural globalization but also of specific economic and social transformations. Some economic formations facilitate or even promote companionate marriage (Collier 1997; Rebhun 1999 a,b; Ahearn 2001; Yan 2003), while others make marriage of almost any kind nearly impossible (Hunter 2005; Gregg 2003). Thus, in addition to describing the varied local permutations of the globally available ideology of marital love (Jankowiak 1995; Jankowiak and Fischer 1992), we locate these ideologies of intimacy in relation to the material and demographic conditions of people’s lives, looking at the ways in which the organization of production and consumption enables or impedes various kinds of conjugal ties, as well as the different strategic advantages men and women see (or don’t) in their particular local version of companionate marriage.

Taking a cue from Connell’s characterization of gender regimes as composed of labor, power, and affectivity (1987), we view emotion—marital love in this case (as well as other sentiments generated by marriage)—as a key component of gendered experience. The anthropology of gender in the 1980s and 1990s exposed the degree to which marriage and the “private” and “domestic” spaces that it supposedly inhabits are highly charged

political arenas in which gendered persons negotiate labor, sex, reproduction, consumption, mobility, health, and the care of older and younger dependent generations. These explorations of gendered axes of power were vital for demonstrating that realms of experience that previous generations of (largely male) anthropologists had disregarded as trivial or personal were actually sites of complex strategizing and struggle. To think about couples only in terms of power, however, is to miss the fact that men and women may also care for the conjugal partners with whom they are simultaneously involved in daily battles over bodies, power, and resources. (This emphasis on conflict and inequality, to the exclusion of love and tenderness, is particularly notable in public health research on gender inequality and sexuality. Sexuality has been largely invisible as a category of interest in public health except in terms of commercial sex, sexual violence, and bargaining around contraceptives or condom use—all moments when the gendered optic is invoked in terms of conflict or domination, rather than pleasure or affect.) We argue that to study gendered relationships it is necessary to attend both to the socially, politically, and economically structured inequalities within which couples negotiate *and* to the possibilities for tenderness, pleasure, and cooperation that exist in spite of these inequalities. Incorporating this dual focus of attention—without simplifying matters by, for example, asserting that love is an ideology that seals men and women into various relations of inequality—may seem like a stretch theoretically, yet it is no more than many of us do in our own daily lives, in our own intimate relationships.

Keeping this dual focus in mind, the chapters point out that it is one thing to marry for love and another to stay married for love. In other words, romantic love is not the same as companionate marriage. While romantic love may be something that companionately married couples strive to maintain during married life—indeed, this is a defining aspect of companionate marriage in many of the cases discussed here—privileging romantic attraction and individual choice when selecting a spouse is, in fact, quite different from being able (and wanting) to prioritize the ongoing affective primacy of the conjugal unit. For one, parents, siblings, and other kin may dispute the centrality of the marital bond, insisting on the equal or greater value of their own emotional and economic claims, making love both a practice through which kin ties are constructed and, at times, a force in tension with those same ties. Relatedly, economic interdependence—between women and men, between the generations, and between affinally related groups—continues to exist, often in tension with

newer ideologies of personal connection. Equally important, partners' expectations within marriage may conflict with gendered performances outside of marriage, as when an expectation of mutual fidelity is at odds with the prestige (more often for men than women) generated by extra-marital partnerships. Keeping these complexities in mind, some of the authors consider the ways in which companionate marriage may falter or fail in the face of poverty, gender asymmetry, or resistance on the part of those who benefit from more "traditional" ways of organizing family life.

In the remainder of the introduction, we first sketch out a brief conceptual exegesis and history of companionate marriage and review some recent work on the economic and demographic changes that seem to underpin shifts in the nature of marital ties. We then discuss links between companionate marriage and key dimensions of modernity: individualism, commoditized social relations, and narratives of progress, particularly the way in which gender is deployed as a trope to represent progress or its lack. We close the introduction by providing an overview of the chapters and an explanation for the book's organization.

"LOVE MAKES A FAMILY": HISTORICAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL
PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPANIONATE IDEAL

We draw the term *companionate marriage* from the English-language social science literature on marriage and family change (Simmons 1979; Skolnik 1991). In this literature companionate marriage is generally defined as a marital ideal in which emotional closeness is understood to be both one of the primary measures of success in marriage and a central practice through which the relationship is constituted and reinforced. The term *companionate marriage* has also been used in this literature to refer to a form of kinship in which the conjugal partnership is privileged over other family ties. In addition to these associations, we also use the phrase *companionate marriage* to suggest two core themes. The first is the idea of companionship as a deliberate goal of marriage and, more generally, the idea of marriage as a project, the aim of which is individual fulfillment and satisfaction, rather than (or in addition to) social reproduction.¹ Some of the chapters in this volume demonstrate the way that people put these ideas into practice, fundamentally changing the meaning and experience of marriage; in other cases, what is new is the way people evaluate their experiences of love and marriage in relation to this emerging global ideal. A second theme is the way the modern discourse of love provides a window into emerging con-

cepts of individuality—for example, the idea that one particular person would be a more satisfying and pleasurable partner than any other because of his or her specific characteristics.

In the historical literature on love and marriage, most of which has focused on Europe, the term *companionate marriage* implies a constellation of associated ideals and practices, some (but not all) of which can be found in the cases examined in this volume: marriage based on a prior romantic relationship, individual choice in spouse, monogamy (as opposed to polygamy), sexual fidelity within marriage, nuclear family households, neolocal residence, the idealization of verbal over instrumental expressions of attachment (e.g., saying “I love you” rather than washing his clothes or fixing her car), preferring the company of one’s spouse over familial or same-sex sociality, viewing marital sex as an expression and symbol of emotional attachment, and viewing marriage as “the presumptive venue of emotional gratification” (Kipnis 2005:88). Anthropologists, not surprisingly, have been quick to problematize these characteristics. De Munck (1998), for example, effectively demolishes the neat opposition between love marriage and arranged marriage, exposing the orientalist binary oppositions that inform these categories. Cynthia Dunn, for her part, points out that although companionate marriage can be said to predominate in both North America and Japan, in North America “the work of marriage involves working on the relationship itself to improve the couple’s compatibility and emotional satisfaction. By contrast, [in Japan] compatibility and emotional fulfillment were much less emphasized (although not totally absent) . . . The focus was as much outward on the couple’s place in society as it was inward on the couple’s relationship with each other” (2004:365).

The contributors to this volume similarly complicate the Euro-American narrative about companionate marriage, showing that emotion, courtship, intimacy, companionship, sexuality, and fidelity interrelate differently in different places. In Nigeria, for example, courtship is a time marked by intimacy, with the implication that the development of this intimacy is a key preamble for a successful marriage. However, as Smith argues, postnuptially the affective qualities of the relationship decline in importance, to be replaced by a much more “traditional” emphasis on the fulfillment of reproductive obligations to kin. In Mexico, in contrast, ideologies of companionate marriage frame not just courtship but also marriage itself as an affective project (Hirsch 2003). In both the Gregg and Erickson chapters, furthermore, a central concern is the *tension* between ideologies of love-based marriage and the reality of marriage under cir-

cumstances of persistent poverty and gender inequality. In some of the cases presented here, companionship is centrally expressed through sexual intimacy, whereas in still other cases sleeping together under the same roof (rather than “sleeping together”) is the principal expression of marital intimacy and is considered a somewhat racy departure from the past, acceptable only because of its associations, via missionary teachings, with Christianity. In some contexts, polygynous marriage is entirely incompatible with companionate marriage, whereas in others, the two can coexist, albeit uneasily at times. Our point, then, is not so much that marriages around the world are actually becoming more companionate—and far less that companionate marriage looks the same everywhere—but rather that the companionate ideal has grown in prominence as a part of the repertoire of concepts on which people draw when crafting their complicated lives, and that part of what is particularly hard for some is the very impossibility of building relations structured primarily around affect, pleasure, and satisfaction.

Although we recognize the Eurocentric nature of the historical narrative that we provide here, it is primarily these models of love and marriage that have been, and are being, globalized—through missionization, through mass media—and thus our goal in sketching out these fragments of history is to provide some sense of the eras and movements that influenced the American/Western European ideal of companionate marriage, which has been subsequently refracted and transformed around the world in ways that we address throughout the volume. Our goal is not to lead our readers to evaluate which marriages are more or less companionate along any one single scale but rather to encourage reflection about how these images of marital romance and intimacy are deployed symbolically—and used strategically—around the world.

Just when, and in what social group, one should date the development of the companionate ideal in Europe is far from clear. Some social historians posit that the ideal of companionate marriage had its origin in the *amour courtois* of eleventh-century Provence in which, ironically, the partners were expected *not* to marry. As Ian Watt states, “Courtly love is in essence the result of the transfer of an attitude of religious adoration from a divine to a secular object—from the Virgin Mary to the lady worshipped by the troubadour” (1987:136). In this scenario, elements of courtly love became embedded in marriage, and wealthy elites were the first to adopt this marital form because, being financially secure, they could afford to marry for love (Reilly 1980). Watt adds that in England, Puritanism, with

its emphasis on “the God-given unity of marriage,” was also crucial in the development of the “idea that love between the sexes is to be regarded as the supreme value of life on earth” (1987:135). Arguing that literature played an important role in promoting the companionate ideal, he observes (rather ethnocentrically) that “the Puritanism that is already strong in [Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*] finds its supreme expression in *Paradise Lost* which is, among other things, the greatest and indeed the only epic of married life” (137).

Other perhaps less literarily-minded historians propose an alternative origin story for companionate marriage in Europe in which the poor, having little stake in ensuring ties with the “right” families, were the first ones to marry for love rather than lineage or property, while the landed aristocracy lagged behind (Benton 1966; Zeldin 1973). Historian Jean-Louis Flandrin, taking issue with the courtly love theory, argues that marriage in which personal sentiment took precedence over other considerations was a literary fantasy that only started shaping actual practice “when wealth became less a matter of land or other forms of real property and more one of cultural capital. Only then would the love marriage cease to threaten the social order” (in Illouz 1997:213).

In the North American context, magazines and court documents concerning divorce suggest that marriages predicated on romantic love—and divorces predicated in part on its absence—occurred as early as the late 1700s or early 1800s. Lantz, for example, cites a case from 1842 in which the Connecticut State Legislature granted a divorce to one Jabez Phelps from his wife, Laura, based on her desertion and neglect of duty, among other things, which Phelps himself attributed to her lack of love for him: “about the time of said desertion, she declared that she did not love her husband, that she never did, and never could, and never would love him . . . that she had nothing against him, he had always used her well, but she . . . had rather go to the poor house, and be supported by the town, than to live with him and all his property . . . only she did not love him” (Connecticut Session Laws, 1842: 16–17, in Lantz 1982). Of course, such documents do not tell us the social position of those involved, what options Laura may have had, or even what Laura herself actually said, thought, and did (the preceding transcript was based on her husband’s testimony). Nevertheless, that concern about love was so elaborated in this document and in others analyzed by Lantz, and was, moreover, juxtaposed with economic security as a basis for marriage, suggests at the very least that love was a possible, if contested, rationale for marriage.

Both archival and more ethnographic observers of life in North America and Europe documented a shift, dated variously from the mid-eighteenth to the early twentieth century, toward a marital ideal characterized by a pronounced emphasis on emotional, social, and sexual intimacy (Stone 1977; Bott 1957 [1971]; D'Emilio 1999; Trimberger 1983). Participants in these companionate unions argued that they were inherently more satisfying and pleasurable than more traditional forms of union, but another aspect of companionate marriage's appeal seems to have been the way people used these gendered performances to signify their own modernity (Stansell 2000). Similarly, many of the chapters in this volume depict young couples arguing for the superiority of affectively oriented relationships by emphasizing the break with tradition, and so it seems worth noting how the deliberate crafting of a more modern gendered self was part of the cultural apparatus of these earlier shifts in marital ideals.

Around the kitchen table and between the sheets, men and women may make the history of love, but of course they do not make it as they please. Addressing questions of causality, Skolnik explores how demographic, economic, and cultural factors came together to cause a marked shift toward a companionate ideal in the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century United States. Demographic transformations included declining fertility and infant mortality, so that couples had fewer children, more of whom survived. Combined with gains in life expectancy, these demographic transformations (which were themselves the product of broader economic and political changes) meant that couples spent a relatively larger proportion of their married life together without young children in their care. Skolnik suggests that intimacy-building stepped into the vacuum created by the decline in the relative proportion of their married years that couples spent caring for children. Urbanization and the spread of wage labor also promoted a nuclear family ideal by reducing people's access to and dependence on their own extended families and by increasing the privacy and mutual interdependence of the conjugal unit (for a discussion of similar changes in Mexico, see de la Peña 1984). Along similar lines, D'Emilio in his work on the history of gay sexuality in the United States (1999) argues that rural to urban migration and industrialization, along with a decline in household production, were the key material changes that made modern sexualities possible. Eva Illouz makes a parallel argument, saying that the expansion of the labor market in the first decades of the twentieth century enabled some women to become less financially dependent on potential husbands, which had the further consequence of shifting women's expectations of marriage from economic security to emotional fulfillment (1997).

But the increasing importance of romance within marriage in the United States cannot be attributed solely to economic and demographic shifts; the rapid spread of new images of and narratives about marriage also played a crucial role. Illouz's reading of popular magazines of the period, for example, shows that Hollywood was singled out and chastised for peddling improbable images of marriage: "Attributing the new definitions of romance to the enthralling power of the new media of film and advertising to shape fantasies, the articles argued that the new romance was the figment of an overexcited imagination . . . In short, marriage was perceived to be under the assault of women's increased autonomy and of Hollywood fantasies, which led to unrealistic expectations of marriage as an arena of hedonistic satisfaction" (1997:50–51). Increasing divorce rates in the early decades of the twentieth century were framed as a "crisis" in American moral life, and one response was the marriage education movement, which was institutionalized on college campuses from the 1930s through the mid-1960s (Bailey 1987). This movement sought to combat the supposed deleterious influence of Hollywood by assembling a cadre of experts, primarily sociologists, to conduct research on "typical" families and to provide youth with a kind of vocational training for matrimony. While the content of these courses varied, they shared a general "hedonistic-therapeutic model" (Illouz 1997:53) that attempted to integrate seemingly opposed discourses about marriage: it should be romantically thrilling but should also be based on scientific principles and hard work. In this brief history we see a complex chain of economic and demographic changes, media technologies, and state policies shaping American desires, possibilities, and moral evaluations of companionate marriage.

Ideas about marital companionship—although not necessarily romantic love—do seem to have a longer history in Western Europe and North America than, say, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, or rural Pakistan, and one of our goals here is to trace out the mechanisms through which the companionate ideal has come to prominence—and been transformed and used locally—in these very different contexts. Recent ethnographic research in other world areas suggests that ideological and emotional shifts in the bonds of marriage are similarly tied to material and demographic transformations, as well as being shaped by media technologies and discourses linking new marital practices with notions of progress.² Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Spain and China, respectively, Collier (1997) and Yan (2003), for example, both argue that the shift away from family-based agricultural production toward wage labor was a critical aspect of the structural terrain in which companionate ideals grew in prominence. Collier also

suggests that the consequent focus on individual achievement and consumption as markers of success reshaped people's attitudes toward intimate relations.

As in the North American context, however, the increasingly widespread conviction that love is the legitimate basis for marriage cannot be attributed solely to material or structural changes. The globalization of images and "proto-narratives of possible lives" (Appadurai 1996) has also shaped people's desires and worked to link this conjugal form to ideologies of modern progress. For example, Larkin asserts that Hausa viewers interpret imported Indian films as illustrating an attractive alternative to both Western modernity and Nigerian traditionalism in the realm of romantic relations (1997). Similarly, Wardlow observed while living with Papua New Guinea nurses that they often spoke of Harlequin and Mills and Boon novels—particularly those concerning relationships between doctors and nurses—as instructional manuals for how to conduct their romantic lives (see also Wardlow 1996). Importantly, economic transformations often work in concert with, and partially structure, globalized cultural forms: that these women were nurses meant that they were literate enough to read romance novels, had the money to buy them or were embedded in social networks that exchanged them, and were sometimes financially independent enough to resist the less companionate arrangements their kin or boyfriends tried to foist on them. Similarly, the Mexican telenovelas that have played such a central role in teaching women more modern forms of desire are only accessible to them because migrant remittances have made satellite dishes an affordable luxury—and because the Salinas administration, to shore up the ruling party's fragile hold on political power, worked hard at installing electrical power in towns throughout rural Mexico.

One observation we might make in this regard is that it would be useful to add contraceptives and the social marketing of family planning that has often been a key aspect of international family planning programs to the list of factors that have contributed to the globalization of the companionate ideal. We do not mean here that contraceptives have been a sort of technological magic bullet that has inevitably modernized intimate relationships. Instead, we follow the argument of Schneider and Schneider (1995), who have described how class differences in the pace of fertility decline in Sicily led to the rise of reproductive stigma, in which poverty, high fertility, and lack of sexual control became intertwined in the social imaginary for the first time. Kanaanah (2002), describing the prestige of small companionate families among Palestinians in the Galilee, writes of a

similar phenomenon in which women and men draw on values learned through family planning messages to evaluate the relative modernity of their neighbors according to their styles of reproduction. As Thornton (2001) has pointed out, the billboards around the globe that show how “the smaller family lives better” reinforce the idea that marital sexuality and reproductive patterns are a crucial means of demonstrating a modern identity that is both individual and national.

LOVE, MARRIAGE, AND MODERNITY

In very diverse ethnographic contexts, the authors whose work is represented here have found similar transformations in how people construct and represent their intimate relationships. As cultural anthropologists, we have found ourselves simultaneously fascinated and discomfited by the similarities. We are fascinated because there do seem to be real underlying commonalities in how the people with whom we work talk about love and marriage. We are discomfited because focusing on these similarities seems to veer perilously close to putting us in the position of serving up reheated modernization theory, in which inexorable social and economic changes produce progress—progress that can be measured by the degree to which the consumption styles, tastes, and preferences of people around the world come to mimic those of Western societies.

That we are not making a modernization argument is apparent for a number of reasons. First, our emphasis here is as much on the differences in how companionate marriage is interpreted worldwide as it is on similarities, so we make it abundantly clear that this is not a story about some inevitable march toward global cultural homogenization. Second, in several of the chapters, the ideal of companionate marriage is largely experienced through its absence; in other words, the cultural project described by these authors is not how people manage a shift toward a more companionate ideal, but how they negotiate the gulf between an increasingly pervasive ideology and their actual experiences. Third, our focus on individual agency highlights how—far from being the inexorable product of changes in the social and economic environment—the shift toward a more companionate ideal is the product of deliberate strategizing on the part of self-conscious actors. Finally, that this is not a modernist approach to cultural change should be clear from our skepticism about claims that companionate marriage is inherently superior to other forms of intimate relations—that the measure of human progress can be marked by a society’s shift from

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Figs. Intro. 1, Intro. 2, Intro. 3. These three images from around the world illustrate the ways in which family planning promotional materials have drawn on and reinforced ideas about the relationship between love and low fertility. In the first one (*above*), produced by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's (SPC) Population Project, a couple gazes lovingly at each other under a romantic moon, presumably enjoying the affective fruits of their demographic choices. In the second image (*facing page, top*), produced by the Institute for Reproductive Health at Georgetown University (which promotes the global use of natural family planning methods), a young woman from Rwanda embraces her partner as they review together the "CycleBead" necklace, in which a string of color-coded beads represents the fertile and "safe" times in a woman's menstrual cycle. Again, as in the poster from SPC, emotional warmth and reproductive control are visually linked. The third illustration (*facing page, bottom*), borrowed from Kanaaneh's *Birthing the Nation: Strategies of Palestinian Women in Israel*, "the cover of a pamphlet on family planning produced by the Department of Health Promotion and Education, Public Health Department, Ministry of Health, Israel, appeals to Palestinians in its invocation of modernity and middle class status" (2002:79). While Kanaaneh does not call our attention to it, this image shares with the others here the same presentation of the pleasures of togetherness as one of its key visual messages.



משרד הבריאות
המחלקה לחינוך לבריאות

تنظيم الأسرة

حقائق ومعلومات

وزارة الصحة - قسم التثقيف والإرشاد الصحي - اورشليم

תכנון המשפחה



the burka to the bikini (see Stout 2001). Although many of our informants argued to us that this new form of relationship represents real progress for women, we see the shift to a companionate ideal as perhaps more accurately described as bringing a series of gains and losses, both for men and for women.

Rather than linking companionate marriage to the narrative of modernization, we insert it into the analytic of modernity, which refers both to (1) a periodization of “Western” history marked by a belief in progress (although sometimes also by alienation) spurred by a growth of scientific consciousness, an emphasis on autonomous individualism, and the burgeoning of capitalism as an economic order and ideological framework, and (2) “how people in different world areas have been impelled to engage the progressivist project of Western modernity” (Knauff 2002:13), ambivalently embracing, resisting, or reshaping narratives that force people to position themselves (and their cultures or nations) in relation to “tradition” and “the modern.” By attending to the intimate, interpersonal, and affective dimensions of modernity, the cases discussed in this volume make an important contribution to this literature. These chapters make clear that modernity can be at once globalized and “vernacular” (Knauff 2002), material and emotional: the idealization of companionate marriage is increasingly pervasive, but also locally variable. It is about interpersonal affect, but affect that is underpinned by certain changes in the organization of production and consumption. We situate love and companionate marriage in three central problematics of modernity: the emergence of the individualized self; the related importance of commodity consumption to practices of self-crafting, as well as the significance of love in the context of commoditized social relations; and the deployment of discourses about progressive gender relations as a means to claim a modern identity, whether this is on the level of interpersonal relations or the nation-state.

LOVE AND INDIVIDUALISM

“i am through you so i”³

A number of our contributors observe that when young men and women talk about love, they may be talking about their specific relationships, desires, and practices, but they are also using love as a trope through which to assert a modern identity. This modern identity is very much about the cultivation of a more individualized self—a self who has a particular style,

particular tastes, a particular constellation of relationships not necessarily based on kinship, and, finally, a romantic relationship in which each partner recognizes the uniqueness of the other. It is this mutual recognition of individuality, and the intimacy created through it, that is thought to provide the substance that will sustain the romantic relationship as it moves into the stage of companionate marriage.

Holland and Eisenhart (1990) suggest that individualism is at the heart of the cultural model of romantic love, at least in its American college student rendition: "An attractive man ('guy') and an attractive woman ('girl') are attracted to one another. The man learns and appreciates the woman's qualities and uniqueness as a person. Sensitive to her desires . . . he buys things for her, takes her places she likes, and shows that he appreciates her special qualities" (94-95). In this schematic model the central meaning of romantic love is the appreciation of an individual, and the practices that convey romantic love are geared toward expressing this mutual appreciation. While other components of the American model may not correspond to the meanings of romantic love in other world areas, it is true that in many of the settings in which anthropologists have explored local iterations of love, couples speak of courtship as a time to explore each other's personalities and to see how good a fit there is between each person's idiosyncratic desires and the other's ability to fulfill those desires. The idea that, for example, there might be different ways of talking (or of kissing), and that it is the individual's skills in these areas that will make him or her a good partner, seems strikingly different from the idea that one could know enough about one's partner by knowing his or her family reputation.

Discussing these issues in the North American context, Skolnik points to "emotional gentrification" as an important factor in the shift to a more companionate ideal (1991). The phrase, while problematic insofar as it calls to mind a prior mentality urgently in need of a bit of spit and polish, if not major structural repair, is meant to suggest a newly introspective turn in American life. Despite its problematic implications, we find the phrase intriguing in the picture it calls to mind of people purposefully cultivating modern selves. Stone (1977) uses a similar concept, "affective individualism," to convey the increasing glorification of personal emotion in England during the eighteenth century, and he similarly links it to a turn toward companionate marriage during that period. The implication here, of course, is that a companionate marital ideal is actually only one dimension of a much larger cultural transformation: the development of the modern individual self. Giddens addresses this point in his description of

the transformation of modern kinship, away from relationships of social obligation and toward “pure relationships” (1992), in which relationships are governed by individual desire, pleasure, choice, and satisfaction. Some ethnographic evidence similarly suggests that the valorization of companionate marriage emerges concurrently with processes that bring about a more individualized sense of self—most notably, wage labor and increased commodity consumption, but also, in some contexts, Christianity (Ahearn 2001; Errington and Gewertz 1993).

However, the individualist characteristics important to romance are expressed not only through innate or cultivated skills, such as kissing and talking, but also through consumption. Quite centrally located in Holland and Eisenhart’s model is “buying things”; one shows one’s own individualism and recognizes the beloved’s individualism through purchased objects that either enhance the self or symbolize one’s uniqueness. Thus, in order to trace out the ways in which companionate marriage is tied to modernity, it is important to examine the relationship between love and social relations under capitalism, particularly the central role of commodity consumption.

LOVE AND CAPITALISM

The theorization of the relationship between love and capitalism has a long history and multiple strands. Engels, usually posited as the apical ancestor of such theorizations, argued that in granting people economic independence from parents, wage labor facilitated the possibility of romantic love (1985). Freed from the desire to maintain or augment one’s holdings of private property, particularly land, from one generation to the next, the laborer was able to forge relationships based on authentic sentiment rather than on an instrumental logic. Also working within a Marxist framework, but far more skeptical about love, feminist theorists have argued that the conceptual distinction between public and private depends on a capitalist regime in which men subject themselves to the alienating world of work, while the feminized domestic realm is constructed as a safe haven in which social relations are untainted by calculation or interest. Love, then, far from being a human capacity liberated by wage labor (*à la* Engels), is critiqued as a mystifying ideology that serves to reinforce a particular construction of female gender as selfless, sensitive, and nurturing while also allocating to women the task of reproducing the labor force (Van Every 1996).

Taking the Marxist feminist argument one step further, cultural studies theorist Laura Kipnis draws on Marxist language to argue that companionate marriage not only facilitates the reproduction of labor but in fact has itself become an onerous mode of production, for both men and women. According to Kipnis, modern married couples—indoctrinated by ideologies of intimacy, the value of commitment, and the idea that marriage “takes work”—slog away at the work of conjugality.

Wage labor, intimacy labor—are you ever not on the clock? . . . When monogamy becomes work, when desire is organized contractually, with accounts kept and fidelity extracted like labor from employees, with marriage a domestic factory policed by means of rigid shop-floor discipline designed to keep the wives and husbands of the world choke-chained to the reproduction machinery . . . It requires a different terminology. This mode of intimacy we will designate . . . *surplus monogamy* . . . (1998:291)

Just who profits from this “surplus monogamy” is unclear in Kipnis’s model, making the labor analogy less than satisfying. Nonetheless, Kipnis makes the case—tongue in cheek we think, although we’re not sure—that adultery can be considered a kind of workplace protest, “a way of organizing grievances about existing conditions into a collectively imagined form” (294) or, in its more utopian libidinal moments, the attempt to imagine “through sheer will, a different moral and affective universe” (296). While this manifesto is clever and entertaining, it is bound to strike the anthropologist as ethnocentric on multiple levels; for one, it assumes a voluntaristic and implicitly Western actor who can choose to “commit adultery” or not. The anthropologist, on the other hand, might immediately think more situationally of mine workers and sex workers around the world, who are caught in economic contexts in which choice is not so clear-cut (Campbell 1997, 2000).⁴ Despite such limitations, Kipnis’s piece is valuable as an exercise in thinking about the disjunctures between the ideal of companionate marriage and its lived realities, particularly when companionate marriage—and monogamy, as a key symbol of the trust and intimacy at the center of companionate marriage—are increasingly framed as markers of modern progress.

One final theorization of the relationship between marriage and capitalism—and perhaps the one that is of the most current interest to ethnographers—focuses less on the way love articulates with the organization of

labor and more on its articulation with the organization of consumption. Eva Illouz examines the way in which commoditization and romantic experience have been mutually constitutive in North America during the twentieth century (1997). Analyzing advertisements, advice columns, self-help books, as well as interview material, Illouz argues that “commodities have now penetrated the romantic bond so deeply that they have become the invisible and unacknowledged spirit reigning over romantic encounters” (1997:11). For example, she demonstrates that the practice of dating—as opposed to calling on a woman at home—coincided with the rise in real income during the first decades of the twentieth century and quickly “made consumption an inherent element of any romantic encounter” (54). Etiquette books reinforced this pattern by defining consumption as symbolic of the “good treatment” of a woman by her partner. For example, the 1963 *Complete Guide to Dating* provides this little scenario: “There goes the phone and the call’s for you: ‘Mind if I drop over for the evening?’ asks the current man in your life. And what do you say? For a moment you may feel angry: why didn’t he ask to take you to a movie, or at least for a soda at the Malt shop? Well, simmer down for a moment before you give him a cold brush off” (in Illouz 1997:69). The marriage education movement, for its part, suggested that a reliable basis for marital success was “sharing common interests,” which meant engaging in leisure activities—increasingly conceptualized as consumption activities—together. Commodity consumption was also necessary for the ongoing seduction that was the work of companionate marriage; as one advertisement for deodorant admonished, “Love cools when husband or wife grows careless about B.O.” (in Illouz 1997:39). In other words, marital intimacy was framed as a quality that needed to be continuously achieved, and consumerism—particularly of self-enhancement products—was an important tool for this achievement. Illouz’s work usefully elucidates a model of companionate marriage in which commodity consumption, individual self-crafting, and romantic love are mutually constitutive and underpinned by economic and demographic changes.

A recent example of this intertwining of love and consumption is a Harry Winston advertisement that ran in the *New York Times* in November 7, 2004; the photo shows a three-stone diamond ring priced at \$8,500 and fancy pink diamond band at \$15,000, and the tongue-in-cheek caption reads “Monogamy does have its thrills.” To be sure, global inequalities shape these intersections between love and commodity consumption, and so it makes a difference whether the commodities in question are diamonds

or soap. Without wanting to argue that love is a luxury reserved only for those who have assured themselves of food and shelter, we think the Gregg and Erickson chapters do suggest that it can be particularly challenging to construct love-oriented relationships under circumstances of intense material insecurity.

LOVE, GENDER, AND NARRATIVES OF PROGRESS

While our contributors sometimes diverge in what they think most characterizes companionate marriage in their respective fieldsites, or in the factors that have generated a shift toward companionate marriage, they all foreground gender in their analyses, and all agree that an examination of love and companionate marriage entails a focus on gender. First, marriage in most areas of the world continues to be premised on sexual difference; thus, entrenched notions of biologically-based gender and reproduction still dictate which couples may obtain legal and religious sanction to marry. Reciprocally, the social expectation that young people will ultimately enter a heterosexual and reproductive marriage reinforces gender as both identity category and practice, with young women and men disciplined to behave in certain ways because it is expected that they will someday be wives/mothers and husbands/fathers. As Borneman writes, marriage has conventionally been conceptualized as “establishing and giving gender its fullest meaning in heterosexual union” (1996:220) and thus powerfully fortifies what Butler has called the “illusion of an interior and organizing gender core” (1990:337; see also Rubin 1975). Indeed, marital ideals shape gendered practice even in intimate same-sex relationships, such as those between Hyderabad men and their hijra “wives,” a topic poignantly taken up by Gayatri Reddy in this volume. At the same time, as mentioned earlier, expectations for gender can conflict with expectations for companionate marriage, with potentially dire health consequences when it is assumed that conjugal emotional fidelity will be expressed through mutual sexual fidelity, an assumption that may be incompatible with gendered (usually masculine) prestige structures that reward extramarital sexual conquest or the ability to financially support more than one sexual partner.

One question that can be asked, then, is whether the ideology of companionate marriage has particular implications for gender identities and practices. Is it a potentially emancipatory ideology that can liberate individuals from heteronormativity? Alternatively, is it an increasingly global regulatory ideal that further naturalizes gender categories and “marginal-

izes, excludes, and abjects that which threatens to disrupt it” (Borneman 1996:227–28)? On the one hand, the logic of companionate marriage—with its privileging of sentiment, choice, and individualism over social obligation and complementary labor—would suggest that gender categories and the importance of gender difference might diminish in importance. If marriage is more about personal fulfillment than social reproduction, then perhaps the anthropologically classic kinship prescriptions concerning affinity and sexual difference matter less. John Borneman, critiquing anthropology’s treatment of marriage as “the definitive ritual and universally translatable regulative ideal of human societies” (1996:215), has urged ethnographers to oust the heteronormative family as the basic building block of human sociality and to recognize instead what he calls the “elementary principle of human affiliation: the need to care and be cared for” (2001:37). The ideology of companionate marriage—in some of its versions—seems to embrace this “elementary principle.”

Less rosilily, on the other hand, companionate marriage is arguably the heteronormative ideology extraordinaire, asserting that women and men belong together not only for the purposes of reproduction and labor, but also for the only real possibility of emotional fulfillment. Certainly most globally-distributed movies and videos depict romantic love and companionate marriage as heterosexual. We argue that the ideology of companionate marriage can be appropriated and deployed for radically different personal and political goals, and that this is one way in which it participates in both a unitary, globalized modernity and its vernaculars. In the Papua New Guinea case, for example, young people employ an ideology of Christian companionate marriage against their elders in order to take the moral (and modern) high ground and thus get their way in choice of spouse. However, when some of these marriages go sour, their elders marshal this same discourse to reject divorce and to demand that young women “work on” their marriages and seek marital counseling from pastors, thus getting out of returning increasingly inflated bridewealth, even in cases where women have suffered extreme physical violence and/or infection with an STD (Wardlow 2006).

Despite the many vernaculars of companionate marriage, one aspect that seems globally shared, and that probably contributes to its global appeal, is its association with modernity—in other words, the discursive intertwining of gender, marriage, and progress, whereby it makes sense to a great number of people in very different places to use gender relations as a means of locating themselves and others along a historical continuum,

labeling themselves or others as more or less modern or traditional. How has gender become an idiom of modernization, what sorts of concerns are foregrounded and obscured by using it as a lens through which to consider social change, how do ideologies and practices of love and marriage play a part in this idiom, and to what extent is the equation of companionate marriage with gender equality a discourse deployed by “the West” to measure “the Rest” and find them wanting? Moreover, under what circumstances do women and men around the globe choose to resist or even reject this gendered lens of progress (e.g., Amadiume 1987)?

The idea of a reciprocal relationship between gender equality and other forms of social progress dates back to before the Enlightenment, and traces of it are reflected in the writings of various eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century revolutionary and social reform movements (Kollantai 1978; Dubois 1978; Schneir 1972; Felski 1995) as well as, less stirringly, in the way writings associated with the development of colonialism worldwide use gender to portray the colonized as savages (Lavrin 1989; Stoler 1995; Mohanty 1991). The ugly side of these gendered measures of modernity is the way gender has been deployed discursively as a handy trope to exoticize various peoples who then become urgently in need of outside intervention to save them. It hardly seems possible to think of a more apt example than Laura Bush’s radio address, in the days before the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, deploring the burka as a marker of the oppression faced by women under the Taliban. Ironically, however, the notion of a gendered modernity has also been a crucial tool in the struggle for gender equality worldwide: respecting women’s rights (or at least professing to respect them) has become a strategy through which both individuals and nations can demonstrate their modernity (Hirsch 2003; Gutmann 1996; CEDAW 1981).

Love and marriage have been easily elided into such narratives about gender and progress; companionate marriage and gender equality are often assumed to travel hand in hand, the former impossible without the latter (Coontz 2005). On the surface, one might assume that companionate marriage is automatically beneficial for women: most (although certainly not all) contemporary Western conceptualizations of companionate marriage presuppose partners who respect each other as equal individuals. In other words, marital partners may have different salaries or a very gendered division of household labor, but implicit in the ideology of love is the notion that as individuals they have equal value. Moreover, since the relationship is grounded in love, each partner should theoretically be motivated to sus-

Women of Iran



Fig. Intro.4. This drawing by graphic artist Marjane Satrapi, featured in a March 2005 article discussing how Iraq's newly elected government would choose to interpret Islamic law in light of how other Islamic countries have negotiated this complex terrain, used changes in women's head-covering and makeup (note especially the sly grin and the hearts on the headscarf in the last two frames) to make a point about the evolving "middle ground between Islamists, who want to stone adulterers to death, and secularists, who want a pure separation of law and religion." (*The New York Times*, March 13, 2005; used with permission of the artist.)



Fig. Intro.5. Images such as this one of Afghani women in burkas were frequently seen in major U.S. newspapers in the days following the post-September 11 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and on November 17 Laura Bush took over the president's weekly radio address "to urge worldwide condemnation of the treatment of women in Afghanistan." The oppression of women—for which the burka was used as evidence—served in her address to symbolize the barbarity of the Taliban. The original caption to this photo in the *New York Times* (published February 23, 2002), read, in part, "Every catastrophe begets its own linguistic fallout—words and phrases forged by the awful novelty of the moment or catapulted from obscurity into everyday speech." That the burka became a sort of visual shorthand for the Taliban's barbarity indicates how deeply intertwined gender and modernity are in our everyday lives. (Photograph by Ruth Fremson, *The New York Times*; used with permission.)

tain the admiration, attachment, and desire of the other by not dominating or exploiting the other. Finally, implicit in the ideology of companionate marriage is the prioritization of and greater personal investment in the marital bond over other relationships. All this might seem to make for a situation in which wives would have equal authority over household resource allocation, more influence over a man than his natal family, and more control over reproductive strategies.

And while this all seems fairly logical, the empirical story is, of course, more complex, as the cases in this volume aptly demonstrate. Thus, while sustaining a sense of skepticism about narratives that link gender with modern progress, it is important to examine the potential benefits and costs of companionate marriage, particularly since some ethnographic data suggest that women in particular strive for this marital form.⁵ In practice there are a number of potential costs to companionate marriage. Holland and Eisenhart (1990) argue, for example, that the American cultural model of equality in romantic love masks a stark gender inequality and that ideologies of romantic love may exacerbate female subordination by persuading women that “staying” in the relationship is the loving thing to do (see also Mahoney 1995). Rebhun suggests that a similar dynamic may be at work in Brazil; as one of her female informants said, “For me, love is the renunciation of I . . . When you like another person, when you love . . . you give yourself totally to that person, you forget yourself and remember to love the other person” (1999a:173). Moreover, in some contexts, companionate heterosexual marriage—however egalitarian—may be more constricting to women than existing alternatives. In her discussion of matrifocal and women-headed households in the Afro-Caribbean and in West Sumatra, Evelyn Blackwood notes that “there is ample evidence of kin practices and intimate relations without marriage or lacking marriage in the normative model” (2005:14) in which women control household production and wealth. Thus, the increasingly globalized images of modern, romantic love may, in some contexts, only serve to “denormalize other forms of relatedness” (15) and thus seal women into heterosexual unions that are disadvantageous.

Moreover, marital ideologies are hardly the only factors that shape gender relations within marriage. Discourses of romantic love and companionate marriage may imply a kind of equality, while at the same time local constructions of gender and economic structures may sustain gender asymmetry. Thus Giddens notes the underlying assumption (more often than not contradicted by reality) that both men and women are equally free

to walk away when the magic is gone (1992); the fact that people say they marry for love does not mean that women cease to be economically dependent on men. It is the combination of women's economic dependence on men and ideologies about the importance of love in making a relationship successful, argues Cancian (1986), that has pushed women to specialize in the work of love. Relationships forged by choice, pleasure, and psychological intimacy may be less durable than marriages based on and maintained through economic ties between families, and so it follows that developing an expertise in emotion and the pleasure of others is a critical skill that women need in order to help these fragile relationships survive.

Around the world the popularization of this idea of bonds based on sentiment has coincided with rising rates of marital dissolution. In a sense, in relationships based on choice, the partners must keep choosing each other long after the marriage ceremony; women—and their children—may be put in a vulnerable economic position if men cease to make this choice. Particularly in the United States, some who have noted the trend have tried to stem the tide through interventions such as marriage education programs and welfare reform. The idea behind these efforts seems to be to exalt marriage's ideological status, to provide people with the interpersonal skills to be more successful at the project of intimacy building, and to reduce government support for programs that were seen by those on both the left and the right as having weakened women's dependence on marriage.⁶ On the most basic level, this book speaks to the futility of those efforts. The genie is out of the bottle, and there is no going back to a time in which agricultural production, kinship organization, and cultural forces intertwined to make the coffin or the sea the only respectable exit strategies for marriages gone bad, and the priesthood the only route to avoiding it altogether.⁷

Finally, companionate marriage may be hazardous to women's health; for most women around the world, their greatest risk of HIV infection comes from having sex with their husbands (UNAIDS 2000). Increasing attachment to a companionate ideal, with its attendant emphasis on mutual monogamy as proof of love, may actually increase women's risk of marital HIV infection by reinforcing their commitment to HIV risk denial (see Hirsch et al. 2002, reprinted in this volume; Sobo 1995a, Sobo 1995b; Smith, this volume). Other factors (such as labor migration and masculine prestige structures) may continue to create conditions in which it is more likely than not that men will form extramarital partnerships. In rural Mexico, the shift to an ideal of companionate marriage has hardly meant that

men have given up their “right” to extramarital sex; rather, they just work harder to be keep these relationships a secret—and their wives, eager to believe that their marriages live up to the modern ideal, are happy to collude in the silence. Thus, increased investment in the ideals of intimacy, devotion, and constancy may create a marital environment of greater disease risk when these ideals are either untenable in practice or no longer as seductive as they once were.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The chapters in part 1, “Social Transformations and Marital Ideologies,” analyze romantic love both as an ideology spread by globalization and as a practice propelled and constrained by specific economic structures and state policies. The widespread emergence of the idea that marriage should be a partnership entered into by two individuals and sustained by their emotional and sexual attachment suggests that similar kinds of structural and cultural forces may be shaping sexual and marital relationships across a wide range of cultural settings. However, as Maggi’s chapter nicely illustrates, it is critical to be ethnographically specific about the source of companionate ideals and the specific local circumstances that make them available and appealing to people as a way of understanding relationships.

The chapters in this first part identify a range of ideological and material forces at work in the emergence of companionate marriage around the world. In Selina Ching Chan’s chapter on the changing meanings of jewelry in marital exchange practices in Singapore and Hong Kong, women’s increasing financial independence is key to making companionate marriage possible for the younger generation. By comparing women of different generations, Chan shows that as women have entered the work force, they are no longer as dependent on either dowry or approval from their natal families. Thus, they can choose their own partners, and they express this romantic autonomy by talking about jewelry as a sign of status and intimacy rather than a source of financial security and symbol of kinship.

In marked contrast to Singapore and Hong Kong, the Huli household in Papua New Guinea is still very much a unit of production, rather than consumption, and Wardlow finds that discourses linking love with modernity are more influential than economic or demographic shifts. Huli teenagers have adopted romantic practices, such as writing love letters, and they have become astute at marshaling Christian discourse to bolster and legitimate their desires to the older generation. However, there are many

forces militating against the project of companionate marriage among Huli youth. Traditional ideology constructs the phenomenological experience of romantic love, particularly by men, as a state of being victimized by love magic. Moreover, a man's female kin often work to undermine his attempts to prioritize the conjugal relationship over kinship ties.

In the last chapter of part 1, Wynne Maggi questions whether romantic love and companionate marriage are necessarily linked to modernity at all. Among the Kalasha of Pakistan, romantic love—being “heart-stuck”—has long been valued, and it is culturally sanctioned (though always a cause of consternation) for women to abandon their arranged marriages and elope with the men they love (Maggi 2001). Thus, the ideology of romantic love and companionate marriage may be associated more with “tradition” than modernity for the Kalasha. Nevertheless, the valorization of women's right to elope is intensified in the contemporary context by ethnic and religious difference. The Kalasha, a small animist group, delineate their difference from neighboring Islamic groups by asserting women's “freedom”—freedom of movement, freedom not to veil, and, perhaps most important, freedom to flee unhappy marriages and to be with the men with whom they are in love. In sum, while the desire for romantic love and companionate marriage may be replacing other forms of union in various locations around the world, the reasons for this change may not be the same everywhere.

A second set of questions addressed by this volume deals with the ways in which local constructions of companionate marriage intersect with sexuality. The ideology of companionate marriage suggests that sexuality can directly generate and sustain attachment between couples, as opposed to indirectly and gradually solidifying bonds via its contribution to reproduction. Thus, the chapters in the second part of the volume, “Changing Sexual Meanings and Practices,” examine what sex does (or does not do) to hold together modern marriages.

In the first chapter of this part, Hirsch and her coauthors explore how the shift in marital ideals from *respeto* (respect), in which unions are centered on the mutual fulfillment of a gendered set of obligations, to *confianza* (intimacy), in which trust and emotional closeness are the criteria by which women measure a relationship's success, shapes the social context of married women's HIV risk in a migrant-sending community. For the older generation, sex produced children and kept a man's attention. In unions of *confianza*, mutually pleasurable intimacy is said by women to strengthen the intimacy that is at the heart of the marriage. Thus, sexual

intimacy functions as a kind of emotional glue for companionate marriages—making younger women even more committed than were their mothers to ignoring evidence of their husbands' dalliances.

In contrast, Erickson's chapter in this part, as well as Reddy's in the next, suggest that companionship and sexual passion are opposed. Erickson describes how adolescent Latino couples in Los Angeles are sometimes forced, in a context of emotional immaturity and economic insecurity, to respond to pregnancy by making decisions about marriage and parenthood. Thus, in some contexts, sexual intimacy is seen as a crucial building block in creating and sustaining marital emotional intimacy, whereas in others, sexual passion is seen as impeding genuine trust and companionship.

In the Nigerian context, young Igbo men and women equally expect fidelity during premarital romances. However, constructions of masculinity award status and a sense of accomplishment to men who have extramarital partners; thus, once a couple is married, a more hierarchical gender dynamic emerges, and "it is in the expectations about and consequences of marital infidelity that this inequality is most profound." Specifically, a man who cheats on his wife risks little social condemnation, as long as he provides financially for his children. Moreover, within men's peer groups, having female lovers is a sign of continuing masculine prowess and economic success. Igbo wives, however, are expected to be faithful, and many women continue to deploy ideals of intimacy and love to influence their wayward husbands.

Of course it is important to keep in mind that the broad structural transformations that seem to underpin companionate marriage reshape intimacy via their effect on the strategies formed in the hearts and minds of individual men and women. Thus, a third set of questions relates to who, specifically, is pushing for these more companionate relationships, and why. What specific advantages and disadvantages are actually present in this new form of relationship? While people may argue that companionate marriages are more egalitarian, the chapters in part 3, "Gender Politics and Implications," trace out both the costs and the benefits of modern love and examine marriage as an institution through which gender is negotiated and reproduced.

Among poor women living in Brazilian *favelas* (shantytowns) sex is less of an emotional glue for relationships with men and more of a weapon against them. Life is very hard in the *favelas*, and the possibility of an enduring companionate marriage seems remote. As one of Jessica Gregg's

informants commented while watching a soap opera, “Do you think there is love like that? There is no such love. It doesn’t exist. It’s just a thing they put on TV.” Gregg argues that while Brazilian women are certainly aware of the idealization of romantic love, structural violence and enduring patriarchal gender ideologies make marriage in any form undesirable. In a cultural context where men are expected to support women financially in exchange for control over female sexuality, virginity is an important means for women to assert their value as wives. However, since few poor men can uphold their role in this implicit bargain, many women assert that their *liberdade*—their independence—is now more important than virginity or marriage.

In contrast to the strategy of *liberdade* pursued by some poor Brazilian women, the “eunuch-transvestite” hijras of India are faithful to their “husbands,” often to their detriment. While hijras are ideally men who have renounced sexual desire, symbolized by the ritual physical excision of the penis and testes, many have not renounced their desire for love and intimacy, as expressed in their longing for non-hijra male husbands. (In fact, many have not renounced their sexual desire either, and they seek out sex work clients as both a source of sexual satisfaction and a means to survive.) As one of Reddy’s informants put it, “It is a different thing . . . it is not desire. It is a companion through life . . . It is companionship and the hope that the person will be there with you later.” Despite the fact that hijras themselves have sexual clients, and their “husbands” often have socially sanctioned female wives, lifelong commitment to one’s husband is held up as the ideal. These “bonds of love,” as the hijras refer to them, often entail a reinscription of normative heterosexual gender ideologies in which the “female” partner is loyal and long-suffering, often in the face of abuse. Thus, hijras’ “bonds of love” with their “husbands” may look more like shackles to the outsider, with many hijra “wives” enduring domestic violence and some attempting suicide on account of abandonment, neglect, or abuse by their husbands. As Reddy concludes, “Although providing powerful egalitarian ideals, clearly not all companionate marriages result in (and from) the empowerment of the ‘female’ partner in the relationship.”

While we have divided this volume into three parts, in fact there is a good deal of overlap between the parts. Indeed, all of the chapters address sexual meanings and practices, social transformations, marital identity, gender politics, and ideologies of love. Essentially, the tripartite division of the volume represents not three separate substantive aspects of companionate marriage, but rather the three overall points of this volume. In the

first part, “Social Transformations and Marital Ideologies,” we make clear that these changing ideologies of love and marriage exist in some very distinct locations, and we suggest that the factors behind these transformations go further than just the worldwide dissemination of a Western ideology. The second part focuses on the transformation of sexuality in light of these changing practices of intimacy, highlighting the importance of exploring the affective dimensions of sexuality in order to understand physical practices. Given the invisibility of affect in most public health research in sexuality, we highlight this to underline the importance of the connection. Third, having described some of the forms of companionate marriages and provided some ethnographic richness in terms of practices of sexuality, we look at some of the implications of these cultural changes, particularly in terms of HIV risk and the persistence of gender inequality. Overall, our hope is that through this volume we can contribute to a new global approach to kinship studies, as we look both at the microlevel practices that constitute and bind relationships and at the macrolevel forces that shape the landscape of love.

NOTES

1. Giddens calls these relationships bound together by pleasure “pure relationships,” but we prefer not to use his term, both because it seems overly evaluative and because it does not quite capture the way in which this shift is, in some places, more symbolic than material.

Nevertheless, we recognize that *companionate marriage* may not be the ideal term either. A central limitation of the phrase is that there are certainly marriages in which one observes a definite form of companionship that is not what we mean by companionate marriage. In Mexico, for example, Dona Catarina cried when talking about how she missed her *viejo* after his death, and the tenderness she felt for him—the product of obligations respectfully fulfilled, of years of careful attention to the minute details of daily life—was definitely palpable. It was not, however, the explicit goal or *raison d’être* of their marriage. Thus, we differentiate between marriages in which companionship and intimacy developed over the years as a product of living together and those in which companionship and intimacy are the reason for getting and staying married.

2. Recent ethnographic treatments of love and marriage include Rebhun 1999a,b, in rural northeastern Brazil; Kanaaneh 2002, among Palestinians in Israel; Ahearn 2001, in Nepal; Cole 1991, in coastal Portugal; Maggi 2001, in Pakistan; Pashgian 2002, among infertile couples in Vietnam; and Inhorn 1996, in Egypt.

3. e. e. cummings.

4. One also wonders about the advisability of advocating adultery as an emancipatory practice in a world where condom use is impeded for multiple reasons,

where marriage is most women's biggest risk factor for HIV infection (UNAIDS 2000), and where a sexual double standard often means that women are penalized far more than men for their sexual transgressions.

5. For example, in 1968 Caldwell noted that in Nigeria "a surprising proportion of women longed for a non-traditional marriage, one with much more spousal companionship and one where this companionship was reflected in sexual matters" (in Orubuloye et al. 1997:1201).

6. As of 2006, the current U.S. administration is replacing previous welfare programs with experimental marriage promotion programs as a strategy for poverty alleviation. According to this model, low-income heterosexual couples can receive monetary incentives and counseling (often religious in nature) for getting married, but they do not necessarily receive funding for education and job training. Evidence suggests that this plan puts the cart before the horse: the Minnesota Family Investment Program, for example, found that marriage rates among the poor increased *after* welfare funds were used to provide job training, child care, and "earned income disregards" (a policy in which employment income doesn't result in the cancellation of welfare benefits). See also Lane et al. 2004 for a trenchant critique of marriage promotion policies.

7. Those concerned with the extent to which marriage has come to be perceived as a project for personal satisfaction rather than a fundamental building block of social organization, however, have a good point, which is that structurally strong marriages were one way of efficiently managing a number of vital aspects of social reproduction (cooking, the care of the young and the old, etc.).