

Content

List of tables | vii
List of figures | viii
Acknowledgements | ix
Credits | xii

Introduction | 15
Anna's wedding | 15
Social class and class distinctions | 18
Theorizing African marriages | 25
The decline of marriage in Southern Africa | 38
Aims, limits and structure of the book | 42

PART I

Fransfontein fieldwork | 47
Reflections on fieldwork with a family | 55
Studying marriage over time | 58
Lived experiences and historical events | 64
Generations and cohorts of Fransfontein women | 69

History through biography | 73
The older generation | 76
The middle generation | 85
The younger generation | 95

Postapartheid livelihoods | 99
Farming with a vision | 99
Living in Fransfontein | 101
Fransfontein class structures | 111
Sharing and caring | 118

PART II

Contemporary Fransfontein marriages | 127
Defining marriage in Fransfontein | 129
An outline of contemporary Fransfontein marriages | 136

Marriage variations | 157
Marriage and the state | 161

From decline to distinction | 167
The decline of marriage in Fransfontein | 167
Explanations for the decline of marriage | 171
Sixty years of wedding practices | 175
Performing distinctions | 185
Why not a cheaper copy? | 189

PART III

Forming families | 199
Entanglements of marriage and reproduction | 199
Fertility decline in Namibia | 205
Reproductive dynamics of married and unmarried women | 208
Becoming a woman and a mother | 211
Families with and without marriage | 220
Seventy years of forming families in Fransfontein | 223

Intimacy outside marriage | 227
Black cow marriages | 228
Intimacy and love in times of AIDS | 232
The making and unmaking of intimate relations | 237
Women staying single | 242
Between sex and sin | 247

Conclusion | 257
Reference list | 267