

by implication Mouse's writing, defies the incest taboo, which in Lacanian psychoanalysis is connected with the entry into language, and thus with the law of the father: "The new universe and language that Johnny and Mouse usher in is . . . one of elemental dependency. . . . Thus by demonstrating this interdependency of Johnny, Mouse, and Ruby, Head, through the text of *The Cardinals*, points to the possibility of a new world, a world in which another kind of language is possible" (p. 118).

Loretta Stec's chapter on Head's didactic judgment in *The Collector of Treasures* (1977) analyzes how Head, through her fusing of multiple narrative techniques, creates narrative positions that claim "the authority of several historical groups: African oral story tellers, who provide morals to the stories they present; [early] Western women writers, who used their position of supposed moral superiority to comment on social and political issues; and Botswana village elders, who use their power to decide community disputes" (p. 122). Stec argues that Head's didacticism can be called subversive because it is from a contemporary female viewpoint and challenges African social codes of gender and judgment and Western aesthetic codes that prefer art without a strong message. According to Stec, Head uses her village tales to critique a male-dominated society that has existed from precolonial times and agrees with Dorothy Driver, who claims that Head's stories support a blending of the best of the "old" world, with its focus on communal cohesion, with the best of the "new" world, with its greater value on, and voice for, women.

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Singhal, Arvind, and W. Stephen Howard. 2003. *THE CHILDREN OF AFRICA CONFRONT AIDS*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 265 pp. \$20.00.

This collection results from a conference at the Institute for the African Child at Ohio University. The contributors, including Africans, come from various disciplines and include faculty, students, development specialists, educators, and a theologian. Many are from Ohio University, as are the editors. There is a focus on communication theory, although other perspectives are represented. Case studies are presented in fifteen chapters, including Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Zambia, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and Botswana.

This is a timely book about African children, especially orphans, who presently confront an overwhelming challenge unparalleled in the history of childhood. We learn from carefully compiled statistical information throughout this collection that, for instance in Zimbabwe, itself typical of much of the central, southern, and eastern regions of the continent, 45 percent of children under the age of five are HIV positive and one of every

two fifteen-year-olds is likely to die of AIDS. Such sobering statistical information is given a human face by many authors, as in Zambia, where “Bwalya’s childhood has been anything but laughter-filled, innocent, and, happy . . . experiences . . . transforming him into a ‘juvenile adult’—vulnerable, scarred, and wary of life” (p. 61) or again, Sarah, from Zimbabwe, who states: “we have to act like adults because no one else treats us like children and we have to do what adults do. Now I wake up at 4 A.M., do the housework, cook, bathe the younger ones, and then I walk about five kilometers to school” (p. 119). The plight of HIV/AIDS-ravaged orphans is inseparable from the circumstances facing adults too, where, in South Africa alone, 4.7 million are infected with the HIV/AIDS virus, and in Botswana, 36 percent of people between the ages of 15 and 49 are infected (p. 219). Across the continent, grandparents are hardest hit, given their own declining health while facing the added burden of parenting their grandchildren.

A thoughtful introductory chapter (Howard) precedes a prophetic analysis concerning an alarming threat to democratic institutions posed by HIV/AIDS (Patterson). There is a decline in political socialization within families sidetracked by excessive parental deaths and the emergence of household structures often headed by children. Civil war involving 120,000 child soldiers fighting in twelve African countries creates child soldiers who represent a further threat to the democratization process. These two chapters set out continental macro causes for the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including civil war, poverty, malnutrition, gender inequality, rapid social change, and silence about and social stigma of HIV/AIDS. Subsequent chapters that emphasize macro causes are Kelly’s discussion of the modern school as a site for HIV infection, civil conflict and sexual violence (Mustapha and Gbakima), and gender inequality (McKee et al.).

Two types of analytical models are considered. First, several paradigms drawn from psychology are milked to apply to children’s coping mechanisms concerning grief and bereavement arising from parental loss, often resulting in regressive behaviors, sleeping problems, and feelings of guilt. Frequently, such children display resilience, although little empirical evidence is presented for this observation (Cook, Fritz, and Mwonya). It is suggested that talking about the process of dying may be therapeutic in a continent where such conversation is traditionally not emphasized (Fox and Parker). Second, three well-done chapters provide perspectives grounded in indigenous social institutions. Mutangadura considers that the extended family remains an important safety net in community coping responses, where, in one survey in Zimbabwe, “grandparents accounted for 50 percent of foster parents in urban areas and 52 percent in rural areas” (p. 62); she concludes that although the extended family is still the major source of care for orphans, economic problems intrude. Pillay shows how storytelling, an indigenous oral tradition, serves in mass media, especially the radio, as an instrument for constructed stories about coping with HIV/AIDS. In a superb chapter, Singhal frames his model as “harnessing cultural undercurrents” by treating “culture as an ally” by considering, for example, how HIV/AIDS

researchers often misunderstand indigenous ideas of sexuality and masculinity. Emphasis on local institutions characterizes two chapters which expertly consider participatory educational interventions, one in Ghana, addressing self-selected peer educators through workshops facilitated by the authors (Vanderpuye and Amegatcher), and the other by Wambuii, who considers how in Kenya, Africa's largest soccer organization sponsors HIV/AIDS-awareness education.

Section titles, although not misleading, are not useful. A section entitled "Possibility" might be better titled to highlight the strength of communication analysis in its five chapters, since each of these is a fine study or a theoretical discussion on the status of communication-based intervention programs in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Goldstein et al. explore "edutainment" (entertainment-education) strategies in South Africa, including a multilingual, combination television drama series and radio magazine (Soul Buddyz), which works to reach adolescents through stories on tabooed sexual topics between parents and children. Other chapters show how youths are educated about HIV/AIDS through community radio, including hiphop music in South Africa (Bosch) and education with comic books in Uganda and elsewhere (McKee et al.), and by emphasis on social studies in the school curriculum in Botswana (Adeyemi).

The remaining sections, entitled "Courage," "Vulnerability," and "Possibility," could be rethought as titles too, so as to emphasize better the theoretical strengths implicit in the text, for instance, the social-science model contrasted to the indigenous one noted above. I applaud Singhal's call for a cultural perspective. More attention should be given to mentioned indigenous cultural patterns, such as kinship, sexuality, nutrition, gender relations, and intergenerational interactions. In sexual analysis, among many questions is to what extent do orphans and other children receive, or could they receive, sexual instruction from grandparents through the institution of "privileged familiarity" as a joking relationship frequently observed across alternating generations in Africa. In gender analysis, one should discover the extent to which men, if not good husbands from a Western perspective, in their social role as brother frequently in Africa maintain strong affective relationships with their sisters, such that the brother-sister relationship is likely to be an often unrecognized kinship route for sharing burdens associated with HIV/AIDS.

More important than minor criticisms, this collection represents a stellar contribution in the best tradition of applied social science while providing a bridgehead into the courageous world of the African orphan.

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