

Publication

The Politics of Love and Intimacy in Goma, Eastern DR Congo: Perspectives on the Market of Intervention as Contact Zone

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This paper takes an ethnographic approach to illuminate everyday interactions relating to physical intimacy and emotional support in Goma's 'market of intervention'. I offer insights into the heterogeneity and complexity of gender identities in the context of protracted war and humanitarian intervention. Conceptualised as a contact zone, the market of intervention illustrates processes of encounter and distancing in Goma's urban space. In particular, the paper offers concrete perspectives on the ambivalent practice of transactional sex and examines it in terms of a conflict between morality and materiality that shapes and (re)configures local gender relations. Taking the issue of love and sex seriously allows one to hone in on processes of profound societal change that challenge constructed and contested notions of femininity and masculinity.

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