## Acknowledgments

As with any project that has taken almost two decades to complete and spans three different continents, there are many moments that inspired this book and the doctoral research that it is based on. The process was as unpredictable and surprising as events in my own life during these years, and it has been enriched by many different people. In order to prevent the list of names from becoming exceedingly long, I will focus on thanking those who accompanied me throughout the journey or encouraged and supported me at crucial moments on the way to publishing this book.

First and foremost my heartfelt gratitude goes to those women who shared their knowledge with me in Ghana, but whose names can only be rendered as pseudonyms: Ameley Norkor, Janet Aidoo, Adwoa Boateng, Hamda Ibrahima, Adi Cortey, Lydia Sackey, Dina Yiborku, Ma'Abena Oppong, Teley Kwao, Becky McCarthy, Stone Addai, Okaile Allotey, Stella Odamten, and the thirty more women who allowed me to record their life histories. Their names represent all the "knowing women," whose lives and love stories remain untold and whose work and knowledge does not come to public recognition due to the ambiguities attached to the disclosure of same-sex desire. Their generosity and their willingness to engage with my many questions and to articulate their insights, without knowing what form it would eventually take in my rendering, enabled me to write this book. My thanks also go to those women who interacted with me but refused to be interviewed. Resisting my desire to document their life narratives and thus resisting being incorporated into a body of intellectual knowledge reminded me of the limitations of scientific knowledge production and of that which can be known at large. Most of all, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my research associate Josephine Enyonam Agbenozan. Without her skills, courage, and commitment, and her tolerance of my social and cultural missteps, this research would have been only a shadow of what it eventually became.

There are several mentors in different parts of the world who encouraged, inspired, and supported the anthropological doctorate from which this book developed. Special thanks to my "Doktorvater" Heinzpeter Znoj at the University of Bern, who made it possible for me to enter a doctoral program at a Swiss university despite my unconventional educational background and my lateral entry into academia. He believed in this project and encouraged me to travel in order to seek and find relevant specialists and mentors among different disciplines. The guidance, warmth, and generosity shown by my co-supervisor, Rudolf Gaudio, in sharing his own findings and experiences in "the field," also substantially supported me in completing my thesis and turning it into a book at a time when my participation in academic conversations was limited by my work for an NGO and my responsibilities as a single mother. I am also grateful for the intellectual and moral support provided at different stages by Jafari Allen, Jean Allman, Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Signe Arnfred, Christa Binswanger, Gracia Clark, Akosua Darkwah, Michelle Gilbert, Jack Halberstam, Anne Hugon, Takyiwaa Manuh, Stephan F. Miescher, Charmaine Pereira, Steven Pierce, Graeme Reid, Brigitte Schnegg, Rachel Spronk, Sjaak van der Geest, Doris Wastl-Walter, and Gloria Wekker.

Decisive academic support in embarking on and sustaining this research project was provided by the Institute for Social Anthropology, my home base at the University of Bern and the Network Gender Studies Switzerland. I am particularly grateful to the board members and my fellow doctoral students of the Gender Graduate School Bern/Fribourg "Scripts and Prescripts" (2005–2009) and to the members of our small collective data interpretation group at the Interdisciplinary Center for Gender Studies. Throughout and beyond the completion of my doctoral thesis, the Interdisciplinary Center for Gender Studies provided me with practical and intellectual support. My gratitude also extends to my temporary Ghanaian home base at the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy and the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon.

This project would not have been possible without a doctoral grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) between 2006 and 2009 and a grant by the Commission for Research Partnerships Developing Countries (KFPE), which enabled me to collaborate with colleagues in Ghana. In 2010, I was offered the "Sarah Pettit

Fellowship" by the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies program at Yale University under the direction of George Chauncey. This fellowship came at a moment when financial support and affiliation to a stimulating academic environment was much needed. It provided new directions for my research, in particular through Yale's Black Feminist reading group. An additional write-up grant by the SNSF allowed me to spend valuable time as a visiting scholar at Yale's Department of Anthropology under Mike McGovern and at the Institute for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality at Columbia University under Saidiya Hartman in 2011/12. I am also grateful for the SNSF's support in making this book an open access publication.

Finally, I am indebted to the generosity of my peers, friends, or (metaphorical) siblings, who encouraged and sustained me emotionally, materially, and intellectually through challenging conversations; reading, formatting, or editing drafts; cooking meals; hosting me in Ghana or the USA; taking care of my daughter Ayeley; and otherwise encouraging me to complete this project. I would particularly like to thank Akua Gyamerah, Andrea Hungerbühler, Andrea Notroff, Anna Lena Weissheimer, Annemarie Woodmann, Bill Fischer, Dominique Grisard, Ellie Gore, Emily "Aunty" Asiedu, George P. Meiu, Henriette Gunkel, Jack U. Tocco, John Cooper, Jovita dos Santos Pinto, Kofi Takvi Asante, Lane R. Clark, Lindsey Green-Simms, Martin Kaiser, Maryke Rumo, Michelle Cottier, Nadine Dankwa-N'Toum'Essia, Nicole Burgermeister, Rahel El-Maawi, Sandro Isler, Simon Dankwa, Tara Thierry, Tina Büchler, Yakubu Ismaila, Yv E. Nav, Zethu Matebeni, as well as Bla\*Sh, the feminist network of women of African descent in Germanspeaking Switzerland.

A final and special thank you, however, must go to four individuals: to Simone Marti, whose passion, tenderness, and perseverance has nurtured me beyond words; to Patricia Purtschert, without whom I would have not ventured into doctoral research and whose critical sisterhood has been a support to me throughout; to my father Edward Kwame Akurang Dankwa who replied to the many uncomfortable questions I have asked over the years and who always gave his unconditional support; and to my mother Edith Dankwa-Hauri who – while teasing me that there were already enough books in the world – co-mothered my daughter and gave me all the space I needed to make this book happen.