

## We Won't be Able to Change How We Fight Without Changing How We Love

Kopano Ratele <sup>1\*</sup>

Published: March 1, 2024

### ABSTRACT

This article draws from and elaborates on some ideas conveyed in my book, *Why Men Hurt Women and Other Reflections on Love, Violence and Masculinity* (2022), to reflect on the relationship between love and violence. It contends that as a society we will not be able to change how we fight or oppose each other, at least we will find it more difficult to reduce the magnitude of men's violence against women, without changing the dominant narrative of love. Although the reflection on the relation between violence and love applies to other kinds of aggression and intimacy, such as between men's violence against and love for other men, the focus of this article is men's violence against women they love. Love and violence, the article shows, are not necessarily and always incompatible but instead are sometimes nested in each other.

**Keywords:** violence, men, masculinity, love, botho

1

In this article I draw from and elaborate on some ideas conveyed my book, *Why Men Hurt Women and Other Reflections on Love, Violence and Masculinity* (henceforth, *Why Men Hurt Women*) (Ratele, 2022) to further reflect on the relationship between love and violence. I contend that as a society we will not be able to change how we fight or violently oppose each other, at least we will find it more difficult to reduce the magnitude of men's violence against women, if we do not change the dominant narrative of love. Although the reflection on the relation between violence and love applies to other kinds of aggression and intimacy, such as between men's violence against and love for other men, between siblings, or between parents and their offspring, my focus is on men's violence against women they love. Love and violence, I wish to submit, are not necessarily and always incompatible. Instead, all too frequently we observe them nested in each other, at times even bracing each other, one the alibi for the other. This is not an argument for toxic relations, fatalism, nor justifying violence. On the contrary, it is realistic to accept that conflict between individuals (as well as groups), which can assume different forms, is not an exceptional state. From the moment humans arrive in the world as neonates to the end of their lives, they are likely to encounter and experience frustration and aggravation, not only pleasure and peace (because of a myriad of reasons such as laws, unmet needs, not knowing what others feel, and not being able to make others do we want them to), and even open conflict with others. Since it is reasonable to accept conflict to be a commonplace phenomenon in the world at large, and therefore unreasonable to expect all intimate life to be immunised from conflict, what is required of the individual or group is to know how to deal with conflict. That also implies being able to deal with negative affect and experiences such as frustration, shame, and anger.

2

It remains stimulating for me to puzzle over what kind of person is more interesting when it comes to what we refer to as love (which can mean different things in different cultures): Is it the person who labours at trying to intellectually fix the meaning of love, who talks (about) love, that is, the person who must define and analyse it so that love can be well-understood? Or is it the individual who is less perturbed about what love in the abstract

<sup>1</sup> Stellenbosch University, SOUTH AFRICA

\*Corresponding Author: [kratele@sun.ac.za](mailto:kratele@sun.ac.za)

means, accepting its elusiveness, and simply navigates in actual life love's promises, disappointments and compensations?

These questions can be viewed as another way of engaging with the question of what we refer to as love itself. Love - what it is, its place in human life, how it arrives, how to do it, how it feels, how it ends if it does - can never be fully resolved because love looks different in different places and times. Even within a single culture it is not uncommon to find individuals holding divergent views about the essence of love. Besides the difference and elusiveness of defining love, no *love in action* is exactly like another. While it is not totally ridiculous that quantitative psychological research requires a phenomenon to be measurable if it is to be adequately grasped (the quantification of love admittedly having a place in the study of love), it seems rather irrational to think we can compare two loves or love across cultures in any exact way.

What we refer to as love, that is, is frustratingly difficult to define. The difficulty is compounded when there is no hegemonic view of love. This difficulty is, moreover, not confined to conceptually or operationally defining love – such as when researchers want to study it or when a person whose relationship has ended wishes to understand it for herself – but extends to how love is displayed (if it is at all) or 'seen'. The difficulty is exacerbated when we wish to understand love cross-culturally. Even more maddening is to try to measure the quantum of love within a relationship or individual.

Similar difficulties that confront us when attempting to understand love are evident when trying to understand lovelessness. How are we to define lovelessness? Is it the feeling of being unloved, the sense of the self being unworthy of love, or the experience of being insufficiently loved? Is it a personality attribute or situational factor? Are we able to confidently measure lovelessness? Can we compare lovelessness across relationships? What about cross-culturally? In light of these difficulties, but also to point to an example illustrative of the complexity when studying love across cultures and individuals, I would like to describe a common way people in some cultures get to love in many places in our multi-cultural society, a way which will be very familiar to some of readers but unknown to others.

Where I grew up, as in many other places in South Africa, there is a practice called *ho fereba* in Sesotho,<sup>1</sup> though most people use the term *ho shela/shelana* from the isiZulu *ukushela/ukushelana*. Here follows a very brief description. A man approaches a woman (it is a heteronormative practice) to persuade her that he loves her, and that she should love him in return. Historically, the occasion would involve a kind of praise singing, a poetic performance, about the woman's abilities, ancestry, beauty, or other physical, behavioural and cultural assets, as well as the man's own assets. The best outcome in this love game is to get a favourable response at first attempt. In most cases the man will have to return several times until the woman is convinced that he is 'serious' and indeed worthy of her love. Love, in this worldview, is verbal performance, a language game, in which the object of having his love accepted has to be argued for. The performance is not just any performance but must be persuasive.

When I read for a postgraduate degree at university, at an institution that was then a predominantly white university, I would learn that *ho shela* was unknown among the majority of my fellow students. Later, as Black South Africa opened up more and more to the white and Western world, I learned from television dramas, from films, as well as from the stories of love among many whose company I kept that this practice of getting to love was unknown. Given the dominance of Western and white cultural ideas in our lives, including ideas about love, many westernised Black people also turn away from *ukushela*. A man must quickly learn that it is not acceptable – and may be regarded as harassment – to walk up to a woman and 'unpack' to her why he loves her and he is worthy to be loved by her.

There is another way of initiating love in our society with which many readers will be familiar. In contrast to *ho shela*, among some groups love is usually supposed to follow after a certain undetermined period of dating. This period may involve going to watch the sunset, having drinks, going to the beach, eating out, and other such activities, in order to get to know each other. As a shorthand, let us call this a predominantly *modern* Western practice of getting to love.

It should be obvious that what I am trying to do here is draw attention to what can be gained from appreciating that there are different conceptions of love, at least of arriving at something people in different contexts refer to as love. It is when we can incorporate into our ways of thinking about love, at least how we initiate a love relationship, that we perhaps can imaginatively open ourselves to expand our own conceptions of love. Expanding how we conceive of love is perhaps a step toward expanding how we *do* love, how to make sense of how we are loved (or not shown love), and potentially how to fight with those who would love us (or not love us).

At this point, I would like to make detour.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sesotho, which is the national language of Lesotho, is also one of the 12 official languages of South Africa. The home language of 7.8% of the population, speakers of the language are concentrated mainly in the provinces of Free State and Gauteng (Statistics South Africa, 2023. *Census 2022: Statistical Release P0301.4*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa).

It will be evident for any reader of the book *Why Men Hurt Women* (Ratele, 2022) that it was essential to try to fathom ideas of love as it was to grapple with masculinity and violence. Working out the relations among these three key terms was also a significant objective.

Given the direction in which my thinking was developing when I was working on the book, I went back to read Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation because of his attention to love (Maslow, 1943a, 1943b, 1958). Although I take leave of him at some point, which is to indicate that there is an important difference in how he conceives of love and how I do, a key idea of the American psychologist who came up with the theory of hierarchy of needs, and one that I agree with, is that love is an essential human need. I do not wish to rehearse Maslow's theory. However, the idea of love – and its opposites such as fear, hate and lovelessness – as a *universal and fundamental human need* (although at times the word *desire*, because it signals agency, is the more apposite) one that motivates men's behaviour just as it motivates women's, is a vital one to bear in mind in thinking about violence in intimate life.

The motive to which we give the name love (or other names in other languages), it may be necessary to underline, is also important in thinking about political and cultural life. The motivation is not restricted to interpersonal relationships. It is observable in cultural and political life, in leaders and followers, authorities and ordinary members, as much as in psychological and intersubjective relations. A culture that fails to recognise the elemental desire (and uses) of love for its reproduction imperils its own future. Love can be used, and quite often abused, in the production and maintenance of a sense of ingroup belonging. Similarly, a political group that does not consider and 'exploit' the need for attachment and affiliation among its members, jeopardises its own survival.

In a country like South Africa, which was colonised by European nations and then ruled by white settler nationalists under the system of apartheid, individuals of a certain age grew up within a socio-political system that bred intergroup antagonism. Under apartheid, and prior to 1948, under colonial rule, the political (as well as cultural, business, and religious) leaders South Africa discouraged, via the law and social convention, mutual bonds and solidarity between people of different races, and, to another extent, different ethnicities. The state actively prohibited certain types of attachment and promoted other kinds of belonging through racist and ethnic segregation. In short, it appears that the white rulers of South Africa understood that love (alongside animosity) was useful for politics, can be seen in group life.

Whereas the apartheid and colonial states appear to have known, even if by proscribing some forms of it, that love is vital for cultural and political reproduction and not only interpersonal life, the fact of love as a basic human motivation that, according to Maslow, is only secondary to the need for oxygen, water and food, and the need for safety and shelter, seemed to have escaped the political leaders of post-apartheid South Africa. Apparently, in the political thought of the leaders of democratic country the human motivation for love has no place in socio-political life. For example, in the first national programme of the African National Congress (ANC) (1994), the Reconstruction and Development Programme, basic needs are defined as 'jobs, land, housing, water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, a clean and healthy environment, nutrition, health care and social welfare'. If this is read generously, it could be said that *a kind* of love was implied in some of the identified needs, because, for instance, the hunger to return to one's ancestral land that was stolen is a hunger to be culturally, spiritually, and psychologically reconnected, to re-member. However, it may also be the case that the ANC, not unlike other psychologically ignorant political formations, did not have confidence in love as cultural and political force – a force that is connected to basic human motivation. It could, then, simply be the case that the leaders of the ANC, like other political parties here and other countries, do not understand the idea of love beyond its interpersonal dimension and how it is politically and culturally usable.

It may make some readers uncomfortable to hear that love can be an instrument in the hands of cultural elites and political figures. However, the dynamics and exploitation of ingroup love – with ingroup membership under specific conditions associated with outgroup hate – is a commonplace in social psychology. There is a choice of contemporary real-life examples where this association is apparent. Apartheid was the prime example of this phenomenon. The war on Gaza that started in 2023 is another. The nationalistic and xenophobic responses against international migrants in the United States and Europe can also be understood as involving intergroup love and outgroup antipathy.

What is puzzling is that the apparent lack of confidence in (and understanding) of love as a fact of political and cultural life applies to Black people, even though, for example, they may recognise that violence, hate and fear underlie anti-Black racism. I am suggesting that while it may be comparatively easier for Black people to recognise that racist hate is a political phenomenon, it seems to be harder to appreciate that love can be political. While I am unable to spend as much time as I would like on what Black people might do differently in response to the claim that there is a lack of appreciation, or an underappreciation, of love as political and cultural matter (but see Ratele, 2022: 91-93), I would like to make three quick observations.

First, what we love and how we love begins in the imagination. While some of these already exists, Black people, especially in African countries, can produce more *images of Black political and cultural love* (but see Hayes and Minkley, 2019, in their collection on photography and visibility in African history). One way to define political and cultural love is as the extension of positive affect and acts such care and solidarity, concern and warmth to Black 'strangers'. Of course, these affects can and do go beyond race, but here I am concerned with political and cultural love among Black women, men and other genders. Faced with an uncaring racist, sexist, capitalist world, Black people can endeavour to make images of the loving world for which they yearn. These images of Black political and cultural love can be realised via stories, video, television dramas, poetry, photography, books, news features, film, fine art, and research. The power of images cannot be exaggerated. The easy part to this proposal is that the making and circulation of image has become much easier since the arrival and wide access to smartphones and social media.

Second, image cannot remain at the level of the discursive but must take material, three-dimensional form. This goal is harder to achieve. Even then, in order to realise love beyond intimate space, then, Black people must maintain, refurbish and create institutional and public spaces that nurture and project Black love. From building and maintaining places of worship to workplaces, from social clubs to public spaces, these can be made more sustaining, healthy, beautiful, and nourishing for Black lives.

Third, to help in realising Black political and cultural love there needs to be more widespread recognition of the fact that love is not only something that transpires between two people or within families, but rather that, as the opposite of anti-Black racism, outgroup hate, and xenophobia, love is indubitably a group affair. To enable such general recognition would need the help of those with political and cultural authority, but also anybody else who is an influencer (which is to say somebody who has some kind of influence). The difficult part of this proposal is whether such authorities and influencers have been educated in Black and African love, which I suggest, can be gleaned from reading the work of authors and political figures such as W.E.B du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Nelson Mandela, and Angela Davis, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, bell hooks, Steve Biko, Toni Morrison, Desmond Tutu, and Maya Angelou.

4

To return to men, from the idea of love as a basic need I have arrived at two key hypotheses. I submit that many men suffer from a sense of lovelessness. Until they have achieved something, many men carry with them a feeling of dispensability. This could be why working and earning well is such a defining feature of dominant masculinity in racist capitalist patriarchy.

It is true that for a long time, like many a man in our society, I experienced myself as not quite lovable, as unnecessary – until I had achieved something. Under this sense of expendability experienced by many a man are interred various experiences and affects. What joins them together is that they are opposites, of one kind or another, of deep, consistent, nourishing, love for others and self-love. To experience oneself as nonessential is already to suffer. The hunger for love in men is generally refused admittance into cultural consciousness. If men's needs for love are noticed by the culture (including by men themselves), which appears to be rare, or confined to an earlier period of men's lives, the culture does not know how to process these love needs of adult heterosexual men and assimilate them into its institutions. As suggested in relation to image-making of Black love, men's needs for love appear to be inadequately symbolised or symbolically mediated by our dominant discursive traditions.<sup>2</sup>

Not all men suffer from a sense of lovelessness. It may be necessary, then, to observe that given the nature of our society, it is some men more than others who suffer this hunger for affection. The men whose chronic love hunger is most likely to be unappreciated, or dismissed, are the very ones who receive minimal dividends from patriarchal masculinity ideology, particularly where this ideology intersects with racism and capitalism. Those who have grown up with poor evidence of love, if there was any love at all, often endure other forms of wretchedness. (That said, it may be the case that even those men who have experienced periods in their lives when they have felt acutely unloved, may have had moments when their love needs were met, however inadequately.)

Men's sense of lovelessness opens up during boyhood. There is a time in a boy's life, it seems to me, when he begins to be touched less (if he ever did receive adequate touch), spoken to in a more peremptory tone, and, as it were, left to his own emotional devices. The intimacy education, if there ever was any, seems to suddenly slow down and may even come to a halt.

The ungratified or poorly gratified love needs of men are largely veiled, minimised, or displaced by conventional ideas of masculinity. The unrecognised hunger for love may be largely unconscious, even in men themselves. As such, the association of effect (deleterious male behaviour) and cause (psychic wounds) may not be readily obvious. It is necessary to make another detour at this point.

---

<sup>2</sup> I thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out to me.

The foundation of how I regard love resides in what is referred to as *botho* in Sesotho. This idea can be understood to simply indicate being human. The core of *botho*, in my reading, is that ‘*P* makes no sense without ‘*you*’ and ‘*we*’. My individual well-being is dependent on our well-being.

Recognition of *botho* as a paradigmatic and social expression of love – indeed of any relationality – emerges from the recognition of my dependence on others, and of theirs on me. A man who comes to more fully recognise his irrevocable need for belonging, soon also recognises the invitation to treat others the way he wants to be treated; to regard another person the way they would like that person to regard them. *Botho* implies the need for mutual humanisation and acceptance.

Consider, for a moment, this particular form of love: passionate love. If it is correct that the need for others and to be needed by them is the foundation of being human, then the passionate form of love between sexual mates essentially specifies *botho* and intensifies it. I could even say that sexual passion plays with the secreted side of *botho*.

Or take parental love. Since *botho* always already entails connectedness, the intricate bond between parent and child simply *focuses* the essential belonging with others. Parent-adult love is the magnification of *botho*. The two are not separate phenomena.

Because love, whether in its sexual or its parental form, is what enables us to unfold our humanness, it would do us good to nourish it, simply because we are doing nothing more or less than realising our being human. We cannot then ignore love, as the affective action aspect of *botho*, in the work we do of trying to lead boys and men toward transformative gender relations.

In light of these propositions, the second key idea regarding love and lovelessness is that a sense of lovelessness appears to lie at the root of some of the violence of men against women. (The same holds for the violence of men against other men, against children, and against themselves, given that alcohol and drug abuse can be taken as examples of forms of self-directed harm, and given that, in a *botho* universe, when we harm those closest to us, we inevitably harm ourselves as well.) Lovelessness explains some, certainly not all, of the violence of men against women they love. Lovelessness does not justify violence. The experience and affects of lovelessness, I ought to stress, appear to be entombed within the experience and identity of being men in this society, within racist, patriarchal, zombifying capitalist structures – a nested relation one constantly tries to figure out so as to comprehend oneself and others as well as the secreted and unmistakable effects of these structures. Racism can be taken as the expression of the systemic denial of *botho* of black people. Without *botho* there can never be any kind of sustaining love. Hence, a man’s feelings of lovelessness, of being unloved, or even of being unworthy of being loved – which is to say the feeling he might have that he is not quite *motho* (meaning ‘not quite human’ in Sesotho) – must always be seen in relation to the influence of racist institutions, practices and ideas that shape and reshape his inner life and interactions. This implies that the continual necessity to probe why he feels the way he does is a lifelong activity.

Lovelessness, or feeling unworthy of being loved, usually develops early in our lives. In some cases, the satisfaction of our yearning for love in childhood is made conditional: ‘I will show you love if you are a good child’; ‘I give you this [a token of love], if you behave’. In Black life, this conditionality of love compounds the feelings of unworthiness as a result of deprivation and dehumanisation caused by racist structures. In other cases, love’s gratification, but more distinctly, utterances concerning love from parents or caregivers, are interlaced with harsh discipline or punishment: ‘I am doing this because I love you’. In either instance, the satiation of affective needs becomes enmeshed with hurts, or terms and conditions, leading to a picture being drawn in our interiors of love coiled around hurting. This picture of a wounding love may loom large in our later relations with others. For some of us, because of the depth of this hurting affect, and given that our inner lives tend to be left largely unexamined, we live with love and pain scrambled together. It is when our ways of loving are scrutinised and carefully unscrambled from the punishment that may have attended how our need for love was gratified, if it was at all, that we are enabled to enjoy (giving and receiving) less-wounding love.

Lovelessness among men shows itself in the childhood of many boys. It is a deficiency that begins at home, naturally, in acts of parental abandonment and child abuse. Ironically, the abandonment particularly of boys by their fathers is a significant factor in the unmet need for male love. The absence of adult men in the lives of young boys, specifically their biological fathers, is implicated in the relative dearth of models of engaged loving manhood in society.

We might ask, are girls not also abandoned by their fathers? Many girls also experience a deficiency of father-love. Girls need loving adult men as much as boys do. They need present, loving fathers to show them how to

relate to men healthily and authentically, whether in platonic or sexual ways, in their own adult lives. However, while girls are also abandoned by their fathers, they have mothers and other adult women with whom they can readily identify and who can show them how to be women without men. (The point that can be raised here is girls might well learn how to be women without men, but it could lead to them becoming unrealistic about relationships with men, and possibly even enduring more from men once they are adult. This is a real possibility, which seems to imply that changing masculinity, to work on nurturing more engaged fathers for girls as much as boys, is imperative.) In contrast, a boy who grows up without the presence of an involved, loving father might not have a readily available, constant, adult male with whom he can readily identify.

What I am advancing is no radical idea. I perceive a deep and dense hurt at the heart of why some men hurt others. Violence against boys and men, which is another way of speaking of the life-pervading experience of boys and men being unloved, is enmeshed with the violence of men against girls and women. And, once again, these different manifestations of violence are not separate from the violence of patriarchy and racism and economic exploitation.

7

It is true that when most people in our society hear the word love, what comes to mind may be parental or sexual love. For instance, while many people will declare their love of God, that tends to be reserved for specific situations or when their understanding of love is being probed. However, the point is what we call love can be and is used to refer to many feeling states, conditions, thoughts, and actions. Love, as I have argued, can also refer to political and cultural attachments.

It is important to note that one's understanding of love is not genetically determined. To say something is not genetic does not mean it is less central to human existence. Humans are, if you will, naturally social beings. Without others to look after us, especially at the beginning of our lives, we would not survive. As a result, to say that love is not inborn does not imply that it is a trifling concern. We might not come into the world with love coded into our genes or knowing what love is. Yet, we cannot live without some form of kindness, compassion, and care from others. We are taught (through caring attentiveness) how love feels, what it looks like, and what we are supposed to do about what we recognise as love. All of this implies that we need others to teach us. We think of love the way we do because of the beliefs, perceptions, feelings and acts of love (whatever forms these take) in the family into which we are born and the relationships we develop when we gain some autonomy and competence in social life. The family, peers and relationship partners in turn construct love from the cultural discourses and images that circulate in their family and social circles and from their life conditions. Vehicles that transport these discourses include religious institutions, radio stories, television soap operas, advertisements, magazines, books, newspapers, films and social media.

Several interesting consequences flow from this understanding. An unfavourable consequence is that because our parents loom large in our early life, they can implant distorted beliefs about and practices of love in us. But these beliefs and practices do not have to be distorted to be unfavourable to us – it can simply be that they are our parents' beliefs and practices, not our own.

8

To speak of being taught and learning what love is on the other hand, has obvious encouraging consequences. Since we learn to love, it means we can change how we think of love. I gestured at the beginning that some people in a society are aware of and have made use of two ways of getting to love: *bo shelana* and dating. If some people can change how they initiate love, I think it suggests that they do appreciate that their ideas of love shift, and are therefore place-, culturally- and historically-contingent. How we think of love is related to another point: we can change how we love. If it is reasonable to assume that we can change our ideas about love and in consequence, also our love actions. If it is also reasonable to assume that love can take different forms, changing how we think of love and do love as men may be necessary when what we call love hurts women. A change that might help, that could open both younger and older males toward different, healthy – meaning non-violent – ideas of manhood – is turning toward a different kind of love. That love is likely to emerge from a deliberate education on masculinity and vulnerability. In other words, men could benefit from an opportunity to think of the vulnerability that appears to inhere in loving unreservedly. To do love vulnerably requires, for those of us who have not had the benefit of these lessons, an education in intimacy. Men must learn to be able to love without fearing that we are making ourselves stupid, leaning into vulnerability – and that is a significant educational and psychological undertaking, as far as I can see. That endeavour involves, for example, learning to ask, learning to take rejection, learning to identify and name the shame inside us when we feel as if we are unworthy of love and disposable. Men must learn to speak of what we like and do not like, learning to reflect on the self, so that we may

become more understanding of anger and ourselves – anger as yet to be analysed part of masculinity, and learning to talk. In this education we unearth ideas and practices of a different love. At the simplest, these lessons might entail asking, for instance, ‘would you please (add whatever it is you desire from another person)?’. You could say, ‘I enjoy that very much’, and so increase the likelihood of whatever it is that you enjoy happening. I hope these examples are not considered to be proposals for self-help strategies. I am simply trying to exemplify how we might get to fold vulnerability into how we love as men.

Changing the patterns set in the family of origin is not easy, though. It also means transforming how a group of people considers love, and that is even harder than changing the way an individual understands love. But, as every family is part of a culture – which is to say that, like any group, it absorbs cultural ideas of how to conceive of and do love – shifting prevalent cultural ideas about love usually takes time and may never happen in your lifetime. But it does not mean you do not have to try to do so.

In conclusion, it seems that when one desires to change how they relate to others, it can sometimes result in the ending of relationships. While there is the possibility of a more sustaining relationship, saying *no* to something when we have accepted or been silent about it for months or years can have undesirable consequences. Changing how we love or want to be loved may force changing the self itself. That can be hard. It can also mean the end of some of our most intimate relations. Even with all that, it does not mean we have to endure a love we do not want, because we now know that we can change.

## REFERENCES

- African National Congress (ANC). (1994). *The Reconstruction and Development Programme*. Johannesburg: Umanyano Publications.
- Hayes, P. and Minkley, G. (eds). (2019). *Ambivalent: Photography and visibility in African history*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv224tp5b.5>
- Maslow, A. H. (1943a). Preface to motivation theory. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 5, 85-92. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00006842-194301000-00012>
- Maslow, A. H. (1943b). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Maslow, A. H. (1958). A dynamic theory of human motivation, in C. L. Stacey and M. DeMartino (eds.), *Understanding Human Motivation* (pp. 26-47). Cleveland, Ohio: Howard Allen Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1037/11305-004>
- Ratele, K. (2022). *Why Men Hurt Women and Other Reflections on Love, Violence and Masculinity*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18772/12022097632>
- Statistics South Africa. (2023). *Census 2022: Statistical Release P0301.4*. Pretoria, South Africa: Statistics South Africa.

---

**Citation:** Ratele, K. (2024). We Won't be Able to Change How We Fight Without Changing How We Love. *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics*, 8(1), 06. <https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc/14216>

Copyright © 2024 by Author/s and Licensed by Lectito Publications, Netherlands. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.