



**UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)**

**Safety in the midst of stigma: Experiencing HIV/AIDS in two Ghanaian communities**

Kwansa, B.K.

[Link to publication](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Kwansa, B. K. (2013). Safety in the midst of stigma: Experiencing HIV/AIDS in two Ghanaian communities

**General rights**

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

**Disclaimer/Complaints regulations**

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

# Contents

List of figures	<i>ix</i>
List of pictures	<i>ix</i>
Preface	<i>x</i>
1 THE STUDY	<i>1</i>
HIV/AIDS in Ghana	<i>4</i>
Study objectives	<i>7</i>
Leading concepts	<i>9</i>
Outline of the book	<i>20</i>
2 ETHNOGRAPHY IN A HIGHLY SENSITIVE SETTING	<i>23</i>
Getting clearance	<i>23</i>
Fieldwork methods	<i>26</i>
My stage of re-socialization and selection of respondents	<i>32</i>
Data collection	<i>40</i>
Field challenges, post-fieldwork, and limitations of the study	<i>47</i>
3 “IT BETTER BE HIDDEN” HIV TESTING NARRATIVES	<i>51</i>
Getting to know	<i>52</i>
The counselling and testing procedure	<i>59</i>
“‘It better be hidden’”: To test or not to test?	<i>65</i>
Conclusion	<i>74</i>
4 TO SELL OR NOT TO SELL THE SICKNESS	<i>77</i>
‘Selling the sickness’ as disclosure	<i>79</i>
Strategies for selling	<i>80</i>
Strategies for managing the sickness	<i>89</i>
To sell or not to sell? Cost-benefit analysis	<i>98</i>
Conclusion	<i>102</i>
5 FRIENDS AND SIBLINGS: ABOUT TRUST AND MISTRUST	<i>105</i>
Care for the sick	<i>106</i>
The first encounter: The medical staff	<i>108</i>
The home visits	<i>116</i>
“‘Meeting with one’s kind’”: Fellow positive persons	<i>121</i>
Conclusion	<i>134</i>

6	BLOOD AND LIFE: MONEY AND THE INFECTION	139
	HIV, blood, and money	140
	The economic situation	141
	The financial needs	148
	Sources of funds for people on ART	159
	Conclusion	161
7	SLEEPING OR DYING: THE IRONY OF THE NEW HOPE	165
	Sleeping and dying	168
	Dying but not dying	169
	Between normalcy and abnormality	170
	The cost of being 'normal': A struggle within society	180
	Conclusion	187
8	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION: SAFETY IN THE MIDST OF STIGMA	191
	The pre-test stage	192
	The test: Confronting reality	194
	Post-test: The stage of liminality and apparent manifestation	195
	Normalization of stigma	207
	References	213
	Appendix 1: List of acronyms	221
	Appendix 2: The ART sites in the Ashanti Region (2008)	223
	Appendix 3: Questionnaire	224
	Appendix 4: Report of HIV/AIDS Workshop	227
	Appendix 5: List of PLHIV associations in Ashanti Region	236
	Summary	241
	Samenvatting (Dutch summary)	245
	Twi summary	249
	About the author	252