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Black racism in Alexandra: cross-border love relationships and negotiation of difference in a post apartheid South African society

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Abstract

My research in Alexandra has looked at the cultural and sexual logic, in explaining black racism and the attacks on non South Africans in May 2008. More particularly the study examines love relationships between South African women and immigrant men in the context of allegations and accusations that the latter are "stealing" South African women. This and the male element of the violence, as a cause of black racism have not been treated with seriousness in the *xenophobic* discourse. Instead it has emphasised on lack of service delivery, poverty and unemployment as the overriding causes. However the research has not disputed this economic reductionism. The findings reveal that black racism in Alexandra can be explained through racialised competition for women and this is an overwhelming source of resentment by South African men towards non South African men. This resentment can be explained in the theoretical context of social formation of races in the township. The pre 1994 internal ethnic differentiation has shifted to the "us" and "them" paradigm, intersecting nationality and ethnicity, defined by racial labelling, naming and stereotyping. A binary racial representations, significations and subjectivity of the "other" and those who belong "here" and "there" are seen in claims to autochthony, thus this kind of racisms.