


"Kantsaywhere"

Black African Women Inside the Australian Racial Crucible



Majavu discusses the overlapping natures of Black womanhood and Eurocentric imaginations about Black womanhood. With an understanding of colonial history, Majavu examines contemporary realities of African mothers and parents in Australia. In Australia, a history of slavery and colonialism intersects with the **African refugee trope** to influence perceptions of African women's sexuality and race (p. 177). This trope characterizes African immigrants as dangerous and assumes they will bring gang-related activity to Australia. Policy-oriented discourse depicts African parents as teenage mothers and social security dependents (p. 173). State agents regulate African parents with invasive supervision, social stigma, and removing children from their families.

The Cultural Deficit Model

The cultural deficit framework normalizes whiteness and suggests that "bad breeding" is responsible for social ills and results from the inferiority of Blackness or Aboriginality (p. 174). Some white Australians have used the cultural deficit model and eugenics to justify the "breeding out of Blackness in Australia" by regulating the sexual reproduction of Black and Aboriginal peoples.

Major Actors in Parental Regulation

- The Racial Hygiene Association (RHA)
 - The Family Planning Association as of 1960
- Australian Children's Protection Services
- Victorian and Adolescent Monitoring System
- Auber Octavius Neville and the "Stolen Generations" phenomenon

The Experience of Black Parenting in 21st Century Australia



African women are seen as a major force that perpetuates Blackness which is "unfit for parenthood" (p. 175). Racist stereotypes of Black women and parents have led the Australian state to invade and monitor family relationships and dictate the parenting strategies of African families (p. 176).

State agents in Australia require African women to demonstrate their "fitness" for motherhood and citizenship. African women in Australia feel that they must continuously behave under expectations and regulations that limit their agency and disadvantage their families.

These sentiments are paralleled by the overrepresentation of children and youth from refugee backgrounds in family service programs. The state child welfare system evaluates negligence and abuse from a (white) normative perspective of parenting and often separates children from their parents -- disempowering African parents.

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