Description: In "Racial capitalism and imaginaries of black masculinity from colonialism to crisis," I explore labor narratives and imaginaries of black masculinity in urban Africa and the African diaspora, with a focus on Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. In doing so I establish how racialized imaginaries of the ideal man shifted in response to changing capitalist regimes, examining the period from colonialism to crisis as a narrative arc with an emphasis on the crisis moment. Complemented by an analysis of black masculinity vis-à-vis capitalist processes of production, consumption and commodification, I draw on fieldwork I conducted from 2008 to 2009 on the livelihoods and lifestyles of underemployed Abidjanais men to illuminate the sustained power of imaginaries even while capitalism affords a deficit of real opportunities.

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