

“Burning for Your Touch”

the Scripted Truth

Data collected by the
Young African-American Men’s Study’s
Department of Psychology - Georgia State University
John L. Peterson, Ph.D. Principal Investigator

Interviews collected from
African-American young men “in the life”

Performed live by
the
ADODJ Muse,
Atlanta’s only
Gay Negro Ensemble

Adaptation by
Derrick Reese, M.P.H., Duncan E. Teague, & Jeffrey Lynn Woodyard, Ph.D.

Opening

1
2
3 DT The names of the individuals you are about to hear from have been
4 omitted
5
6 MW to protect their identities.
7
8 TD We beg of you, to help us maintain the anonymity of these men as you
9 listen to their profound, honest words
10
11 DT by not revealing either your own identity, if you were interviewed
12
13 TD or the names of any of the men who you are absolutely sure you know .
14 All In other words, "keep it to ya'self"
15 MW The opinions expressed are strictly those of men interviewed and are not
16 necessarily shared by, Georgia State University, the YAAMS Project,
17 TD Second Sunday,
18 DT Adodi Muse,
19 All or any of our sponsors.
20 (Music Cue: "Burning for Your Touch" fades up)
21

Burning for Your Touch

1

2

3 TD

We know what the men we know usually do when they put themselves at risk by having unsafe sex. (Catty)

4

5

6 MW

It's usually about penetration with another man, meaning penis and anus, I guess. Oral sex, any kind of behavior where any bodily fluids would be exchanged. That's what puts them at risk.

7

8

9 *(Music fades out)*

10 TD (Know It All)

Oh, I guess anal sex without condoms is the biggest risk. I don't know much about oral sex with no condom or without. But basically, I think it's mostly the anal stuff with no condoms. And I really feel that people don't think that the oral part is very risky, more so than anal.

11

12

13

14

15

1 DT I think people feel if they just do oral, they fine. (Telling on Self)

2

3 MW Mostly, it's oral sex without condoms. Not much else is risky 'cause
4 most of the time if people have intercourse, they use a condom. Some
5 people, like when I said oral sex, some people just don't see it as a risk.
6 So they don't care about, you know, using a condom. (Concerned)

7

8 *****

9 DT And men have risky sex in certain situations and
10 circumstances...(Embarrassed)

11

12 TD They might go down to Cypress Street or Piedmont Park and solicit like
13 male hustlers or prostitutes and they won't use any condoms.

14

15 MW Meeting people in bathrooms and the Piedmont park

16

17 All in the trails and after hours in the park,

18

19 MW Five Points bathrooms, Georgia State bathrooms... any public rest
20 rooms and stores.

21 All You name it.

22

23

24

1 TD(A WONDERING VOICE) What I don't get is why these men are having risky,
2 unprotected sex.

3

4 TD I mean, I know a lot of guys that drink a lot -- you know. And they go
5 the club and go home with a total stranger and I guess -- you know --
6 they either so drunk or they so into the moment that they won't even --
7 you know -- think to grab a condom.

8

9 MW They in love, high and drunk, ignorance, gosh, more so people just
10 thinking they can't get it. You know, it's just easy to think,

11 TD "Oh somebody else..."

12

13 DT (Game show host) Take a look at the most frivolous reason: heat of the
14 moment.

15

16 TD A hot guy who, and this is particularly the guy who's going to be doing
17 the penetrating -- you know -- in the heat of the moment, this hot guy
18 might not want to use the condom, he might be offended. The other
19 side, too, is -- you know -- the simplicity of, well,

20

21 MW "the guy looks okay. He might not -- you know -- be positive.

22

23 TD Sometimes it is alcohol. Yeah, I think alcohol is the major, the major
24 unsafe method. Other than liquor, I guess unless you're in a

1 relationship for a long time, I guess you get to the point that you feel
2 that you don't need to use condoms.

3
4 MW Younger people that I know do unsafe sex because their partners talk
5 them out of it. It's not ignorance. In love is real big and stupidity, yes, I
6 agree.

7
8 DT Then again, some people might feel that they're lonely and then they
9 decide to -- when they find the guy who they really like they just get
10 carried away. The, the risk factors they don't think of that much until
11 later after they've been with the person several times, after the desire for
12 that person is not as great as it was initially.

13
14 TD Fact is, these guys don't think about it at the time, they just want to
15 bust a nut and that's it.

16
17 DT They just go with the flow. Some are embarrassed to suggest using a
18 condom.

19
20 DT I think this macho thing with guys is that,

21
22 MW "I don't want to use a condom. I want to feel it. I want it to be real, --
23 you know.

24 *****

1 [TALKSEX] (*Music Cue*)

2 MW I'll tell you what's a trip! The way men who have sex with men see their
3 risk of contracting the virus. I think they -- I don't know -- I guess this
4 attitude it won't happen to me, oh, oh, no not me. I don't think they
5 take it seriously enough. A lot of them don't see themselves as getting
6 it...

7

8 TD that it's always somebody else's disease. Basically, that's the attitude
9 that I hear a lot.

10

11 DT(clinical) I believe that a lot of people feel that they're invincible to the disease. I
12 don't know if it's because of our age. I'm in an age bracket that you
13 really don't think about death, you don't really think about disease.

14

15 MW(Homeboy) They don't see no risk, to me. The way they're acting. Like it
16 doesn't exist, to me, most of the guys. Some of them are careful, some of
17 them aren't. Most of them know they have it and they keep messing
18 around.

19

20 DT Yeah, but most of my friends... they don't even care. Well, I don't know.
21 They seem that they're safe and just don't really care. They don't. Most
22 of them are not careful. And I mean... I know they know they should use
23 protection, but there's just so many guys that refuse to do that.

24 DT And basically, it's like:

1

2 TD "I don't give a damn,"

3

4 DT which is quite sad.

5

6 MW(confident) Uh, huh, most of my friends are really into safe sex
7 practices. They see their risk of contracting it as a minimum considering
8 that factor. And I do have a friend who don't use any type of
9 prophylactic or whatever. And I think they think they're a little immune
10 to catching it.

11

12 DT(snot, Bfs) Well, the majority of people I hang out with, well, they're
13 pretty much educated as we know, or I should say we go to, say, for
14 example, resource centers and get information on current, you know, like
15 AIDS and HIV information. And things that we, at one time, considered
16 were safe are considered risky so we don't really do that, per se. I mean
17 I'm not saying that, that we don't do it, but if you're going to have, say,
18 safe sex, we try to use it to the best of our capabilities. So in essence,
19 the majority of my friends, we're pretty much aware of what's going on.

20 TD/MW OH!

21

22 [METHODS] *(Music Cue)*

23 TD So, I ran into one of those outreach tables in the club last night. That
24 little table is so tired. No one wants that mess. People will pick that

1 Nonoxynol-9, which is helping the disease from spreading.

2 *****

3 TD And I am so tired of hearing about AIDS, the statistics of AIDS and the
4 effects of AIDS on the body. All the educators say is

5
6 MW "Wear a condom."

7
8 TD Excuse me, what the fuck is that all about? Where's the beef, -- you
9 know?

10
11 DT And the funding for black education and prevention agencies is way too
12 low and they are very understaffed. **At AIDAtlanta, the African**
13 **American Outreach only has one person and the Gay African**
14 **American Outreach only has one part-time person, neither of whom**
15 **knows what the hell he is doing.** It's sad when we make up over half
16 the cases but are the lowest funded and even less paid and when we look
17 at the funding boards we may be one in twenty-five and that one is an
18 "Uncle Tom."

19
20 MW Yes, and I'm sick of people with AIDS shoving it down our throats. I am
21 HIV-negative and I don't plan on getting it anytime soon. People think
22 that just because I love men that one day I will be positive.

23 All That is just not the case.

24

1 MW Just because you are positive does not mean you can do the work.

2 *****

3 TD Then, again, child, trade is dumb... Trade can't read or won't read. If
4 you don't tell them, they don't know... Girl, most trade is straight out of
5 the jail, so they fine as shit, ohhh, and dumb as hell... Body by Bally;
6 mind by Mattell.

7

8 MW See, these boys don't care about education. They only want two things:

9

10 All dick and ass.

11

12 *****

13 DT But the educational programs are too Anglicized. They speak about sex
14 as some kind of tangential kind of topic. Everything is done with white
15 figures. It is not germane to the African American gay culture. It doesn't
16 look like anything they're used to. It doesn't sound like anything they're
17 used to. Everything is spoken in purely scientific terms and they're
18 spoken normally to them by people who don't look like them so it's more
19 difficulty for them to relate to the message because they can't relate to
20 the messengers.

21 *****

22 TD Now let me tell you what methods work. The good thing about the effort
23 of outreach in the club is that it puts the information out there for the
24 brothers. Free condoms and lubricant are always good like I said before

1 it is embarrassing to buy condoms.

2

3 MW And visualizing this disease has worked with me and my friends seeing a
4 speaker stand before me and say,

5

6 TD "Hi, I am an HIV+ Black man who loves men.

7

8 MW I am like, "Wow, he does not look sick or anything!" I mean he looks just
9 like me. And that makes the difference. If the speaker had been a white
10 man or a black woman I would not have given them a second thought.

11

12 DT Probably, the best way to educate about HIV/AIDS is through peers and
13 word of mouth.

14 TD I think that our community is underestimated on issues of support and
15 openness.

16 TD/MW Outness for black men is not the same as for white men because we
17 don't have the same problems.

18 TD I know a lot of black men who are not ashamed of their sexuality, but
19 you won't see them marching with the white gay man because he does
20 not represent our interests.

21

22 MW (Transition ad lib re. Testing and not being able to tell by just looking)

23

24 DT You know, a lot of the philosophy is: if I have it, I don't want to know

1 and if I don't have it -- you know -- I don't need to know.

2

3 TD And that lack of knowledge comes from the lack of going to get physicals,
4 going to the doctors, going to learn, going to get education about the
5 situation, going to seminars, going to workshops.

6

7 MW Oh, everybody, everybody knows you can get HIV from sex. Everybody
8 knows that. Why some people don't take precautions, I don't
9 understand.

10

11 TD And like I said, because the package looks good, you logically conclude,
12 "Well, there can't be anything wrong with him.

13

14 MW Some of the people I know have oral sex unprotected but because they
15 have been through the safer sex workshops, because they've been at it so
16 long that they realize the slimness they put themselves at by doing it as
17 opposed to the (more) extensive risk of having anal sex without a
18 condom.

19

20 DT One of the most common misconceptions surrounding anal sex and the
21 virus has to do with people a man

22 All "pulling out"

23 DT before he ejaculates. They'll say things like,

24 MW "I'll pull out or I won't ejaculate inside of this person."

1 DT Or, whatever.

2

3 TD And a lot of guys, even my -- the guy I am with now, had believed that
4 as long as he pulls out before he ejaculates in me, everything will be fine.
5 And that's not even true. But a lot of people think that way.

6

7

8

9 [REACH] (*Music Cue*)

10 DT We got plenty of data from the guys on how we could reach these men

11 TD Reaching African American men who have sex with men at risk for
12 HIV/AIDS with interventions is about knowing how these men think and
13 operate -- you know -- what is real for them. My friends and I, we meet
14 most of our sexual partners at the clubs: *Loretta's*, *The Palace* and *Tracks*.
15 These are where you go to meet the gay boys. Now, if you are looking for
16 trade, it the *Queezy*, *Marquette* or Cypress Street, which is not a club,
17 but an actual street in Atlanta. The gyms are always a hot spot, like
18 *Bally's* or *Lee Haney's*. And everyone knows if you want a really fine man
19 just for sex, go to *Guys and Dolls* or *The Coronet Club*. The strippers give
20 you anything for the right price.

21 (*Music fades out*)

22 DT Child, everywhere! I work the grocery stores and department stores.
23 Krogers on Ponce, Riches at Lenox, Greenbriar, Northlake, umm, just
24 about any mall. The clubs are a nice place to go but I only go to the

1 nicer gay clubs. Like the Otherside or Karats, the atmosphere is not so
2 All "gay" --
3 DT you know. ...The strippers at different clubs: The Prime Time dancer all
4 swing and are some of the finest men in Atlanta, but they are also some
5 of the easiest to get into bed... The straight clubs like Club 112, and
6 Cafe Echelon are good places to meet masculine men. And Piedmont
7 Park on Sundays, a lot of men are there.

8
9 MW I don't go to openly gay places because if someone I work with is there I
10 wouldn't want them spreading my business around the office. I only
11 meet my partners through friends or house parties which are very big
12 here in Atlanta.

13
14 TD Child, the snow queens are in Backstreet, Armory, Metro and Bulldogs.
15 Trade loves to hangout in the strip clubs. Ms. Thang, you can cruise
16 anywhere driving down Peachtree in your car, the park, the mall, the
17 gym, anywhere.

18
19 MW I like to cruise the gyms: The Run N Shoot, Lee Haney's and Bally's at
20 Lenox and Northlake are where I go. Better Bodies is a gay gym, but
21 there are few to zero black men there. The showers are a mess. I go to
22 Rumors, which is a straight black club, on Saturday night to see Prime
23 Time. Those are truly some fine men. I know several people who have
24 had been with a couple of them.

1

2 TD I meet my men in the church and at Black social functions. Antioch
3 Baptist North, St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Cathedral of Faith,
4 Hillside Truth Center. I have met them in the Georgia State Library and
5 the Fulton County Library down by the Peachtree Center MARTA Station.
6 You know, like the Black Expo, Freaknic, The Black Arts Festival,
7 Memorial Day, Labor Day, The Sweet Auburn Avenue Festival.

8

9 MW I've met a lot of men at Frozen Paradise and Fat Tuesday in the
10 Underground. A lot of men are in South DeKalb and Greenbriar. Men
11 buy that outfit for the club that night. I have met them at the Outlet
12 mall on Buford Highway. It got so bad there that they had to post signs
13 for no loitering and take doors off the hinges in the bathrooms.

14

15 MW I meet brothers at my job and in my professional organizations like
16 Second Sunday, a discussion group for black gay men, the Judies, a
17 black professional group for upwardly mobile black gay men, 100 Black
18 Men of Atlanta, etc...

19

20 DT Being a student here in Atlanta, I meet a lot of them in the Atlanta
21 University Complex. Morehouse, Clark-Atlanta and Morris Brown are
22 packed with them. Club Woody, the Carter G. Woodson Library section
23 A, B, and C, Emory Law Library, fifth floor, the Botanical Gardens and
24 the High Museum of Art on Thursdays. The student clubs like the

1 Warehouse, The Velvet or So Ho. You can get dick just about anywhere.

2

3 TD I have too much to loose so I only go to safe places. Well, I only to the
4 white clubs They are really good places to go for closeted gay married
5 men or bisexual men with girlfriends because, (1) you can park in the
6 back of the club and no one will see your car, and (2) Black gay men who
7 go there are not the same ones who hang deep in the black community. I
8 mean it is hard to get a black man to give you the time of day in
9 Backstreet, but sometimes you get lucky. I have a wife and two children.
10 I can't risk being seen in a black gay club.

11 *****

12 MW They will listen to what you have to say because it is an environment
13 that is safe for them. I mean what gay man is going to admit to you that
14 he is in a straight club to pick up a brother?

15

16 DT Chile, men in Atlanta are bold. I would try reaching them in very public
17 places: malls, MARTA, grocery stores... I mean they are really bold here. I
18 think you would be surprised by the number responses you will get.

19

20 MW Nighttime is always the best way of reaching black gay men in Atlanta.
21 These men are very concerned about their cover and they don't want their
22 covers blown in the families and communities. The later you start, the
23 more likely you are to reach the population that you are looking for, even
24 on the weekend.

1

2 TD I think the problem with doing intervention in the clubs is that the drag
3 queens do these memorials of someone who died of AIDS and has the
4 whole club depressed. Now, because of that the outreach workers can't
5 get their foot in the door.

6

7 *(Transition: Sound Cue- C. Evertt Koop)*

8

9 DT We have been bombarded with so much useless information that we
10 have been desensitized to what outreach workers have to tell us. I mean
11 no one gives a shit what AIDS does to the body and we really don't want
12 to hear about it. All I need to know is how to protect myself, how to do
13 it correctly, and how to have fun with it.

14

15 MW You are going to have more flack from outside non-gay organizations
16 than anything else. Remember there are no gay men in the black
17 community so therefore there is no need to target us for intervention.

18

19 TD Abstinence is not an option and it needs to stop being taught. It is an
20 immediate turn off for any man; sex is a natural act and needs to really
21 be discussed.

22

23 MW I think that outreach is confined too much to clubs and health
24 agencies. That stagnates the whole purpose of education.

1 TD My friend GiGi had a slip of paper in her hand. I said,

2 MW "GiGi, what does that say; tell me what it says."

3 TD GiGi then turned to me and said,

4 DT "See that's our problem. We always want folks to tell us instead of
5 reading it for ourselves."

6 TD That is a big problem in our community. People could tell you anything,
7 but you won't really understand until

8 TD/MW you read for yourself and

9 All go out and find it for yourself.

10 *****

11 MW The public bathrooms need more information them. ***(Pause, reconsider***
12 ***the suggestion)*** Have a large social gathering centered around the
13 education about the disease like a fashion show or a live band. Throw a
14 major house party or park function almost like a Black Gay Freaknic
15 without all the bad publicity.

16
17 DT Throw and "In The Life" Convention and make it a weekend retreat in a
18 hotel inside the downtown area or outside the city limits and have
19 different workshops from safer sex techniques to loving your body.

20

21 TD Put it on the talk shows.

22 MW Ricki Lake,

23 DT Jenny Jones,

24 TD Jerry Springer. These are the things that the gay guys like to watch.

1

2 MW You need to reach the kids in highs schools who are coming out earlier
3 and earlier. They don't want an alternative method to be taught in the
4 schools, but it is something that is desperately needed.

5

6 DT Give away free dinners or shopping sprees, have a gay dating game on
7 public access. Give away free cars and cruises. I bet they will turn out
8 to any event you hold with give-aways.

9

10 MW There needs to be more marketing with black couples and black men in
11 general. None of the clubs have any posters in the bathroom talking
12 about AIDS or the awareness of it.

13

14 TD Promote eroticism. Show sexual condom commercials. Put on
15 commercials supporting gay black men. Legalize gay marriages and gay
16 rights.

17 *(Transition: Music Cue- Church Music)*

18 TD BLACK CHURCH proved to be one of the most interesting sections and
19 the hardest to cut because of the depth of the responses-What we have
20 to say about the Black Church.

21

22 DT Look, African American men who have sex with men are all-up-in-the-
23 Church. There are lots of them... I'd say like 40 or 50 percent would
24 attend some church, somewhere.

1

2 TD Most of the guys I know are in the Church. I would say 80 percent are
3 involved in the Church.

4

5

6 MW Most of the guys I know are not very involved in Church. They go to
7 church maybe once every two months, because they are not very faithful.
8 They do believe and have faith, but they're not 100 percent faithful to the
9 point where they go to church every week.

10

11 TD When I first moved to Atlanta, everybody said if you want to meet some
12 homosexuals, just go to church. They're all-up-in-the choir, -- you know
13 what I mean. And that was so funny to me-- you know -- men who are
14 in the choir.

15

16 DT And being in the Church has different effects on the way African
17 American men who have sex with men see themselves. As for me, I think
18 Church is a positive or uplifting thing for many of these men.

19

20 MW(Disagreeing) It keeps them confused. You're being taught that this is
21 wrong and an abomination and all that and you grow up in Church and
22 you sit there and you're hearing that and you just don't know where you
23 fit. So, I guess a lot of them would probably not attend church as much
24 or -- you know -- a lot of them don't care and they'll attend anyway.

1

2 TD It's very -- it depends on the background of the church. Pentecostals
3 will view it as total sin, therefore-- you know -- damnation. 100 percent
4 hatred.

5 DT Baptist will view it as -- Southern Baptists, I'm sorry -- as it's a sin, but
6 they're not gonna damn it. They'll overlook it and let it go.

7 TD Full gospel will view it as a sin, therefore, it should be rebuked,
8 damned, but only 60 percent will actually conform to any of that.

9

10 MW Well, the Black Churches do not embrace their gay children. They shun
11 them. The churches have belittled them and made them feel less human
12 than -- I guess -- the culture at large. And considering that Black men
13 are normally raised in a church until such a time as they can choose not
14 to go; it adds to the self-hatred, the self-loathing that you find in many
15 homosexuals or with men who have sex with men. They have this whole
16 self-loathing kind of psychotic episode. Black churches have not helped
17 Black gay men.

18

19 TD The Church is the last place to do intervention. you can be the last
20 "Queen of the Night" in the church, but is something that is just not
21 discussed. Because of the large homosexual population in Atlanta, some
22 of the churches have even taken on this unspoken "Don't ask, Don't
23 preach" thing.

24

1

2

3 DT It's not really right to be gay anyway-- you know -- I don't know why I'm
4 gay but then a lot of people say it's not to be gay. So, I feel the church
5 had a lot to do with you saying that, making those types of statements.

6

7 TD All that matters is that you're gay and you're going to hell. And it is as
8 simple as that. There is no redemption for you.

9

10 MW I don't see it that way. The Church is a place of salvation and everybody
11 finds salvation in church. So we continually go back. The Lord loves
12 everybody and He -- despite our practices -- we're all sinners -- He
13 forgives us all.

14

15 TD And a lot of preachers, especially here in the South, you know that old
16 Baptist belt-- you know. It's just wrong. Homosexuality is wrong. There
17 nothing to say about it. There's nothing; you can't rationalize it. You
18 can't change their opinion. Wrong is wrong. And they're not going to
19 deal with it-- you know. Even when their organist suddenly gets sick, or
20 the pianist gets sick or there are certain choir members who are no
21 longer coming to church-- you know.

22 DT "He's just sick. It's not HIV nor AIDS. He's just sick. Pray for him."

23 TD And they move on because they know by dealing with that, you 'bout to
24 blow it up.

1 MW "Bout to blow it up."

2 TD They ain't going to deal with that.

3

4 MW Well, it all depends, because you have some churches that are basically
5 run by gays. And, and for them, they just see church as a place to go
6 and sing -- you know -- get happy, get roused up. And to others -- you
7 know -- who go to churches that are structured more heterosexually, I
8 think they tend to see church as their last chance of being straight. You
9 know -- that, that maybe the Spirit finally falls on them in that church -
10 - you know --

11 TD/DT "The Spirit of Heterosexuality"

12 MW will finally come into them and cleanse them.

13 *****

14 DT Churches seem to have some influence on the sexual behavior of African
15 American men who have sex with men. See, both my parents are
16 Pentecostal ministers. I used to have to sneak and sneak and go here
17 and go there. When you sneak, you do more things at risk, I've learned.
18 When you haven't admitted it openly, you don't say,

19 TD "I'm gay,"

20 DT you have to sneak to the clubs, you have to sneak on Cypress, you have
21 to sneak over here and sneak over there.

22 DT(con't) Being involved in the church probably increases sexual behavior, if
23 anything --

24 TD/MW you know.

1
2 MW A lot of the ones I be fuckin', or that be -- you know -- fuckin' me --
3 they're deacons and ministers. I know what good dick feels like kow. I
4 think I know what I'm talking about there. And they got good dick.
5 Because they don't get to use it that much, and when they use it, they
6 don't want to stop. Well, I think it makes their sexual behavior a lot
7 better because they don't get to have sex that much. But when they do,
8 Ooh!
9
10 TD I just went cold turkey celibate because of the Bible, the Church and
11 commitment that I want to make with God. So what I'm saying is -- I'm
12 very rare, rare. And I'm a very rare case for the simple reason I just
13 stopped cold turkey. But every time I mention it to other African
14 American men, they say,
15 MW/DT "Gosh, I wish I could do that."
16
17 MW I had relations with this guy who is the minister of music at a church.
18 And you know, it was, like, up to the point in time when we had sex, he
19 was fine. And then afterward, he had this --
20 TD "Oh, I really cannot believe I'm doing this -- you know -- because I'm
21 trying to live a Christian life. I'm going to go to hell," --
22 MW you know.
23 DT It was interesting to watch.
24 MW It wasn't pleasant; but it definitely typified persons who are entrenched

1 in the Church -- how they feel about themselves, and what they identify
2 with sexually, how it manifests itself.

3 All It's a sad state of affairs.

4
5 DT Some go to church on Sunday. They'll feel the Spirit. They'll
6 acknowledge God and Christ and they'll get horny and they'll call you
7 and then, like, want to have sex and then the next week they feel
8 religious again. I've had that happen.

9
10 *(Transition: Music Cue -Church music fades out , up with unity fun music)*

11
12 DT Let's see, do African American men who have sex with men feel like they
13 are part of some kind of community? Well, I don't think that they are a
14 part of a community because being black or gay is only a small part of a
15 person's life.

16
17 TD There are too many divides in the gay life to have a community. There is
18 a lot of separation between Black gay males, drag queen to trade.

19
20 MW Naw, too many men who have sex with men want to deny they are gay.

21 *****

22
23 DT My community is made up of exclusively gay men.

24

1 MW People with high standards and morals.

2

3 TD All different types of people, not just gay men.

4

5 DT I like intellectuals; spiritual church people.

6

7 TD My community is in my mind. I do not need people.

8

9 DT It teaches me how to be schizophrenic ... straight at work; gay with my
10 lover.

11

12 MW It provides support for dealing with straight people. We attach to
13 women for stability, not for love.

14

15 TD It gives me a sense of purpose that transcends sex.

16

17 DT Problems in my community are

18 TD racism

19 MW and sexism.

20

21 TD See, what would make my community stronger is for us to realize that
22 God does love us. And people like our Black leaders need to recognize us
23 and understand us.

24

1 MW We'd be stronger if more Black people tried to identify with us and help
2 us deal with racism and sexism.

3
4 DT We need organization, leadership, financial support, economic
5 empowerment, and better networking.

6
7 *(Transition: Music Cue, Hip Hop)*

8 All It ain't easy being Black and gayand living with this virus.

9
10 MW Our Researchers were curious as to whether or not the men in our study
11 saw race as a factor in behavior or just in dealing with HIV/AIDS.

12
13 DT African American men differ from other men in their approaches to sex.
14 In the white gay community, which is well organized and everything like
15 that -- well-funded -- you've seen a decrease in HIV infection rates. As in
16 the black community, as a whole, you've seen an increase.

17 *****

18 MW There's not enough material in minority communities that stress the
19 prevention of HIV, the use of condom education.

20
21 *****

22 MW I think, personally, that Black men are less freaky than white men.

23
24 DT Caucasian homosexuals tend to be very, very -- you know -- sexually

1 free.

2

3 MW And they're just more promiscuous than Black people are.

4 *****

5 TD Discrimination and racism might impact African American men's risk for
6 HIV.

7

8 MW No, I don't think there's any discrimination; 'cause AIDS don't
9 discriminate.

10

11 DT I mean, if you engage in unprotected sex, whether you are black or white,
12 you have the same risk as any race of getting it.

13

14 TD I mean, as long as they practice safe sex, as long as they're being
15 educated about it... I don't think it would really matter what a person's
16 race is.

17

18 DT I would think discrimination or racism really doesn't affect you as long
19 as you are HIV- -- you know. But once you are positive, and you begin to
20 deal with the different types of AIDS service agencies and support groups
21 in this city -- you know -- you see racism and discrimination and you're
22 really disenfranchised with those persons.

23

24 TD It's all about your endowment and how big it is and how you use it and

1 that's the extent of your manhood. So yeah, black men believe in the
2 myths about themselves -- having big, big penises. I think it contributes
3 to a lot of unhappiness that black gay men experience.

4 TD We just want to take an impromptu survey.

5 All How many men here have big Penises? Raise your hands.

6 *****

7 [IDEAS FOR INTERVENTION]

8 DT It seems to me that prevention events need to be both entertaining and
9 educational.

10

11 *(Transition by MW)*

12 TD Social events... Throw an AIDS dance, Black gay prom or ball, a fashion
13 show, a pageant or barbecue, something fun and educational.

14

15 MW I was at this event where there was this lady talking about her sister who
16 was HIV positive and how the disease has affected her and her family and
17 at the end of her speech she says that she would like for us to meet her
18 sister. And she got up from the middle of the audience and walked up on
19 stage and it just blew my mind. She talked about how she was a virgin
20 and that the first person she had sex with gave her the virus. If
21 something like that could be done with African American gay men, it
22 would be phenomenal.

23

24 DT Have a drag queen walk around with a basket of condoms handing them

1 out or

2 TD have them stuck to her dress and as she pulls them off to give to people,

3 have here do an educational speech on the spot.

4

5 TD Put a dildo,

6 MW a fake butt,

7 DT condoms and plastic wrap

8 TD on the belts of the men. Have them wear badges that say,

9 DT/MW "Ask me about sex."

10 TD When someone stops them they will do a safer sex demonstration right

11 there on the spot. I would call them

12 DT/MW "The Condom Cops"

13 TD or even better,

14 DT/MW "The Dick Control Patrol."

15 TD And so the same for lesbians...

16

17 DT There are not posters or anything in the clubs about HIV/AIDS. They

18 should have those information billboards in the bathroom like you see in

19 dentist offices or at school

20 TD and have some fine black man like L.L. Cool J., Wesley Snipes or Keith

21 Hamilton Cobb in on the poster. These boys like Ice Cube.

22 MW Just put a fine celebrity on the boards and have all the information they

23 need about AIDS surrounding them.

24 DT The children will read it by playing it off like they are really into the fine

1 men in the picture.

2

3 TD Put it on TV. Right in the middle of a nice video.

4 MW Put it on BET.

5 All Put in on Cable.

6

7 DT You have to visualize it.

8 TD Show shocking pictures of people before and after the disease.

9 DT We are very visual people. TV, Billboards, magazines are more pictures
10 than anything else.

11 MW Target teens in high school. Have those condom machines in the
12 bathrooms at high school. These children are coming out early.

13 MW Put visual spots on television where people can call an 800 number for
14 all the information they need.

15

16 TD An 800 number where you could call and be anonymous and talk about
17 issues related to being black and gay. Self, esteem, coming out,
18 acceptance, all those types of things. People will call it because
19 DT (1) it is easily accessible,
20 MW and(2) it won't show up on the phone bill so their lover, wives, or
21 whatever
22 All cannot trace what they are doing.

23 *****

24 TD They need to set up some stations in other places besides the club. I

1 would try highly populated areas like Krogers, Piedmont Park,
2 DT the malls, fitness centers, record stores,
3 MW video stores, movie theaters, bookstores, grocery stores, and
4 TD even some restaurants.

5
6 DT Make a very sexy, sensual and seductive safer sex video targeting black
7 men who love black men with some brothers in it
8 MW who are actually attractive like the Christian Bjorn boys or The Latino
9 fan club.

10 TD Baby, you talking about some fine men, woo! I mean, if they do porn I
11 am sure they can do a safer sex video.

12 MW Just don't get those old tired out of shape black men.

13 TD you have to make sure they have body and face or
14 All the video will not work.

15 *****

16 MW(Therapist-like) You need to pay attention to these men's self-esteem. The
17 root of the problem is this self-esteem issue. Being black and gay is not
18 an easy thing to do. Many brothers see this in a very negative light and
19 still live this lifestyle. If you can't get them to improve on their own self
20 worth and help them to love themselves, then it is a lost cause.

21
22 DT Throw functions involving self-love. You can talk about prevention all
23 day long, but it is the issue of self-love that really needs to be addressed,
24 and by black gay male professionals with degrees who really know what

1 they are doing.

2

3 TD And,

4 All for goodness sake,

5 TD make sure the messenger is someone with whom the community can

6 identify. You must target the people who are the most respected in the

7 African American gay community for your intervention to work.

8 *(Music fades up "Burning for Your Touch" by Mother's Finest)*

9 DT You have to visualize it

10 TD Put it on the talk shows

11 MW Ricki Lake

12 DT Jenny Jones

13 TD Jerry Springer

14 MW Wear a condom

15 DT The "Dick Control Patrol"

16 TD Abstinence is not an option