



XVII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

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Poster Exhibition

Track C - Prevention programmes for men who have sex with men (MSM)

THPE0371 - The thrills, chills and spills of working with sexually explicit materials in the new gay mainstream

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Issues: With increasing political and social conservatism in mainstream society influencing the shifting social agendas in gay communities (parenting, relationship recognition and gay marriage), prevention and awareness campaigns attempting to address HIV and other sexually transmitted infections are presented with particular challenges and tensions that are difficult to reconcile.

Description: This presentation will look at the implicit and explicit tensions that arise from working with sexually explicit materials that target homosexually active men in a culture that has shifted increasingly to what is euphemistically characterized as 'the mainstream'. I will chart the difficult negotiation with public funders as well as critical attitudes from some in the gay community that reveal a deeply embedded fear that, in depicting or suggesting homosexual sex, many of our hard won social gains will be lost.

The presentation will examine three campaign approaches that have been implemented over the past year; The Drama Downunder, PEP and 'Last night I fucked what's-his-name...' Examining issues related to unprotected anal intercourse in casual settings.

Lessons learned: It is possible to utilise sexually explicit material in the creation and implementation of sexual health campaigns, but only if careful consultation and collaboration takes place at all levels of the process including political players, policy makers, funders and targeted communities.

Next steps: Thorough and rigorous process and impact evaluation will determine to what extent the employment of sexually explicit materials have aided campaign recognition and comprehension.