

Young Black MSM Living and Learning in Canadian Cities

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Agenda

- Acknowledgements
- Background
- Engaged Scholarship on/with Black Queer Youth
- Key Questions
- Sociocultural Context
- Conceptual Framework
- Youth Narratives
- Discussion
- Implications

Acknowledgements

- BGRG Board of Directors
- Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention in Toronto
- Arc En Ciel d'Afrique in Montreal

Background

Interdisciplinary

Public
Intellectual

Community
Engagement

Postnational

Engaged Scholarship on/with Black Queer Youth

Making Space
for Diverse
Masculinities

- Diversity Project

Adaptation of
Many Men,
Many Voices
(3MV)

- Black Coalition for
AIDS Prevention
(Black CAP)

Educational
Trajectories of
Black Male
Youth

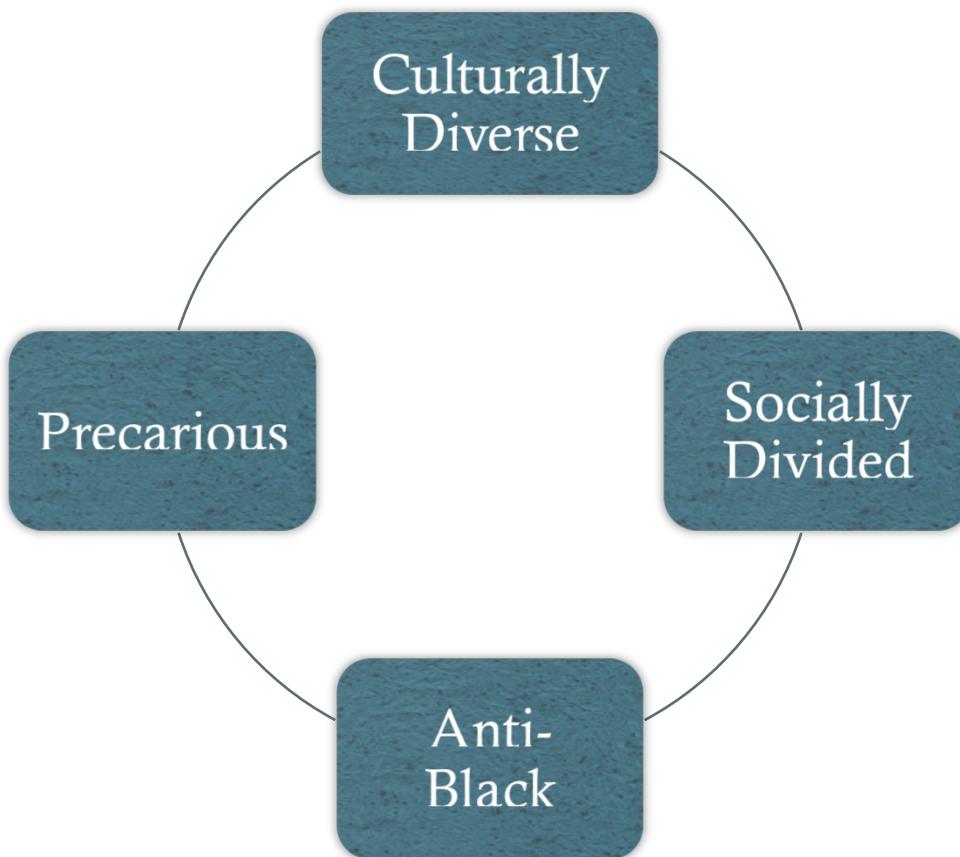
- East Metro Youth
Services
- Black CAP
- DESTA Black
Youth Network
- Arc-en-ciel
d'Afrique

Key Questions

How do young Black MSM experience adulthood in Canadian cities like Toronto and Montreal that are culturally diverse, yet socially divided?

What, how and where are they learning about identity, risk, resilience and relationships through participation in urban communities online and offline?

Sociocultural Context of Canadian Cities



Conceptual Framework

Youth Studies

Focuses on the ways young people's lives in "industrialized" nations have changed with key contexts such as education, labour market experiences and patterns of dependency.

Documents how transitions to adulthood take longer to accomplish, are less likely to involve linear movement from education to work and independent living with 'backtracking' and mixing of statuses that were once distinct becoming more common?

Social Learning Theories

Learning as Participation

Learning Across Contexts

- Formal
- Non-Formal
- Informal

Queer of Color Analysis

Understanding the ways multiple forms of oppression and discrimination intersect in the lives of queer people of color.

Bringing queer of color ways of knowing to bear on issues and topics in education, employment, health and well-being.

Methodology

Critical
Ethnography

Case Study

Phenomenology

Narrative

How do young Black MSM experience adulthood?

- *George*: My parents are from West Africa, I was born in Ghana... Being a Black gay man I feel that I may never, well I shouldn't have said never. I might not have the chance to start my own traditional family. So um [laughs] maybe getting an education, an advanced education, a PhD, will compensate for my sense of um... will compensate for the long period that I have, the lot of time that I have that I'm not able to do what's traditionally expected of me, as a male member of the community. The education is maybe an attempt to fill a vacuum...a vacuum that is created by my non-conformity, non-conformist lifestyle.

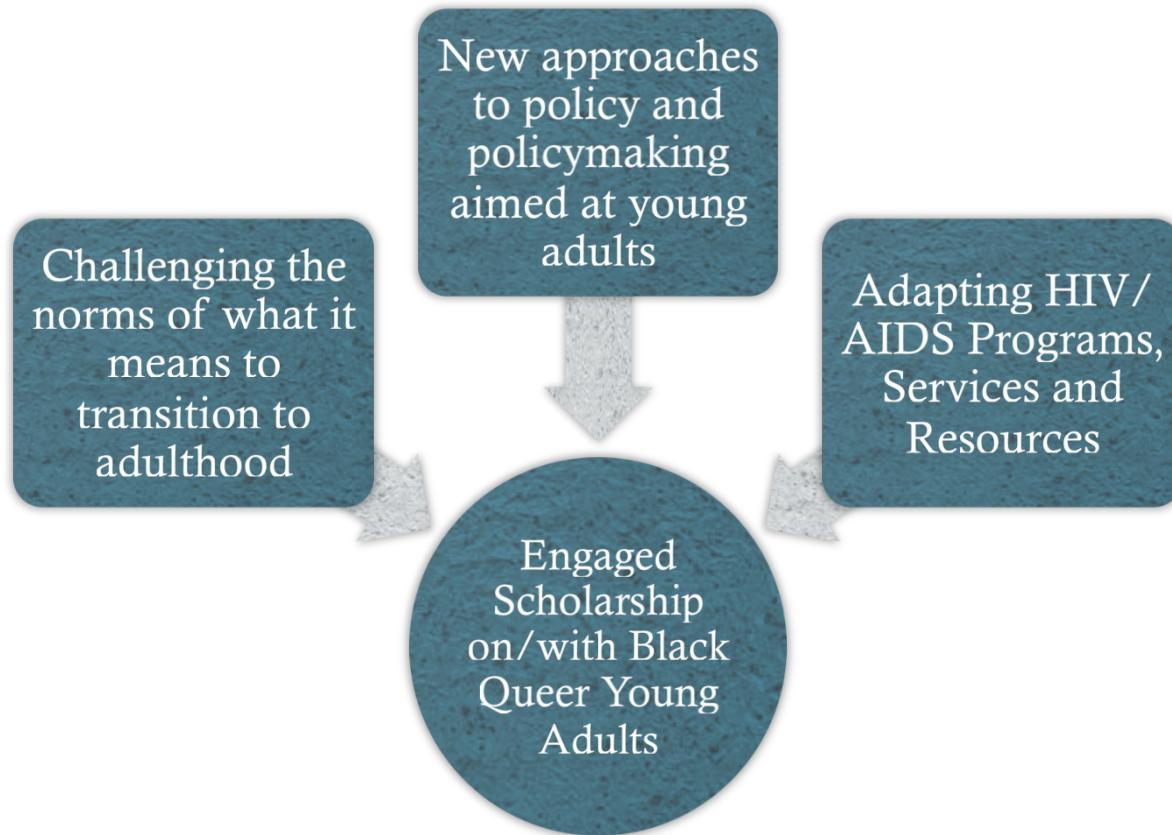
What, how and where are young Black MSM learning?

- **Russell:** I guess my gay life started in high school and it was more down here and not up there, sort of. I think I've always kept that distinction, that my gay life is down here and not there. I guess I live a double life, but not really (laughs). But if anyone asked, I guess I would say something.
- **Tony:** My mom is Jamaican and my dad is from Congo...So in terms of education, I am going to go to school for business, to open my own business. I will either open a restaurant with my brother or I am going to own some kind of entertainment management company...I was working at Y.E.S and that was alright working at Youth Employment Services. Like whatever, they knew I had a GED and everybody was like "Oh my gosh you (only) have a GED? What the hell are you doing with just a GED? You need to go to school, you're so smart!" But I was like, the whole university situation really discouraged me. I just took time to work and kinda let life lead me. Now that I know what I want to do in life, that is why I am going back to school now, so I guess life influenced my educational decisions.

Discussion

- Young Black MSM spoke of experiencing multiple forms of discrimination as they navigated the social divides of Canadian cities; they aspired to live on their own, independent of their parents, but struggled to achieve the markers that would allow them to do so such as finishing postsecondary education and obtaining stable work with a living wage.
- In what ways are the narratives of young Black MSM, and the knowledges they contain, consistent with the reasons given for prolonged transitions to adulthood in the youth studies literature and in what ways do they challenge these norms and raise new questions?

Implications



Thank You!!!

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