



What meanings are gay men ascribing to safe sex in other countries?

Adam Bourne

Associate Professor

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society

La Trobe University

CRICOS PROVIDER 00115M

Outline

1. Sex is safe is if *feels* safe
2. Safe sex is what is possible
3. Safe sex is about safe environments
4. Safe sex is what I understand or appreciate

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1. Sex is safe if it *feels* safe

- Significant proportion of HIV in some countries transmitted within regular sexual partnerships (Xiridou et al, 2003)
- Familiarity, trust and a 'Halo effect'
- Establishing or maintaining intimacy
- 'Talk, Test, Test, Trust, Together'
- Does *that* person pose a risk to me?



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2. Safe sex is what is possible



PrEP availability as of 1.9.2017: www.prepwatch.org

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2. Safe sex is what is possible



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3. Safe sex is about safe environments

- Safe sex is non-threatening
- Nearly 1 in 5 MSM in South Africa, Botswana, Malawi, and Namibia experienced blackmail. 1 in 10 had been raped (Zahn et al, 2016)
- Safe sex is (or can be) about feeling in control
- Safety and sexual consent



4. Safe sex is what I understand or appreciate

- For many, condoms still = safe sex
- Frankis et al (2016) – UK
 - 29.7% heard of PrEP
 - 47.8% likely to use PrEP if available
 - Higher risk = higher likelihood
- Can a pill really protect against HIV?
- What does ‘undetectable’ mean?
- *“I mean I have, it may have crossed my mind once or twice that if I had an undetectable viral load then I [...] there might be a chance of me not being able to pass it on, but then undetectable doesn’t mean that it’s not there. It just means that whatever method there is can’t pick it up.” (Bourne et al, 2015)*

Final word

- *“Safe sex has not only been a prevention approach but also a social movement and a way of reframing interpersonal relations [...] In reality, safe sex has never been a static concept but rather an evolving set of practices that emerge from communities affected by HIV and their ongoing engagement with health information.”*

Thank you

