

expressions of femininity (Hale & Ojeda, 2018; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012). The researchers further emphasize that an acceptable practice among many cisgender queer men involves the preference against, and punishing of, any queer presentation that lies beyond the boundaries of desirability. Such assertions are further supported by qualitative data in which cisgender queer men report valuing masculinity, personally identifying as masculine, and reporting that they would prefer to engage socially, romantically, and sexually with men who also identify as, and perform, stereotyped masculinity (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012). Additional examples of the non-masculine being punished may arise through the patriarchal degradation of women; the limiting of dating preference through comments such as “no fats, no femmes;” or through the perpetration of *bussiphobia*, another term I coin to describe the physical devaluation and sometimes violent domination of the bussy during bussy play (Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015; Hale & Ojeda, 2018; Kay & Jeffries, 2010; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012).

Research subtly presents the impact of hegemonic masculinity and power dynamics in bussy intercourse through the investigation of cisgender queer male experiences of anodyspareunia during penetration (Damon & Simon Rosser, 2005; Hollows, 2007; Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015). In their foundational quantitative research study, which introduced the relevance of pain during bussy penetration, Simon Rosser, Short, Thurmes, and Coleman (1998) investigated the factors that contribute to the frequency and severity of bussy pain during penetration. Their findings highlighted that in addition to the contribution of anxieties endorsed around bussy penetration by Bottoms, one of the most significant factors that influence pain during penetration included the forced depth and rate of thrusting enacted by the Top. Qualitative research furthered the work of Simon Rosser and colleagues (1998) as Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, and Lane (2018) investigated the painful experiences, and contributing factors, endured by Black cisgender queer male Bottoms in South Africa. In their study, 81 Black cisgender queer Bottoms communicated that much of the avoidable pain experienced during bussy intercourse was related to having partners who were physically dominant and aggressive, who did not respect Bottom boundaries, and who were unconcerned with their partners’ pain although the two agreed upon a consensual, intendedly pleasurable, engagement.

“He was so rough, and then like he didn’t listen to what I wanted in bed. He was so controlling to me and he wanted whatever he want.”

“The experience, that person he controlled me over and he was just doing it and he was rushed, he was rough and rushed. That’s why I’ve experienced a lot of pain and stayed for a long time not having sex.”

“Ja, I did tell him that ‘next time you must be gentle and I’ve told you that before we have sex, that you must be gentle, but . . . you’re just being rushed and now I am experiencing the pain.’”

“Some other guy, we agreed to each other . . . I can say his dick was very huge. He could not like penetrate me. And then he was busy like trying to force himself on me . . . I was scared of him and . . . [tried to] relax anyway for him to do his job.” (Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015).

The above excerpts highlight that some Bottoms engaged in bussy play have experiences that are neither empowering nor pleasurable. They find themselves engaged with Tops who enact hegemonic practices that degrade Bottoms’ positions as receptive partners; and place them into patriarchal, submissive, and physically and sexually oppressive performative roles that only serve the ego of the Top (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Kay & Jeffries, 2010; Messerschmitt, 2019). Such behavior is a violent display of power in which two members of a marginalized group become victims of a heteronormative patriarchal framework that gives dominance to the seemingly masculine—read, more powerful—member; and limits the physical and sexual agency of the seemingly feminine—read, less important—member (Hale & Ojeda, 2018). What stands further alarming is that this presentation of power dynamics in queer relationships has been perpetuated in research across queer communities of different cultural backgrounds.

Studies that have been conducted on the roles and behaviors of Tops and Bottoms have consistently presented Tops as being the more masculine and aggressive members of the sexual and relational pairing; and Bottoms as being the more feminine and submissive (Damon, 2000; Johns, Pingel, Eisenberg, Santana, & Bauermeister, 2012; Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2008; Xu & Zheng, 2016; Zheng, Hart, & Zheng, 2013). In his qualitative exploration of the motivational factors that make cisgender queer men in Chicago more likely to identify as a Bottom or Top, and to engage in receptive or insertive bussy penetration, Will Damon (2000) found that power was a significant motivator. Respondents who identified as top highlighted traits of aggression and control as their main motivators for

being the insertive partner. Damon's (2000) findings further communicated that Tops perceived a loss of control as a factor that prevented them from assuming the Bottom position.

"I'm aggressive in every part of my life . . . being a top is just a part of that."

"I don't like the idea of surrendering to anyone."

"If I'm not in control, I'm not interested in [sex] . . . so I put myself in [the Top position]."

Following this presentation, men in the study who identified as Bottoms associated their position with submissiveness and femininity that allowed them to be physically dominated by Tops.

"I like feeling more submissive. I like feeling overpowered."

"I'm a very controlling person, and I take control in all these other areas of my life. In sex, I like to give up control." (Damon, 2000).

These quotes highlight the assumed power in sexual positioning and suggest an increase of power and dominance afforded to Tops during cisgender queer male bussy intercourse. Damon's (2000) study identifies Tops as resistant to relinquishing control in various aspects of their lives; while presenting those who identify as Bottom as fully willing to abandon their power and physical control. Aligning with Damon's (2000) work are other studies that describe Bottoms as passive, feminine, and submissive, while tops are depicted as more masculine, dominant and aggressive (Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2008; Xu & Zheng, 2016). Even cross culturally, qualitative research conducted with cisgender queer men in China communicated that those who identified as Bottoms were more likely desiring to be overpowered by their partners during sex, whereas those who identified as Tops were more focused on dominating their partners (Zheng, Hart, & Zheng, 2013).

In addition to power dynamics during bussy penetration, research highlights that this imbalance of power expands to areas of oral sex, fisting, and gendered interactions outside of sex (Damon, 2000; Xu & Zheng, 2016). For some couples, Bottoms are expected to display and perform a heteronormative feminine role in relationships, while Tops are prompted to enact the role of the more masculine partner in the binary adherent relationship (Kiguwa, 2015). This performance has been noted to impact Bottoms' sense of self; to be commonly accepted by larger society; and to even be considered normal in the perceptions of queer youth (Johns,

Pingel, Eisenberg, Santana, & Bauermeister, 2012). Johns et al.'s (2012) work, looking at sexual positioning and gender role performance as perceived by young queer men revealed a common perception among youth (aged 18 to 24) of Bottoms being submissive, fragile, and effeminate both in and out of the bedroom; and of Tops being perceived as the ideal representation of manhood and masculinity. Further, Bottom-identifying youth who endorsed perceptions of Bottoms being more submissive, feminine, and passive reported themselves navigating sexual spaces with similar passivity, despite their sometimes contrasted natural inclinations to be a more aggressive partner (Johns, Pingel, Eisenberg, Santana, & Bauermeister, 2012). Bottoms have additionally been characterized through literature as more empathizing, sympathizing, and catering to the physical, emotional, and sexual needs of their partners; whereas Tops have been clinically exempt and unexpectant of possessing these traits (Zheng, Hart, & Zheng, 2013). These depictions in literature, being disseminated in scientific and lay groups alike, may account for the problematic, and often painful, sexual interactions had between Bottoms and Tops to date.

Such findings, while not inherently negative, may be used to justify Bottom experiences of bussinism and pain during bussy penetration. Extant literature seems to communicate that anxiety, and resultant pain during bussy intercourse, is expected for Bottoms as they have opted to be the receptive partner and possess a desire to be dominated (Damon, 2000; Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2008; Xu & Zheng, 2016). Literature on the personality traits of White male Bottoms and Tops suggest that discomfort during pain might be pleasurable for some Bottoms, as assuming the Bottom role provides a sexual pleasure that arises through being dominated and stripped of the agency, power, and privilege they possess in other spheres of their everyday lives (Damon, 2000). Further qualitative study of a Hispanic sample suggests that pain during bussy penetration is in fact pleasurable because the experience of pain serves as a marker that the Bottom is maintaining his manhood while assuming a feminine role (Clark et al., 2013). It is at this point that current literature must be scrutinized for the messages it disseminates as these reports neglect the experiences of Black cisgender queer male Bottoms.

Much of the research to date that explores the cognitive, emotional, and physical experiences of cisgender male Bottoms engaged in bussy penetration through a pleasure lens have focused on the experiences of White and Asian cisgender queer men (Clark et al., 2013; Damon, 2000;

Damon & Simon Rosser, 2005; Hollows, 2007; Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2008; Xu & Zheng, 2016). And although Asians are considered a racial and cultural minority, both domestic and foreign born Asians have been troublingly characterized in society as model minorities—individuals of minority status that closely align with White ideals (Liou, 2018). Additionally, the research on positionality and bussy play concerning Black and Brown people have been done in relation to HIV research (Carrillo & Hoffman, 2016; Quinn et al., 2017; Vaughn et al., 2014). Nevertheless, when studies observe Black and Brown cis queer male sexual experiences outside of HIV risk, a difference in the way the Bottom identity is perceived and performed is presented.

Kiguwa's (2015) qualitative delve into the Bottom identity and the experiences of sexual pleasure among cisgender Black queer men who lived in South African townships communicated themes of Bottom pride, sexual autonomy, pleasure equality and a reclamation of power, and bodily agency.

“For me, it’s about choosing to be receptive and not because you have to be.”

“We are not invoking heteronormativity at all, it is about the sensual pleasure of it.”

“I definitely get so much pleasure from seeing how much my partner, who is inserting me at the time, is enjoying the moment.”

“His pleasure depends on me . . . so to me that actually says have the power”

“I give him the pleasure . . . he is at my mercy.”

“I provide the pleasure . . . I control it.” (Kiguwa, 2015).

Despite the small sample size of this study, these quotes highlight that some cisgender Black queer Bottoms possess a contrasting view from their White and Asian counterparts when it comes to the act of bottoming (Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015; Kiguwa, 2015). Instead of wanting to be overpowered or controlled, or having the expectation of being submissive to their partners, these respondents communicated feeling empowered in taking the Bottom position during bussy penetration. Further contrasting characterizations of Bottoms being passive, submissive, and feminine, and heteronormative, the Bottoms in this study were intentional about highlighting how sex between two men challenges heteronormativity and

diminishes the need for a more submissive or more dominant partner (Kiguwa, 2015).

The responses from this work also highlight that by challenging previous conceptualizations of Bottom identity and the Bottom experience, unaddressed bussinismus and pain endured by Black cisgender queer Bottoms juxtaposes pleasure. It is an unfortunate occurrence when two marginalized individuals (i.e. cisgender queer male Tops and Bottom) engage in a manner that perpetuates internalized heteronormativity in an attempt to ultimately align with White ideals (Hale & Ojeda, 2018; Kiguwa, 2015). By acknowledging and appropriately responding to bussinismus (with communication, proper bussy foreplay, and attention to Bottoms' reactions during intercourse), Black cisgender queer men engage in the radical act of separating queer identity from heterosexual standards. To identify and remove the physical manifestations of hegemony, hegemonic masculinity, and patriarchy from the cisgender queer male sexual sphere is to highlight that there is no "man" or "woman" in cisgender queer male relationships, and therefore no need for gendered performances and oppressions between two cisgender men.

In addition to addressing the power inequalities that exist in cisgender queer male relationships, the issue of bussinismus highlights broader political issues that impact our greater community. Unaddressed experiences of bussinismus also highlights the lack of pleasure-focused sexual education available to most of those living in sex negative patriarchal societies. Adding to the dearth of sexual education that is available to youth and adults is the complete absence of LGBT inclusive, pleasure-based, sexual education accessible in many mainstream communities (Nelson, Pantalone, and Carey, 2018; Ohene, 2019). Studies show that a lack of sex education contributes to negative sexual health outcomes, which include contraction of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), decreased autonomy and agency in sexual decision making, and reduced experience of pleasure during sexual engagement (Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015; Kiguwa, 2015; Randolph, Pleasants, & Gonzalez-Guarda, 2017). Following this logic, many cisgender queer men have identified a lack of education around how to engage bussy intercourse, bussy foreplay, the anatomy of the bussy, the importance of lubrication, and awareness of partner needs; and have therefore mismanaged bussinismus, which leads to experienced pain (Collier, Sandfort, Reddy, & Lane, 2015; Damon & Simon Rosser, 2005). To fully address in the experience of bussinismus, cisgender queer men must be

given formal education on their sexualities and safe sexual practices. Such knowledge may also assist in the restructuring of the ways Bottoms and Tops perceive their positions and performances, providing space for further separation from masculine and feminine dichotomies.

Conclusion

The following autoethnography provided an introduction to the phenomenon of bussinismus—the state of Bottom anxiety leading to constriction of the external sphincter and increased risk of pain during penetration. The relevance of this phenomenon was further explored as it related to power and politics among cisgender queer men. As previously stated, acknowledging and further exploring the concept and consequences of bussinismus will work to disrupt the influence of hegemony and patriarchy on queer cisgender male individuals. Such efforts will also highlight the impact inadequate sexual education has on the pleasure experience of various marginalized groups.

Current research on Bottoms' lived experiences around sex have mostly focused on White and Asian cisgender men. As there exists little non-HIV-affiliated research on the experiences of queer Black cisgender male Bottoms as it relates to pleasure during bussy penetration. It is recommended that future qualitative work be targeted toward understanding the experiences of cisgender Black male Bottoms through a pleasure perspective. Current studies that observe queer cisgender Black men through a pleasure-based lens have focused on how most Black men are presumed to be aggressive tops, which aligns with White constructed ideals of Black masculinity and cisgender Black male sexuality (hooks, 2004; Lemelle, 2010; Lick & Johnson, 2015; Snorton, 2014). Collecting further data on this typically ignored group (i.e., cisgender male Black Bottoms) will give greater insight into the ways those with power and resource in the sexual community can continue to educate, empower, and liberate those who are at greater risk of being oppressed and marginalized. Increased findings from this cohort will also provide opportunity for commonly accepted, yet incorrect, narratives about queer Black male Bottom sexuality and sexual expression to be challenged.

The radical nature of using bussinismus as a catalyst to educate and liberate continues as one considers the way in which education on bussinismus will challenge the homo-negative ideas that have been disseminated through and toward Black queer communities. The sexual and romantic connections between cisgender Black men have been deemed unnatural and

a consequence of colonialism for decades (Ward, 2005; Winder, 2015). Additionally, pain and other negative consequences related to bussy play have been weaponized in order to exemplify how queer relationships should not exist. Providing education on bussinismus and highlighting that bussy play can occur without pain would severely disarm certain homonegative stances and create greater space for Black queer sexual exploration.

It is hoped that this work lays the foundation for continued exploration of Black queer cisgender male Bottom pleasure. More research is needed to liberate Black cisgender queer men from associations with heteronormativity, White patriarchy, and White standards of queer experience. Similar to the ways in which queer cisgender men have experiences that cannot be captured by heterosexual frameworks, Black cisgender queer men have experiences that cannot be conceptualized within a White queer framework. It is therefore imperative that the effort to bring forth more pleasure centered portrayals of cisgender Black queer male life start now.

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