Black gay men under the corporate lens

The Business of HIV and the Politics of Health

Funke Sangodeyi (ReD Associates)

Funke Sangodeyi (PhD, History of Science, Harvard) studied the modern history of microbes before working for ReD Associates, a consulting firm that draws from across the social and human sciences. In this talk, Sangodeyi takes a critical look at a recent consulting project carried out for a major pharmaceutical company about “Black Men who have Sex with Men” and HIV. The goal of the project was to study the intransigent problem of rising HIV rates in black gay men through an investigation into their lives and healthcare ecologies in two radically different American cities with skyrocketing HIV rates (Baltimore, MD and Jackson, MS). Sangodeyi uses the tools of Science, Technology, & Society (STS) to examine how such work is commissioned, made and used.

Can Big Pharma use anthropological techniques effectively in the corporate sphere? How does the setting — corporate, academic, activist, etc — shape and inform a social inquiry?