

## Abstract

The scripting of sexual encounters among young people in Kenya is described using results of 28 focus group discussions conducted with young people attending primary school standard 7, from four different ethnic groups and living in 22 different communities. Sexual encounters were described as both mundane and inevitable and followed a predetermined scripted sequence of events and interactions in which girls and boys played complementary roles. These scripts were set within discourses of force and the exchange of gifts for sex. The gendered nature of the script and its social and cultural foundations are discussed. Potential strategies for developing HIV prevention programming are discussed from the perspective of existing sexual scripts.