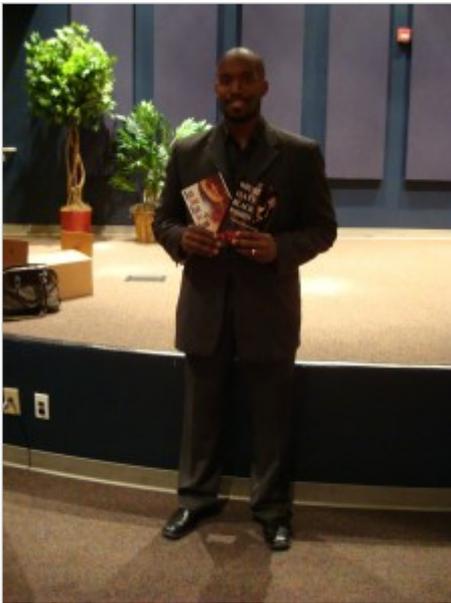


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Sex has always been a subject that raises concern and interest in conversations; yet it is the least to be discussed openly without making people awkward and uncomfortable. However, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, Black Student Awareness Council, Women of Purpose and Power as well as Men of Standards, co-organized “Love, Sex and Liability” as a common ground for Radford students, especially female students, to speak their minds and strengthen students’ awareness of sex issues.

The discussion was hosted by Renee Toppin, an organizer of “Black Women Who Want More” and Hasani Pettiford, author of a series of best-selling novels such as “Black Thighs, Black Guys & Bedroom Lies,” “Why We Hate Black Women: And Why We Should Love Them” and “Pimpin’ from the Pulpit to the Pews.” Renee and Hasani started off the presentation by loosening the audience with their keen sense of humor.

The talk focused on the consequences faced by college students when they become sexually active. They also discussed that these consequences are worse when the college students are not knowledgeable and are in the wrong state of emotion while having sex. According to Renee, this dangerous misconception derives from the lack of “standards” that both the males and the females must set for themselves before engaging in sexual relations.

Renee emphasizes the importance of women creating high

'You allow a 'D' (grade) product to protect you from the transmitted diseases and unexpected pregnancy?' - Hasani Pettiford (Huyen Trang Nguyen)

standards and respecting themselves, while also being emotionally stable. These standards help women know what they want and demand what they deserve. Renee's words echoed and permeated the silence of the hall when all the female students absorbed her powerful message: "Stop giving too much and receiving too little!"

Carrying on this idea, Hasani pointed out the challenge that women, particularly black women, have to overcome to earn social status and respect, which allows them to develop their standards. These challenges are the results of a long history of suppression that black people had to endure, a period of inequalities that these women had to suffer. They even the competition, the hatred and jealousy among women themselves. Somehow, these hindrances still reflect in modern society like a ghost of bias.

However, Hasani gave his female audience a new look at themselves as the "co-creator" of the universe so that each woman could be proud of her identity and learn to protect what she has. Renee called each woman a "diamond in a jewelry box" because she is precious and "priceless."

The discussion did not only enhance young peoples' understanding of physical relationships, but it encouraged each person to achieve and maintain his or her "wholeness," for it leads to "smart decisions," as Renee said. Further analyzing the sexual relationship between men and women, Hasani and Renee persuaded the audience to strengthen the self-esteem in themselves to achieve a healthy and long-lasting relationship.

"Make him make love with your mind," Hasani said.

Both the guest speakers delivered their message powerfully by using striking statistics, visual demonstrations and audience interaction. Hasani announced that only four percent of people who engage in sexual relationships use condoms, which prove to have a 36 percent failure rate according to recent studies. Based on the statistical information, he reasoned that condoms maintained a 64 percent success rate, which deserves a 'D' according to regular school's grading scale.

"Then you allow a 'D' product to protect you from the transmitted diseases and unexpected pregnancy?" he said to the audience.

The hall was showered with silence.

Avoiding the conventional method of lecturing about the consequences of a “booty call,” such as transmitted diseases, unexpected pregnancy and undesirable outcomes for the women, Hasani also convinced the male audience to protect themselves because you may also be a victim.



Renee reminded students the importance of creating standards for yourself and following through on those standards. (Huyen Trang Nguyen)

Men stand a similar risk percentage of transmitted diseases, especially throat cancer when engaging in sex. Moreover, they may become unexpected fathers and be responsible for child support of “\$150,000 to raise an 18-month child.”

Renee added weight to her analysis when she drew the attention of all male students to a possible future suffering from financial collapse when they have to pay for the child support as well as the debt of their education cost.

Open and straightforward, Renee and Hasani forced students to face the cold realities of sexual relationships. The desire and satisfaction come temporarily, leaving behind destructive consequences that both genders have to suffer “physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually” when they do not fully comprehend the purpose of their action.

The price of a one-night-stand can be the bright future of the students and the appreciation and respect for the true loved ones that they will encounter in their life. Speaking from their hearts and personal experiences, Hasani and Renee inspired the young generation to reflect on each step of their action, learn to respect themselves and nourish their knowledge to protect them from temptation. Renee advised her audience: “When you set a goal, step toward it in order. Don’t turn left or turn right to fall out of the road.”