



Fighting Words : Personal Essays by Black Gay Men : Breaking the Silence on Issues of Identity, Family Relationships, Race, and Sexuality

Charles M. Smith

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A boy discovers his sexuality in the shadow of a murder spree in Atlanta. A U.S. marine writes of his fierce, tragic love for a fellow marine. A man is forced to do a thing he dreads-play basketball-or risk losing face to the youngster for whom he is trying to provide a role model.

These and twenty-seven other illuminating essays reveal a world of double barriers and two-fold prejudices-a world of men looking for love and careers, companionship and mentors, rough trade and gentle understanding among those who alone can know what it means to be African-American and gay. Writings that range from the street-smart to the erudite, from the erotic to the political and the spiritual, this collection explores the vicious crosscurrents of pressures that black gay men face, and the ways they have coped with them-or failed to.

A vivid, candid and provocative portrait of a diverse community, *Fighting Words* is a remarkable anthology of individual journeys experienced by African-American gay men.

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