Myth vs. Reality in the Pen

HIV got

April 1, 2004 By Tim Murphy

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1. Myth: Prison is an HIV breeding ground.

Reality: Most inmates with HIV got it before incarceration.

2. Myth: Health care is better in prison than outside.
Reality: Only if you've had no health care at all outside.

3. Myth: Men's prisons are tougher on gays.
Reality: It's tougher on the weak or effeminate of any sort—and gay men in prison are often quite tough themselves.

4. Myth: Women's prisons teem with lesbians.
Reality: Many women prisoners are coming off abusive relationships with men and find intimacy among one another— but they don't all identify as "lesbian."

5. Myth: Prison rape is common.
Reality: Brutal rape sometimes occurs in male prisons—but coercive sex is more often an adaptive or survival move. Most rape in women's prison is committed by male guards.

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