Oprah on the DL

July 1, 2004 By Josh Sparber

What's old is new again, and men are still having secret, condomless sex with other men—and giving their wives and girlfriends HIV. On an April episode, talk überdiva Oprah Winfrey introduced Middle America to the sexual underground known as "the down low." She grilled J.L. King (top), whose wife's discovery of his secret desire for brotherly love prompted him to write *On the Down Low*, a new book with such tips as how to identify the DL thug/professional/"I'm just curious" types.

Short of adding King's tell-all to her book club, Oprah familiarized her masses with the faces affected by men on the DL, including black college students and folks over 50. In the mix were campus poster boy Jonathan Perry (bottom left; see "His Diff'rent World") and former *POZ* cover dame and activist Jane Fowler (bottom right).

Producers took their cue from the *New York Times Magazine*'s "Double Lives on the Down Low" cover story, a sordid exposé that rocked the chattering classes last August. "Oprah felt that AIDS is a prominent issue in the community that deserved to be broadcast," her spokespeople told *POZ*. And even if we've heard it before, when Oprah talks, America listens. Just ask the beef industry.

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