

“Articulating a Politics of (Multiple) Identities:
Sexuality and Inclusion in Black Community Life”

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This work examines the strategies Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people use in Black environments to proclaim a gay identity that is simultaneous with a Black identity. It identifies three distinctive features of LGBT protest in Black communities. Black gay protest takes on a particular form when individuals are also trying to maintain solidarity with the racial group despite the threat of distancing that occurs as a result of their sexual minority status. Black sexual minorities who see their self-interests as linked to those of other Blacks use cultural references to connect their struggles to historical efforts for Black equality and draw from nationalist symbols and language to frame their political work. They believe that increasing their visibility in Black spaces will promote a greater understanding of gay sexuality as an identity status that can exist alongside, rather than in competition with, race. The findings of this research have implications for larger discussions of identity, protest, and gay sexuality in intraracial contexts.

Key Words: Intraracial Conflict, LGBT, Gay Sexuality, Linked Fate, Cross-Cutting Issues, Racial Group Consciousness, Gay Rights, African American Politics