

An Examination of Black LGBT Populations Across the United States

An Examination of Black LGBT Populations Across the United States

Intersections of Race and Sexuality



Juan Battle Graduate Center City University of New York New York, USA

Angelique Harris Marquette University Milwaukee, USA Antonio (Jay) Pastrana, Jr. John Jay College of Criminal Justice City University of New York New York, USA

ISBN 978-1-137-56521-1 DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56522-8 ISBN 978-1-137-56522-8 (eBook)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016955195

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2017

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use. The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Cover illustration: Cover pattern © Melisa Hasan

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature The registered company is Nature America Inc. The registered company address is: 1 New York Plaza, New York, NY 10004, U.S.A.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
	Naming and Labels	3
	LGBT Communities	4
	Black LGBT Communities	5
	Black LGBTs Coming Out	6
	Black LGBT Family Life	6
	Black LGBT Spirituality	7
	The Significance of Black LGBT Sexuality	7
	Organization of the Book	8
	References	9
2	Current Trends	17
	Current Trends	18
	Trans* Issues	18
	Immigration	19
	Marriage	20
	Economics	21
	Health	21
	References	22
3	Coming Out and Being Out	25
	Meet Samuel Justin Simms	28
	Racial or Ethnic Identity for LGBT People of Color	31
	The Black LGBT Closet	32

vi CONTENTS

	Religion	32
	Notes	33
	References	33
4	Religion and Spirituality	35
	Religion in Black Communities	36
	The SJS Project and Black LGBT Religious and Spiritual Practices	36
	Diversity in Religious Experiences	37
	Homophobia and Religion	40
	Note	43
	References	44
5	Family Life	45
	Support within Families	46
	Relationships and Children	53
	Note	55
	References	55
6	The SJS Project: Phases of Research	57
	SJS Research Principles and Background	57
	Phase I—Preliminary Work	59
	Phase II—Field Period for Quantitative Survey	61
	Phase III—Reports and Academic Articles	61
	Phase IV—Field Period for Qualitative Survey	62
	Phase V—Field Period for Digital Image Project	62
	Notes	63
	References	63
In	Index	

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Juan Battle is a Professor of Sociology, Public Health, and Urban Education at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). He is also the Coordinator of the Africana Studies Certificate Program.

His research focuses on race, sexuality, and social justice. In addition to having delivered lectures at a multitude of academic institutions, community-based organizations, and funding agencies throughout the world, Professor Battle's scholarship has included work throughout North America, South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

He is a Fulbright Senior Specialist; was the Fulbright Distinguished Chair of Gender Studies at the University of Klagenfurt, Austria; and was an Affiliate Faculty of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, and Tobago.

Further, he is a former president of the Association of Black Sociologists and is actively involved with the American Sociological Association.

For more information, see JuanBattle.com.

Antonio (Jay) Pastrana, Jr. is an Associate Professor in the Sociology Department and Deputy Director of the Gender Studies Program at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY. His research and scholarship calls attention to theoretical, methodological, and practical dilemmas within the field of intersectionality studies. Specifically, he examines how racebased marginalization affects the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans* (LGBT) people of color.

As a professor, Pastrana encourages students to participate in professional activities outside of the classroom, while helping them to connect their own lives to the task of critical inquiry. As a Principal Investigator of the Social Justice Sexuality Project, one of the largest national survey research projects to collect data on LGBT people of color, he is committed to ongoing efforts that document the lived experiences of these understudied populations. A New York City native, Pastrana engages various audiences in advancing the work produced by scholars exploring intersectional issues, specifically those whose focus includes race, class, gender and sexuality, and social justice.

Angelique Harris is a Director of the Center for Gender and Sexualities Studies and the Women's and Gender Studies Program, and an Associate Professor of Sociology in the Department of Social and Cultural Sciences at the Helen Way Klingler College of Arts and Sciences. Her research and teaching interests include the sociology of health and illness, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, religion, urban studies, media studies, and social movements.

Her research examines social problems and issues within marginalized communities, primarily focusing on the experiences of women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ communities. Dr. Harris's primary research program studies how disadvantaged groups understand, construct, and respond to health issues as well as how the marginalization and stigmatization they experience impact their access to healthcare. She is the author of AIDS, Sexuality, and the Black Church: Making the Wounded Whole, and coauthored the writing reference books Writing for Emerging Sociologists and The Sociology Student's Guide to Writing.