

God, Gays, and Progressive Politics: Reconceptualizing Intersectionality as a Normatively Malleable Analytical Framework

Keisha Lindsay

I draw on conservative black Christians' claims regarding their co-constitutive racial, religious, class, and sexual subordination to demonstrate that intersectionality is a heuristic that can be used to advance a range of normative arguments. My research rejects traditional understandings of intersectionality as a necessarily progressive analytical framework, as well as recent discussions that suggest that intersectionality's use for conservative ends is evidence of its theoretical underdevelopment. My analysis also reveals that by positing interlocking racism, classism, heterophobia, and anti-Christian bigotry as blacks' "true" experience of oppression, conservative black Christians guide political scientists to consider 1) that intersectional analysis is central rather than antithetical to in-group policing; 2) that we can best interrogate the standards that social groups use to police their boundaries when we adopt a normative-critical conception of power, and 3) that power so defined challenges the erroneous assumption that our role is to either describe or prescribe social reality.

We are a collective of Black feminists . . . committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking . . . The inclusiveness of our politics makes us concerned with any situation that impinges upon the lives of women, Third World, and working people.¹

With these words, members of the Combahee River Collective capture a common sentiment regarding intersectionality—the analytical framework pioneered by black feminists to demonstrate how

black women's experiences of racial, gendered, and sexual disadvantage gain meaning from each other. This sentiment presumes that intersectional analysis is necessarily concerned with the progressive reordering of racial, gendered, and other hierarchies of power.² Yet at the same time, newer intersectional scholarship suggests that social conservatives³ are increasingly appropriating intersectionality for anti-feminist, racist, or heterosexist ends. An important question underlies these two seemingly contradictory understandings of what it means to engage in intersectional analysis: What kind of normative agenda does an intersectional framework engender?

The answer lies in embracing and elaborating upon intersectionality's status as a heuristic.⁴ When I speak of intersectionality as a heuristic I mean that it illuminates how identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other but that it does not prescribe which identities, categories, or processes are mutually constructing. The result is that intersectional analysis can be used to make starkly different arguments, including anti-progressive ones, regarding who is disadvantaged and how to remedy their disadvantage. I illuminate my argument by demonstrating how conservative black Christians use the logic of intersectionality to critique gay marriage and to depict themselves as the only blacks who are "truly" disadvantaged.

I am concerned here not only with demonstrating that intersectionality is normatively malleable but also with

Keisha Lindsay is in the Departments of Gender and Women's Studies and Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (knlindsay@wisc.edu). Her research interests include intersectionality, black feminist theory, black masculinities, and the gendered politics of popular culture. The author is grateful to the anonymous reviewers from Perspectives on Politics for their insightful comments—and to Mara Marin, Jimmy Klausen, and Bob Gooding-Williams for encouraging her to more clearly conceptualize the key arguments in this article. Thanks also to Jane Collins, Julie D'Acci, Aili Tripp, Michael Bosia, Christy Clark-Pujara, Linn Posey, Aida Hussien, Ellen Samuels and to participants in the "Alternatives in Political Theory" roundtable held at the 2011 Western Political Science Association meeting for their careful reading and constructive criticism.

doi:10.1017/S1537592713001047

© American Political Science Association 2013

June 2013 | Vol. 11/No. 2 447

outlining why this is relevant to political scientists. I argue, first, that how conservative black Christian critics of gay marriage employ intersectionality should guide political scientists to re-examine the grounds of a phenomenon that many of us encounter in our research and in the literature on in-group policing—one in which social groups, from Sri Lankan Tamils to Northern Irish Catholics, mark out and then punish some members for being less authentic than others.⁵ Several scholars of racial, gendered, sexual, and interest group politics suggest that this kind of policing occurs when social groups ignore the reality that their membership is irreducible to any single definitive criterion.⁶

Black Christian critics of gay marriage reveal a different reality. These critics use an intersectional framework to argue that blacks' "true" experience of oppression is one of mutually constructing racism, heterophobia, classism, and anti-Christian bias and that the needs of blacks who are not disadvantaged in this manner are secondary at best. In doing so, conservative black Christian critics of gay marriage encourage political scientists to consider that intersectionality and in-group policing are not mutually exclusive phenomenon.

I contend, second, that comparativists, Americanists, theorists, and other political scientists can better interrogate the standards that social groups use to police their boundaries when we adopt a normative-critical conception of power that black Christian critics of gay marriage clearly do not embrace. A critical theory of power regards domination within social groups as self-defeating and unjust and is attentive to these groups' capacity to be simultaneously advantaged and disadvantaged. This approach to power enables us to recognize, for instance, that heterosexual black Christians experience interlocking race and class disadvantage at the same time that they are advantaged as heterosexual Christians. A critical theory of power also reveals, contrary to what many conservative black Christians assert, that embracing heterosexism does not "uplift" the race. On the contrary, doing so erroneously disregards homophobia as a key dimension of black disadvantage and, by extension, undermines many conservative black Christians' own professed commitment to anti-racist politics.

Finally, in advocating the use of a normative-critical theory of power to assess heterosexual black Christians' presumption of "true" black disadvantage, I join other critical theorists in inviting political scientists to reconsider the well-entrenched but erroneous fact-value divide in the discipline or the assumption in much of the political science literature on method and methodology that our role is to either describe *or* prescribe social reality.⁷ I suggest, more specifically, that far from stymieing empirically-grounded inquiry, a normative-critical theory of power allows us to unearth heterosexual black Christians' complex, often contradictory, socio-economic status relative to other blacks and to other social groups.

I first outline scholars' varying, often contradictory, views regarding intersectionality's normative underpinnings. Next I demonstrate that these scholars' diverse perspectives reflect intersectionality's status as a normatively malleable heuristic that can be used for a variety of ends including anti-feminist and heterosexist ones. The next section examines sermons, articles, and other materials produced by black Christian critics of gay marriage to elucidate this claim. In the final section I demonstrate how embracing a critical theory of power adds a progressive agenda to the kind of intersectional analysis deployed by black Christian critics of gay marriage. This argument is important because it gives intersectionality a normative "edge" that its adherents frequently presume but do not always achieve.

Intersectionality Defined

Many intersectional scholars examine how one social group is constituted at the junction of plural identities and across various social categories.⁸ Such an approach entails examining how, for example, black women's identities as "women" and as "blacks" are mutually constructing across the categories of "race" and "gender." Other intersectional scholars strive to capture "the complexity of relationships among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories."⁹ Putting this approach into practice might involve illuminating how black women's subordination as "women" and as "blacks" gains meaning from white men's privilege as "whites" and as "men."

Still other intersectional theorists describe intersectionality as the relational process by which race, gender, class, sexual, and other social categories come to the fore. The focus here is not on a social group or groups but on illuminating mutually constructing processes of "gendering, racialization, ethnicization, culturalization, sexualization" through which "subjectivities and social differences are produced" in relation to each other.¹⁰ These intersectional theorists do not deny the existence of categories of difference or the identities associated with these categories. They argue instead that the "subjects" who occupy these categories do not merely "have identities" but are "socially produced *as* identities" within the context of specific institutions (the welfare state, the labor force, etc.) and systems of inequality (racism, classism, etc.).¹¹

While intersectional theorists vary in the extent to which they adopt a group or process centered approach they have, until quite recently, shown greater consensus regarding intersectionality's normative orientation. Most intersectional theorists presume that intersectional analysis is part of a "liberation/political framework" that fosters "egalitarian coalitions and social movements toward systemic change."¹² Take, for instance, Ange-Marie Hancock's assertion that intersectionality not only illuminates how "gender, class, and sexual orientation . . . are mutually constitutive at both the individual and institutional levels" but does so in ways that foster "political change."¹³

In articulating this argument, Hancock asks us to consider the case of working class lesbians. She argues that an intersectional framework guides us to consider and critique that they are subordinated by individually heterosexist and misogynist men who sexually or verbally assault them and that they are structurally disadvantaged by welfare reform measures, including efforts to garnish the wages of “deadbeat dads,” which mistakenly assume that all impoverished children stem from heterosexual unions.

Another argument is that intersectionality is progressive because it deconstructs the myth of universal subjectivity. The assumption here is that intersectional analysis undermines the notion, for instance, that “woman” is “homogenous” and unchanging and in doing so “disrupts a calcified and definitive way of understanding difference, subjects, and subjectivity.”¹⁴ According to this logic, because it is the very “social fictio[n]” of “woman,” “black,” and so on that generates inequality, it thus follows that to destabilize the notion of a homogenous, “self-referencing, unified subject” is to challenge existing hierarchies of power.¹⁵

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that intersectional theorists always assume that utilizing an intersectional framework means challenging inequalities of power. In fact, some recent scholarship suggests that the opposite is the case. Michelle Fine argues that conservatives are increasingly using intersectional analysis to conclude that “culture or genetics” rather than the “systematic effects of cumulative oppression” explain social groups’ mutually constructing racial, gendered, and class subordination.¹⁶ Kimberlé Crenshaw critiques the “flattening” of intersectionality whereby scholars provide “just a listing of people and a description without any analysis as to how their particular conditions are located within structures of power.”¹⁷ Patricia Hill Collins bemoans the trend in intersectional scholarship of “oppression talk [that] obscures actual unjust power relations.”¹⁸ She singles out for criticism “privileged academics [who] feel free to claim a bit of oppression for themselves” on the grounds that “if all oppressions mutually construct one another, then we are all oppressed in some way by something.”¹⁹ While Collins does not explicitly describe these academics’ use of intersectionality as “conservative,” she does suggest that it is complicit with a conservative agenda.

Intersectional theorists offer two explanations of intersectionality’s use for conservative or potentially conservative ends. The first explanation, advanced by Crenshaw, Michele Berger, and Kathleen Guidroz, is that this state of affairs “is a result of the discursive environment through which [intersectional] ideas travel rather than a reflection of inherent deficiencies in [the] ideas themselves.”²⁰ In other words, conservatives’ seeming co-optation of intersectionality stems less from intersectionality’s own theoretical limitations and more from a broader neoliberal socio-economic context in which individuals and social groups

perceive themselves as under attack from suspect forces including secularism, the breakdown of “normal” nuclear family life, and affirmative action.²¹

The second explanation is that a growing number of intersectionality’s adherents subscribe to a “myth of equivalent oppressions” or the flawed assumption that the interaction of race, gender, and other social categories and the identities associated with these categories generates the same results for all disadvantaged groups. Collins emphasizes that this myth is made possible by intersectionality’s status as a “heuristic device” which “describe[s] what kinds of things to consider” rather than “any actual patterns of social organization.” She also contends that using intersectionality in ways that “obscure[e] differences in how race, class, and gender are hierarchically organized” ultimately fosters anti-progressive scholarship.²²

Conceptualizing Intersectionality as a Heuristic

I contend that intersectionality can be used for conservative ends because it is a heuristic that guides us to ask and clarify a particular question,—how do identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other? Intersectionality, so defined is not imbued with a particular orientation, progressive or otherwise, towards the social world. Instead, intersectionality’s adherents use a variety of ideological perspectives to analyze how identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other and arrive at normatively diverse conclusions based on their analyses.

In advancing this claim, I reject conventional understandings of intersectionality as a necessarily progressive analytical framework and embrace Collins’ suggestion that intersectionality’s use for anti-progressive ends is made possible by its status as a heuristic.²³ However, my work goes further than Collins’ in several important ways. First, I detail the logic of *why* intersectionality’s status as a heuristic renders it normatively malleable—namely, that intersectionality can be used to advance racist, heterosexist, and anti-feminist arguments because it does not specify which identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other or with what effect.

Second, I reveal what intersectionality’s normative malleability looks like in a specific space and time,—one in which black Christian critics of gay marriage use intersectionality to construct themselves as victims of mutually constructing religious, racial, class, and sexual oppression. Third, I fully embrace the implications of casting intersectionality as a heuristic, the most important of which is its normative malleability. Put more specifically, I reject Collins’ suggestion that intersectionality’s inability to prescribe particular “patterns of social organization” is evidence of its own shortcomings or theoretical underdevelopment. For implicit in

this assertion is the erroneous assumption that intersectionality does, in fact, have a normative core or function that scholars can better elucidate.

Understanding intersectionality as a normatively malleable heuristic also means rejecting the notion that we should read its use for conservative ends as a function of the neoliberalism of the 1980s and beyond. Instead, intersectionality's status as a heuristic means that it is already always capable of exposing malleable understandings of the social world. As such, intersectionality can be used to highlight conservative sentiment in *any* socio-economic context and not merely in what Crenshaw and Berger and Guidroz describe as a distinctly neoliberal "discursive environment." My aim here is not to endorse particular uses of intersectionality and especially not to endorse conservative uses of it. It is simply to recognize the *insufficiency* of the intersectionality heuristic as a means of social critique and to insist that critics need to do more than invoke "intersectionality" to make their criticisms compelling.

Let me begin with my first claim that intersectionality is a heuristic that guides us to consider how identities, categories, or processes of identification and categorization are mutually constructing. Using this logic, theorists who embrace a single-group approach to intersectionality might argue that the racial identity "black" and the gendered identity "woman" can and do enter into a relationship with each other, and when they do, each identity is redefined such that "woman" takes on new racialized qualities and "black" takes on new gendered characteristics. According to this reasoning, "black woman" is more than "black" plus "woman" because a black woman's experience of "blackness" is feminized in ways that a black man's is not. Meanwhile, her experience of being a woman is racialized in ways that a white woman's is not.

Proponents of a multi-group approach might use intersectionality to argue that white men's status as "men" and as "whites" gains meaning from black women's status as "women" and as "blacks." In other words, it is not merely that white men's experience of masculinity is a function of their whiteness and that how they experience whiteness is shaped by their masculinity. The group "white men" exists in hierarchal relation to the group "black women" to the extent that the former is widely presumed to be the antithesis of the latter. For instance, to be a white man (rational, virtuous, responsible) is to be what a black woman is presumably not (irrational, immoral, irresponsible). The idea here is that the status of social groups (for example, gay black men and middle class white men), within and across racial, sexual, gendered and other categories of difference, is a function other groups' intersectional status or the absence thereof (for example, black lesbians and working class white women).

Scholars who contend that intersectionality enables us to understand how racialization, gendering, and other pro-

cesses of inequality are organized in relation to each other might use intersectionality to demonstrate how the public school system generates and sustains mutually constructing experiences of race and gender through institutional regulations and customs. These customs and practices include using textbooks and other curricular materials that cast hypersexual, violent sexual predators as male and non-white.

While intersectionality illuminates how identities, categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other, it does not specify *which* identities, categories, or processes of inequality are most important to analyze. As a result, intersectional theorists can advance very different understandings about who is intersectionally disadvantaged and what to do about their disadvantage. I do not deny that intersectional theorists have long identified specific dimensions of social life as mutually constructing. My argument is that, while feminist theorists of intersectionality have traditionally focused on the co-constitutive relationship between race, gender, and sexuality, there is nothing in the logic of intersectionality that mandates a focus on these particular categories. Instead, intersectionality's adherents can and do argue that any number of other categories including age, religion, and ethnicity gain meaning from each other.

Furthermore, even when intersectionality's adherents are attentive to the "traditional" triad of race, gender, and sexuality, an intersectional framework does not dictate the content or the specific identities associated with these social categories. The result is that intersectionality's adherents can designate "black," "man," and "heterosexual," and any other combination of identities associated with the categories "race," "gender," and "sexuality," as mutually constructing. Similarly, intersectionality does not mandate a focus on some mutually constructing processes of identification and categorization over others. Intersectionality's adherents are thus free to posit everything from the racialization of the welfare state to secularization in the classroom to the feminization of the labor force as co-constitutive.

Finally, intersectionality's inability to prescribe which identities, social categories, or process of identification and categorization are mutually constructing is a function of its value un-specificity. By value un-specificity I mean two things. First, intersectionality does not determine the socio-economic status of persons associated with a given identity (e.g., black), social category (e.g., race), or social process (e.g., racialization). Intersectionality's practitioners can thus conceivably contend, for example, that white men are victims of systematic racial and gendered oppression. Second, there is nothing in the logic of intersectionality that guides its adherents to privilege a given identity, social category, or social process as normatively ideal. Intersectionality's practitioners are consequently free to determine, for instance, that "woman" is an identity to be reviled, celebrated, or some combination thereof.

Practicing Intersectionality as a Heuristic

Black Christian Critics of Gay Marriage

The way that conservative black Christians oppose gay marriage is tangible evidence that intersectionality is a normatively malleable heuristic. Gay marriage is not black Christians' most pressing political concern. Nor is it the case that black Christians are socially conservative on most issues or that they are more socially conservative than other Americans. On the contrary, most black Christians rank the economy as their greatest political worry and are more likely than the general population to identify as "liberals," support abortion rights, and to believe that the government is obligated to help the needy.²⁴ Furthermore, a near majority of black Christians support gays and lesbians serving openly in the military and favor civil unions for same-sex partners.²⁵

What the existing empirical data *does* reveal is that a majority of black Christians (63 percent) oppose gay marriage. This opposition exists among black Christians who attend services weekly (69 percent), who attend less regularly (59 percent), who identify as evangelical Protestants (73 percent), and who define themselves as mainline Protestants (52 percent).²⁶ Furthermore, black Christians are two and a half times more likely to oppose gay marriage than their religiously unaffiliated peers even when controlling for the age, education, political ideology, biblical views, and religious attendance of the former.²⁷

Black Christians communicate and cultivate their opposition to gay marriage through a variety of legislative, judicial, and other advocacy-related activities including lawsuits, educational programs, and political lobbying.²⁸ The rhetoric they typically use to oppose gay marriage is both similar to and different from that used by other opponents. Like white evangelicals, black Christians justify their opposition to gay marriage via "fate-linking" or by suggesting that other groups subordinated by mutually constructing racial, religious, and other types of systemic oppression share their views. Unlike white evangelicals and other critics of gay marriage, black Christians rarely suggest that gay marriage is unconstitutional.²⁹

What follows demonstrates that conservative black Christians use an intersectional framework to oppose gay marriage and do so in ways that challenge conventional presumptions of intersectionality as a progressive construct. I draw on conservative black Christians' letters, articles, sermons, legal documents, and websites to support my claim. My focus is on materials produced since the mid-1990s, when gay marriage advocates began to achieve legislative victories and when anti-gay marriage activists became increasingly vocal and organized. I pay special attention to materials that capture how various sub-groups of black Christians oppose gay marriage and that are produced by influential black Christian critics of gay marriage.³⁰ Finally, I employ discourse analysis to read

these materials. Such an analysis involves identifying the rules by which a discourse operates and chronicling the institutional relations or conditions through which it functions.³¹ Put more concretely, I document the central assumptions, assertions, norms, and prohibitions of conservative black Christian critics of gay marriage and consider how their rhetoric is resonant within the social and cultural context of conservative black Christianity.

Conservative black critics of gay marriage do not recognize intersectionality as a political construct. Nor is it the case that conservative blacks who talk about their disadvantage as black Christians are explicitly using the language of intersectionality or participating in the same "language game" as feminist theorists of intersectionality. Instead, these and other social actors can "use" an analytical framework without being conscious of it. In other words, while black Christian critics of gay marriage do not explicitly acknowledge or deploy intersectionality, how they conceptualize their disadvantage is clearly premised on a "nonadditive way of understanding social inequality" that strikingly mirrors the logic of intersectionality.³²

Nancy Wadsworth also recognizes that intersectionality informs how conservative black Christians oppose gay marriage. She asserts, in part, that some black Christians reject gay marriage on the interlocking "racial religious" assumption that it offends their "Bible-based . . . cultural traditions."³³ These "traditions" include a respect for heterosexual marriage in the face of racist whites' past and present efforts to thwart this type of union among blacks. My research suggests that many black critics of gay marriage also use intersectionality to construct themselves as victims of interlocking sexual and religious, as well as race and class, based subordination. Furthermore, while Wadsworth illuminates the "historically constituted power configurations" that motivate some black Christians to employ intersectionality for conservative ends, I emphasize that intersectionality's heuristic status explains why it can be used to advance a conservative agenda on gay marriage.

I will start with Wadsworth's argument that conservative black Christians oppose gay marriage on interlocking "racial religious" grounds. Reverend Clenard Childress, a senior pastor at the New Calvary Baptist Church in Montclair, New Jersey, perhaps sums up this sentiment best:

Equating the [Civil Rights struggle to the] current same-sex marriage effort being waged by gays and lesbians and their supporters is, quite frankly, insulting to most African-Americans and . . . trivializes our long and painful struggle . . . through a bloody civil war, the enactment of four separate amendments to our federal Constitution, thousands of federal court decisions and millions of hours at the 'back of the bus' . . . if you are to better understand the nature of African-American opposition to same-sex marriage [you must] also understand that our faith and our civic duty are intertwined. . . . 'Separation of church and state' arguments do not hold water in the black community. . . . We understand that if not for the strength of leaders like the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Adam Clayton Powell Jr.

and scores of others, our struggle would have been longer and more painful.³⁴

On Childress' reading, gay marriage undermines blacks' religious traditions and in doing so thwarts their successful use of these traditions to challenge racism. In other words, gay marriage's supposedly harmful racial and religious effects mutually construct each other.

Black Christian critics of gay marriage also suggest that such unions exacerbate heterosexual black Christians' mutually-constructing sexual and religious subordination. The founders of blacksforMarriage.org, an online information portal, explain:

blacksforMarriage.org was founded with the mission to stem the tide of homosexuality, homosexual marriage, and broken families across America, and in the black community of America in particular In 2009, Christian leaders and individuals took part in signing a document called the Manhattan Declaration . . . 'born out of an urgent concern about growing efforts to marginalize the Christian voice in the public square, to redefine marriage, and to move away from the biblical view of the sanctity of life.' We at blacksforMarriage.org wholeheartedly agree with this important document . . . we stand for marriage between a man and a woman . . . Now, more than ever before, traditional marriage has come under attack and it will be up to us as Christians to counter that attack with the uncompromising Word of God. . . .³⁵

The founders of blacksforMarriage.org argue, on the one hand, that heterosexual black Christians are disadvantaged by the reality that so many of the "efforts to marginalize the Christian voice in the public square" come in the form of assaults on the supposed pillar of heterosexual family life,—“marriage between a man and a woman.” According to this reasoning, heterosexual black Christians' experience of anti-Christian bigotry is (hetero)sexualized. On the other hand, heterosexual black Christians are also oppressed in a social context in which it is acceptable to “attack” heterosexual family life and to do so by denigrating Christians' “biblical view” that marriage is between men and women. Put more explicitly, if you are a heterosexual black Christian the kind of heterophobia you experience is heavily informed by anti-Christian bias.

Crystal Dixon, a former university administrator who was fired by her white, lesbian boss for expressing anti-gay sentiments, suggests that heterosexual black Christians are disadvantaged by not two, but three interlocking phenomena,—anti-Christian bigotry, heterophobia, and racism:

It is not lost on me that [my boss who is] a white female and that I, a black female who happens to be a Christian, [are] being treated completely differently She was quoted and actually wrote [that] persons who were in opposition to the city of Toledo's domestic partner registry . . . were religious bigots She wasn't fired When it comes to the issue of homosexuality, there is no level playing field Once an individual doesn't agree with their [homosexual] lifestyle, you can expect some heavy . . . opposition to commence.³⁶

On Dixon's account, how blacks are racially subordinated is a function of their status as heterosexuals and Christians in a nation in which homosexuals have “heavy” power and in which secularists can practice anti-Christian bigotry without fear of being “fired.” Furthermore, the fact that straight blacks experience sexual subordination—including being fired for critiquing homosexuals' “lifestyle”—is intrinsically linked to their mutually constructing racial and religious disempowerment in a society that is white and secular. Dixon suggests, finally, that blacks' experience of anti-Christian bigotry is shaped both by their status as blacks in a nation in which only whites enjoy true freedom of speech and by the fact that there is “no level playing field” for heterosexuals in contemporary America.

Syndicated columnist Star Parker argues, on a different but related note, that gay marriage and other “assault[s] on the traditional family” are “simultaneously an assault on blacks and the poor” or that heterosexual blacks experience interlocking race and class based subordination.³⁷ Parker's point of departure is racist white “liberals” who promote “government subsidization and protection of irresponsible behavior”, which supposedly leads to many impoverished, black single-parent households. In detailing how efforts to legalize gay marriage worsen heterosexual blacks' subordination at the junction of race and class, Parker explains:

. . . [it is] not an accident that 75 percent of blacks supported the ban on gay marriage that passed in Texas in the week past. Blacks are increasingly appreciating that the No.1 challenge in our community is the restoration of family The reality of the black community is testimony that the formula for keeping children poor, and assuring that their children will be poor, is to destroy the integrity of the family Blacks see and feel the crisis. We are trying to rebuild our families and communities.³⁸

Parker and other black Christians' opposition to gay marriage is best understood within the broader context of conservative black Christianity. In contrast to more reformist and radical black theological traditions,³⁹ conservative black Christianity presumes that the Bible is the only means of understanding the social and political world; that liberation from oppression requires an individual relationship with God; that patriarchal family life is key to socioeconomic and moral improvement; and that birth control, premarital sex, abortion, and homosexuality are sins.⁴⁰ Researchers attribute this type of worship to turn-of-the-century black pastors' emphasis on their congregants' capacity for spiritual and material transformation in the “here and now” or to blacks' Depression-era assimilationist retreat from political activism and African-derived cultural norms.⁴¹ Other researchers emphasize that conservative black Christianity remains an important means of racial assimilation. They cite as evidence conservative black Christians' contemporary valorization of Euro-American notions of sexual morality, individualism, and theology.⁴² Another

argument is that despite its flawed assimilationist orientation, conservative black Christianity's Victorian social ethos enables those who embrace it to challenge racist stereotypes about their social and moral deviance.⁴³ Yet other scholars emphasize what my own analysis reveals—that conservative black Christianity's continued influence, whether negative or positive, is evident in its followers' vociferous rejection of gay marriage.⁴⁴

Black Male Academies and “Reverse” Discrimination

The use of intersectionality by black Christians to critique gay marriage is not the only example of intersectionality's deployment for conservative ends. Legislators, educators, and other proponents of separate schools for black boys utilize the logic of intersectionality in a similar manner. They emphasize that black boys' academic achievement lags far behind that of other social groups and contend that establishing all-black male schools is the best means of addressing this disconcerting reality.⁴⁵ Most important for my purpose is how some of these proponents explain black boys' academic underachievement. They argue that racist white educators punish black boys for their “natural” masculine aggression while rewarding black girls for their supposedly innate passivity. This is an intersectional argument because it posits black boys' racial victimization as a function of their gender. It is *also* a profoundly conservative claim that perpetuates patriarchal assumptions about men and women's “natural” roles and obscures black females' own co-constitutive gendered and racialized disadvantage in the classroom as evidenced, for instance, by their higher dropout rate (40 percent) relative to white girls (28 percent).⁴⁶

Many white critics of affirmative action also use intersectionality in a similar way. These critics do more than argue that affirmative action is “reverse discrimination” or a means by which whites are discriminated against, as whites, under the law. They also contend that affirmative action boosts racial minorities and women's academic and job prospects at the expense of better qualified white *men*.⁴⁷ The underlying contention here is not that affirmative action harms whites but that it harms white *men* who, unlike white women or racial minorities, enjoy no “special” treatment under the law. This argument clearly ignores white men's systemic privileges in the labor market and beyond as evidenced, for instance, by their higher annual income (\$51,405) relative to white women (\$38,533) and black men (\$37,496). These critics' reasoning nevertheless rests on the decidedly intersectional presumption that racism is gendered.⁴⁸

Lessons Learned

There is much to criticize about intersectionality's use for conservative ends. Conservative black Christian critics of gay marriage who embrace intersectionality mistakenly con-

struct “black” and “homosexual” as mutually exclusive terms. In doing so, they both deny the existence of black gays and lesbians and fail to interrogate the specificity of their intersectional oppression. This oppression includes existing in a social world in which white gay-rights activists assume that all homosexuals are white and in which blacks take it for granted that authentic “blackness” is the sole purview of heterosexual men.⁴⁹ Such criticism, as I will explain, is accurate and important. However, it does not negate the reality that conservative black Christians use intersectionality to define *themselves* as systemically disadvantaged. Most significantly, their very ability to do so—to cast themselves as victims of interlocking anti-Christian bias, racism, classism, and heterophobia—is possible because nothing within an intersectional framework compels them to do otherwise.

Intersectionality and/as In-Group Policing

What conservative black Christians' use of an intersectional framework does suggest is that intersectionality and in-group policing may not be mutually exclusive phenomena. Scholars of ethnic conflict define in-group policing as the “formal or informal administration of sanctions, even violent sanctions, within a group so as to enforce a certain line of action vis-à-vis outsiders (who may be defined not only in ethnic terms but in religious, ideological, class, or any other terms).”⁵⁰ Enforcing this “line of action” usually involves reigning in group members who are offensive to other social groups or compelling group members to attack or otherwise challenge other social groups.⁵¹

Many scholars of racial, gendered, sexual, and interest group politics similarly contend that social groups practice in-group policing to either mitigate or encourage conflict with other social groups. However, these authors emphasize that in-group policing is often less about physical violence and more about articulating which group members are “truly” disadvantaged. Cathy Cohen argues that blacks exclude homophobia from their “real” experience of oppression to help render the race “normal” and to ultimately diminish whites' rationale for practicing anti-black racism. Shane Phelan notes that white feminists routinely reject racism as central to women's “true” experience of oppression because they assume that positing women's disadvantage as purely gendered is key to challenging patriarchal power.

Most significant for my purpose is that many of these scholars presume that in-group policing occurs when social groups are inattentive to intersectionality.⁵² Cohen, for instance, asserts that many blacks do not count homosexuals or women among “truly” disadvantaged members of the race precisely because they suppose that black oppression occurs along the “single dimension” of racism.⁵³ Ian Barnard and Nikki Sullivan contend that because gay white men take it for granted that homosexuals are defined by one “marginalized subjectivity (i.e., gayness),” they routinely

construct lesbians and black men's experiences of sexism and/or racism as "irrelevant and divisive" or as something other than "real" homophobia.⁵⁴ Dara Strolovitch develops a similar perspective in her nuanced account of how race, class, and gender inform interest group politics. She carefully analyzes the different advocacy claims advanced by interest groups purporting to represent subaltern interests and in doing so demonstrates the *insufficiently* intersectional character of these claims. Strolovitch thus concludes that social groups and the advocacy organizations that claim to speak on their behalf "are traditionally organized around single axes of discrimination" and that they consequently regard as secondary the concerns of members who are "caught at the crossroad of multiple forms of disadvantage."⁵⁵ Although this conclusion surely carries weight, it obscures what my own research highlights—namely, those instances where intersectionality itself is mobilized on behalf of exclusion.

The example of black Christian critics of gay marriage epitomizes this more complex picture in which intersectionality is central to how social groups police their boundaries. Take for instance G. Craig Lewis's explanation of how and why heterosexual black Christians are oppressed. Lewis, the pastor of Adamant Believers Council in Grand Prairie, Texas, argues that homosexual blacks are anything but victims of systemic oppression. On the contrary, Lewis explains, they are privileged in a world in which too many heterosexual blacks are intent on "befriending them, protecting them and their rights, as well as condoning their lifestyles."⁵⁶ Lewis argues instead that it is *heterosexual* black Christians who are truly disadvantaged, often by their gay and lesbian peers.

Lewis's point of reference is the "homosexual agenda" and what he describes as its negative, mutually constructing gendered, sexualized, and religious effects on the "black community." These supposed effects include the disturbing fact that:

The prisons are overrun with AIDS, homosexuals, and down low black men. They are dying, spreading disease, and destroying the birthrate of the black community. Look at our numbers. We are now closer to 11% of the American population down from 14% a few years ago We should be afraid for our communities. We should be afraid for our churches because this agenda is deadly. It's like a nuclear bomb that has exploded and the fall out is the agenda! It's spreading like cancer through our communities and we should be running for our lives to find shelter in the word of God.⁵⁷

In other words, according to Lewis, the "homosexual agenda" of which gay marriage is a part racially subordinates heterosexual blacks in a distinctly gendered, sexualized, and religious way by limiting black men's and women's interest in and capacity to reproduce the race and by denigrating their religiously-informed opposition to homosexuality. Moreover, this disconcerting reality explains why it is heterosexual black Christians rather than their homo-

sexual peers who should and do worry most about the future.

Bishop Harry Jackson, pastor of the non-denominational Hope Christian Church in Beltsville, Maryland, concurs that it is not black gays and lesbians but their heterosexual Christian peers "wh[o] are facing persecution." Jackson suggests that far from being disadvantaged, black gays and lesbians benefit from the black church's traditional "don't-ask-don't-tell" approach to gay members of congregations, choirs, and clergy.⁵⁸ Heterosexual black Christians, in contrast, are harmed by the co-constitutive, negative racial and gendered effects of this "don't-ask-don't-tell" approach. Paramount among these effects is a veneration of the kind of non-traditional gender roles that limit black Christians' ability to create and sustain future generations of the race. In Jackson's own words,

recent studies concerning same-sex marriage have shown that . . . where such unions have been allowed, marriage is devalued—resulting in fewer and later marriages . . . [and] rising out-of-wedlock births akin to the current black community dilemma in the U.S. In addition to the damage that gay marriage does to the black family structure that is already under stress, legalization of gay marriage has the potential of endangering the next generation. Statistics show that children do better in school and are greater contributors to society when a mother and a father are present in the home.⁵⁹

Towards a Normative-Critical Understanding of Power

That heterosexual black Christians can use the logic of intersectionality to police the boundaries of "true" black disadvantage does not undermine the value of an intersectional approach. Instead, conservative blacks' ability to use intersectionality in this way is evidence of its status as an inclusive analytical framework that a range of persons—from black feminists to supporters of separate schools for black boys to white male critics of affirmative action—can employ in ways that reflect their understanding of who among them is "truly" disadvantaged. The difficulty is that intersectionality's normative malleability makes it inadequate for doing something more—interrogating the criteria that blacks and other social groups use when they engage in processes of inclusion and exclusion. This "something more" has been at the heart of much of the recent work on intersectionality in political science. But scholars working in this vein have often relied too heavily on "intersectionality" to do the critical work that can only come from elsewhere. For while intersectionality is useful (and limited) as a heuristic, what is needed is a critical theory of *power*. Only when tied to such a theory can the discourse of intersectionality furnish the kind of progressive critique to which most theorists of intersectionality are drawn.

While critical theory is anything but a unified school of thought,⁶⁰ its adherents presume that social and political

theory should not only explain but also contest the socio-economic and political world.⁶¹ Most important for my argument is these theorists' presumption that realizing progressive social change requires two things—being attentive to the complex reality of simultaneous advantage and disadvantage within social groups and being normatively suspicious of dominative harm.

To speak of social groups as simultaneously advantaged and disadvantaged is to assume that we inhabit a social world in which “there are no pure oppressors or oppressed” and in which “almost all of us occupy both dominant and subordinate positions and experience both advantage and disadvantage.”⁶² This is so because when identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization gain meaning from each other the outcome is varied and often conflicting patterns of simultaneous advantage and disadvantage.⁶³ For example, when “white” and “woman” intersect, the result is not only that white women's experience of gender differs from black women's and that white women's experience of race differs from white men's. How “white” and “woman” are co-constitutive also means that white women are simultaneously advantaged as whites in a society premised on white racial supremacy *and* disadvantaged as women in a patriarchal social order.

Recognizing that social groups experience simultaneous advantage and disadvantage is far more than an intellectual exercise. Doing so is a key means by which political scientists can assess the criteria by which social groups, including blacks, police their boundaries. First, if we accept that identities, categories, and processes of identification and categorization are mutually constructing in ways that advantage and disadvantage social groups, then it stands to reason that many heterosexual black Christians' presumption that they necessarily and always epitomize “true” black disadvantage is fundamentally flawed. And, indeed, while heterosexual black Christians are often stereotyped as emotional and irrational and have long been denied access to leadership positions in white religious organizations, they also enjoy advantages that secular blacks or those of other faiths do not. These privileges include a greater ability to posit themselves as standard bearers of morality, to attend religious services and display religious symbols without being harassed, and to observe religious holidays without having to forego either income or schooling.⁶⁴

Furthermore, while whites routinely practice a kind of (hetero)sexualized racism that presumes that black households without a male breadwinner and female caregiver are socially deviant and thus unemployable, it is also true that unlike their homosexual peers, heterosexual black Christians have access to marriage licenses and the important benefits that accompany them. These benefits include a lower tax rate as well as the ability to sponsor immigrant family members, make medical decisions for ailing partners, and access partners' health insurance coverage.⁶⁵ In

sum, recognizing social groups' capacity to be simultaneously advantaged and disadvantaged enables political scientists to discern what heterosexual black critics of gay marriage do not—that heterosexual Christianity is neither necessarily nor always a “true” marker of black disadvantage.

Political scientists can evaluate social groups' standards of inclusion and exclusion when we embrace a second key component of a normative-critical understanding of power. I have in mind here critical theorists' normative suspicion of dominative harm. Some critical theorists characterize harmful domination as “the institutional constraint on self-determination” or as that which occurs when people are denied the opportunity to “achiev[e] autonomously formulated, reasonable life plans, through fellowship and community.”⁶⁶ Others debate whether the unjust distribution of material goods and resources is, in fact, chief among domination's harms.⁶⁷ Yet others disagree about whether dominative harm, however defined, ultimately impedes freedom or justice.⁶⁸

Despite these differences critical theorists agree on three basic precepts. The first is that inflicting dominative harm is indefensible. Ian Shapiro, in this vein, concludes that we need to “police the potential” for “illegitimate” or harmful domination.⁶⁹ Phillip Pettit casts “arbitrary” or harmful acts of domination as the antithesis of “what is reasonable to expect of a decent state and a decent civil society.”⁷⁰ Critical theorists also agree that defending dominative harm necessarily has negative consequences. These consequences include fostering societies without “values that constitute the good life” or “the security, nutrition, health, and education [we] need to develop into . . . normal adult[s].”⁷¹

Many critical theorists embrace a third and final precept—that rejecting domination in some, rather than all, of its harmful forms is self-defeating. Many critical theorists embrace a third and final precept, that rejecting domination in some rather than all of its harmful forms is self-defeating. When critical theorists speak of domination as self-defeating they not only mean that dominators' sense of superiority ironically depends on the sentiment of supposedly inferior others.⁷² Critical theorists also contend that the “interconnection of all forms of subordination” makes it impossible to challenge any single form of domination without challenging another.⁷³ Feminist theorists who embrace this logic argue, for instance, that feminist politics is inevitably ineffective when it ignores how racism informs black women's experience of gender oppression and that anti-racist politics cannot achieve its goals when it is inattentive to how sexism shapes black women's experiences of racism.⁷⁴

Political scientists who are attentive to these precepts are well positioned to assess social groups', including blacks', processes of inclusion and exclusion. For example, if we recognize that dominative harm is indefensible because its

consequences are necessarily negative and severe, then it stands to reason that we should reject conservative black Christians' sentiment that black gays and lesbians somehow benefit from heterosexism. Consider the aforementioned Pastor Lewis's conclusion that heterosexism is a benevolent form of domination:

Sure we are to love our brothers and sisters, but we love them by telling them the truth . . . there is danger ahead if they do not cease to indulge in the most dangerous of lifestyle practices. If we love them we will . . . try to get them to change for their own safety and sanctity . . . by being silent on the issues concerning them, we are not loving them at all, but we are killing them softly and silently.⁷⁵

Absent from Lewis's analysis is any recognition that the poverty rate for black lesbian couples (21.1 percent) and black gay male couples (14.4 percent) is higher than that of black heterosexual couples (9.3 percent)⁷⁶ or that the annual median income of black lesbian couples (\$31,500) is \$10,000 less than their heterosexual peers.⁷⁷ Put more explicitly, far from saving black gays and lesbians from spiritual, psychological, and physical damnation, there is a case to be made that heterosexism does, in fact, render them truly disadvantaged.

If it is true, as critical theorists suggest, that we cannot challenge any single domination without one also challenging another, then political scientists should also reject processes of social inclusion and exclusion that are inattentive to this reality. Conservative black Christians' presumption that they can and should emphasize racism as black people's "true" disadvantage while ignoring the harmful effects of heterosexist domination in black people's lives is a prime example. Indeed, a critical theory of power guides us to understand that Dixon, Childress, and other commentators' unwillingness to challenge heterosexism actually weakens their professed anti-racist politics. For instance, black Christian critics of gay marriage who do not challenge heterosexism are arguably hard pressed to counter the pervasive racist assumption that blacks are racially inferior to whites precisely because the former are less likely to reside in "normal" nuclear family or opposite-sex households.

Conclusion

Intersectionality is not a necessarily progressive analytical framework. As a heuristic it reveals how identities, social categories, or processes of identification and categorization are co-constitutive without prescribing who is disadvantaged as a result or how to ameliorate their disadvantage. Conservative black Christians and others can thus use intersectionality to advance a range of normative arguments including anti-feminist, racist, or heterosexist ones.

In making this claim I embrace Patricia Hill Collins' suggestion of a relationship between intersectionality's status as a heuristic and its use for conservative or potentially

conservative ends. However, unlike Collins, I detail the logic of why this is so. In addition, I reject two concomitant claims advanced by Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and other feminist theorists of intersectionality—that intersectionality's use for something other than a progressive agenda is evidence either that it is "undertheorized" or that its adherents increasingly embrace key neoliberal tenets. Instead, I argue that intersectionality cannot be better theorized to facilitate progressive politics because it has no inherent normative orientation that scholars can unearth and refine. Furthermore, we cannot read intersectionality's use for conservative ends as a mere function of neoliberalism's ascendance. Rather, intersectionality's status as a heuristic means that it can highlight a range of normative views, conservative or otherwise, in any socio-economic context.

Conservative black Christians' use of intersectionality to critique gay marriage offers important lessons for political scientists. Chief among these lessons is that in-group policing and intersectionality are not mutually exclusive phenomenon. Instead, social groups can and do use the logic of intersectionality when contemplating who among them is an authentic group member. Heterosexual black Christians' presumption that mutually constructing anti-Christian bigotry, heterophobia, classism, and racism exemplifies blacks' "true" experience of oppression is a key example.

Political scientists can better assess the criteria that inform blacks and other social groups' processes of inclusion and exclusion when we embrace a critical theory of power that recognizes the reality of simultaneous advantage and disadvantage within social groups and that is normatively suspicious of dominative harm. Power so defined reveals, contrary to what many black Christian critics of gay marriage suggest, that "heterosexual black Christian" is not necessarily a site of disadvantage and that embracing the dominative harms wrought by heterosexism does not challenge anti-black racism.

Put in more practical terms, a critical theory of power illuminates two important empirical realities. First, "heterosexual black Christians" and "disadvantaged" cannot be synonymous when, in fact, heterosexual black Christians enjoy tax, immigration, and other tangible benefits that other blacks do not. Second, heterosexism is not a benevolent form of domination that ultimately benefits blacks by saving them from genocidal extinction or moral degeneracy. Instead, patriarchy and heterosexism are harmful socio-economic phenomena whose concrete effects include, among other things, the significant numbers of black gays and lesbians who are impoverished and uninsured.

Last but certainly not least, that a critical theory of power can do this or reveal that conservative black Christians' conception of authentic black disadvantage is empirically ungrounded, is further evidence that a dual

perspective is possible or that normative judgment and empirical inquiry are not mutually exclusive⁷⁸ Put more explicitly, it is not the case that we must concern ourselves with either describing how the social world is or prescribing what it should look like, as some political scientists have long suggested.⁷⁹

To be sure, how we should combine explanatory description with normative prescription is subject to debate. One response is that particular types of explanation engender judgment or evaluation and, consequently, that inquiry can serve both a normative and a descriptive purpose.⁸⁰ Other critical theorists emphasize that we can use evidence to “track the truth” and normative theory to “construct representations out of those truths that serve the pragmatic aims of inquiry.”⁸¹ In the final analysis, what matters most is that these and other critical approaches to power facilitate progressive social change precisely because they meld normative prescription with empirically-grounded analysis.

Notes

- 1 Combahee River Collective 1982, 13.
- 2 By “progressive,” I mean a politics that fosters the consideration that American society remains mired in long standing socio-economic and political inequalities, and that challenging these inequalities is the task of both the state and individual citizens; Shelby 2007.
- 3 Social conservatives assume that traditional gendered and sexual social values positively influence individual character and, consequently, that we should resist efforts to free individuals from established sources of gendered and sexual authority and recognize the importance of the patriarchal nuclear family and other means of imparting and inculcating said authority; Muller 1997.
- 4 Collins 2006.
- 5 Fearon and Laitin 1996; Bhavnani and Backer 2000.
- 6 Cohen 1999; Phelan 1994; Strolovitch 2007.
- 7 Dahl 1961; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994.
- 8 Crenshaw 2000; Choo and Ferree 2010.
- 9 McCall 2005, 1786; Yuval-Davis 2006.
- 10 Anthias 1998; Dhamoon 2011, 235.
- 11 Dhamoon 2011, 235.
- 12 Hancock 2007b, 250; Jordan-Zachery 2007, 261.
- 13 Hancock 2007a, 252.
- 14 Brah and Phoenix 2004; Dhamoon 2011, 239.
- 15 McCall 2005, 1773.
- 16 Fine, cited in Berger and Guidroz 2009.
- 17 Crenshaw, cited in Berger and Guidroz 2009.
- 18 Collins 2006, 212.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Crenshaw forthcoming, 3; Berger and Guidroz 2009.
- 21 Neo-liberalism describes the melding of liberal notions of individualism, small government, and free markets with conservative principles of social authoritarianism, nationalism, and “law-and-order” that gained ascendancy during the 1980s. “Neoliberal” also describes specific racialized attitudes including a reluctance to identify structural inequality as racism’s cause and the rearticulation of seemingly race-neutral concepts, like “equality” in ways that delegitimize claims of racial injustice; Harvey 2007; Omi and Winant 1986.
- 22 Collins 2006, 210–212.
- 23 Collins 2006 is not the first scholar to cast intersectionality as a heuristic or lens for understanding the social world; see Crenshaw 2011, Weldon 2008. Collins is, however, the first intersectional theorist to suggest that intersectionality’s status as a heuristic means that it can be used for anti-progressive ends.
- 24 Jones and Cox 2011; Sahgal and Smith 2009.
- 25 Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2010.
- 26 Sahgal and Smith 2009; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2010.
- 27 Jones and Cox 2011.
- 28 In 2007 several black religious leaders submitted an amicus brief against efforts to legalize gay marriage in California; Wadsworth 2011. The National Black Church Initiative, a nationwide coalition of 30,000 black churches, sponsors “Family Strengthening Circles,” which aim to persuade participants that “the success of the black community depends on the Church’s vigorous defense of the traditional family”; National Black Church Initiative 2012. Other black church leaders have established the Maryland Marriage Alliance, one of the main sponsors of a petition drive and letter-writing campaign aimed at overturning the Maryland General Assembly’s recent approval of gay marriage; Maryland Marriage Alliance 2012.
- 29 Wadsworth 2011.
- 30 These influential critics include black pastors who are traditionally held in high regard by blacks within and beyond their congregations; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990.
- 31 Foucault 2002; Norval and Stavrakakis 2000.
- 32 Choo and Ferree 2010, 131.
- 33 Wadsworth 2011, 210.
- 34 Childress 2009.
- 35 blacksforMarriage.org 2011.
- 36 Cited in the *Toledo Journal* 2008.
- 37 Parker 2004.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 The former strives to reform racist socio-economic structures while the latter sanctions the total dismantling of white supremacy, if necessary, by violent

means. Both traditions are characterized by a “constant critical posture against racism”; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, 202.

- 40 Baker-Fletcher 2009.
 41 Billingsley 2008; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990.
 42 Dyson 2004.
 43 Ibid.
 44 Walton 2009.
 45 Claire, cited in Troller 2010; Poussaint, cited in Carnes 1996; Kunjufu 2005. Troller 2010; Carnes 1996; Kunjufu 2005.
 46 EPE Research Center 2007.
 47 Lynch 1989; Pulara 2006.
 48 Institute for Women’s Policy Research 2010.
 49 Bérubé 2001; Moore 2010.
 50 Brubaker 2004, 99; Fearon and Laitin 1996.
 51 Bhavnani and Backer 2000; Fearon and Laitin 1996.
 52 Sullivan 2003.
 53 Cohen 1999.
 54 Barnard 2004, 4.
 55 Strolovitch 2007, 23.
 56 Lewis 2011.
 57 Ibid.
 58 Jackson 2007.
 59 Ibid.
 60 Critical theorists debate, among other things, whether their work necessarily embodies a single theoretical and methodological approach and whether social groups must embrace rationality, universality, and other Enlightenment values to affect progressive social change; Habermas 1984; Hoy 2004.
 61 Bronner 2011.
 62 Weber 2004, 131.
 63 García Bedolla 2007; Weldon 2008.
 64 Clark 2006; Mitchell 2004.
 65 Movement Advancement Project, Family Equality Council, and Center for American Progress 2011.
 66 Lovett 2010, viii; Young 1990, 37.
 67 Fraser and Honneth 2003.
 68 Pettit 1999, Shapiro 2012.
 69 Shapiro 2012.
 70 Pettit 1999, 4.
 71 Shapiro 2012, 294; Young 1990, 37.
 72 Hegel 1977.
 73 Matsuda 1991, 118.
 74 Collins 2006, Crenshaw 2000.
 75 Lewis 2011.
 76 Dunn and Moodie-Mills 2012; Albelda et al. 2009.
 77 Ibid.
 78 Dryzek 1987, Habermas 1996.
 79 Dahl 1961; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Lasswell and Kaplan 1950.
 80 Bhaskar 1986.
 81 Anderson 2011.

References

- Albelda, R., M.L. Badget,, A. Schneebaum, and G.J. Gates. 2009. *Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. 2011. “Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science.” <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/> Accessed August 20, 2012.
- Anthias, Floya. 1998. “Rethinking Social Divisions: Some Notes towards a Theoretical Framework.” *Sociological Review* 46: 505–35.
- Baker-Fletcher, Garth. 2009. *Bible Witness in Black Churches*. New York: MacMillan.
- Barnard, Ian. 2004. *Queer Race: Cultural Interventions in the Racial Politics of Queer Theory*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Berger, Michelle Tracey, and Kathleen Guidroz. 2009. “A Conversation with Founding Scholars of Intersectionality.” In *The Intersectional Approach: Transforming the Academy through Race, Class, and Gender*, ed. Michele Berger and Kathleen Guidroz. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Bérubé, Alan. 2001. “How Gay Stays White and What Kind of White It Stays.” In *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness*, ed. Birgit Brander Rasmussen, Eric Klinenberg, Irene J. Nexica, Matt Wray. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bhaskar, Roy. 1986. *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation*. London: Verso.
- Bhavnani, Ravi, and David Backer 2000. “Localized Ethnic Conflict and Genocide: Accounting for Differences in Rwanda and Burundi.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 443: 283–306.
- Billingsley, Scott. 2008. *It’s a New Day: Race and Gender in the Modern Charismatic Movement*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press.
- blacksforMarriage.org. 2011. “About Us.” <http://www.blacksformarriage.org/about-us.html> Accessed December 1, 2011.
- Brah, Avtar, and Ann Phoenix. 2004. “Ain’t I a Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality.” *Journal of International Women’s Studies* 53: 75–86.
- Bronner, Stephen. 2011. *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Carnes, James. 1996. “Reaching All Children.” *Teaching Tolerance* 9: Spring. <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-9-spring-1996/reaching-all-children> Accessed November 5, 2011.
- Childress, Clenard. 2009. “Gay Rights Struggle Not the Same as African-Americans’.” December 11, http://blog.nj.com/njv_guest_blog/2009/12/gay_rights_struggle_not_the_sa.html (accessed June 20, 2011).

- Choo, Hae Yeon, and Myra Marx Ferree. 2010. "Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities." *Sociological Theory* 28(2): 129–49[c1].
- Clark, Christine. 2006. "Unburning the Cross-Christian Privilege and White Supremacy in the United States." In *Religion in Multicultural Education: Research in Multicultural Education and International Perspectives*, ed. Farideh Salili and Rumjahn Hoosain. Westport, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Cohen, Cathy. 1999. *Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2006. "Some Group Matters: Intersectionality, Situated Standpoints, and Black Feminist Thought." In *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*, ed. Tommie Lott and John Pittman. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Combahee River Collective. 1982. "A Black Feminist Statement." In *All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men but Some of Us are Brave*, ed. Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell Scott and Barbara Smith. New York: Feminist Press.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 2000. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." In *Black Feminist Reader*, eds. Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 208–238.
- . 2011. "Postscript." In *Framing Intersectionality: Debates on a Multi-Faceted Concept in Gender Studies*, eds. Helma Lutz, Maria Teresa Herrera Vivar, and Linda Supik. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 221–234.
- Dahl, Robert. 1961. "The Behavioral Approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest." *American Political Science Review* 55(4): 763–72.
- Dhamoon, Rita. 2011. "Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(1): 230–43.
- Dryzek, J.S. 1987. "Discursive Designs: Critical Theory and Political Institutions." *American Journal of Political Science* 31(3): 656–79.
- Dunn, Melissa, and Aisha Moodie-Mills. 2012. *The State of Gay and Transgender Communities of Color in 2012*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
- Dyson, Eric. 2004. *The Michael Eric Dyson Reader*. New York: Basic Books.
- EPE Research Center. 2007. "Diplomas Count: Ready for What?" *Education Week*. <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2007/06/12/index.html> Accessed August 29, 2012.
- Fearon, J.D., and D.D. Laitin. 1996. "Explaining Inter-ethnic Cooperation." *American Political Science Review* 90(4): 715–35.
- Foucault, M. 2002. *Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Routledge.
- Fraser, Nancy, and Alex Honneth. 2003. *Redistribution or Recognition: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. London: Verso.
- García Bedolla, Lisa. 2007. "Intersections of Inequality: Understanding Marginalization and Privilege in the Post Civil-Rights Era." *Politics and Gender* 3(2): 232–48.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1984. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: Polity.
- . 1996. *Between Facts and Norms*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Hancock, Ange Marie. 2007a. "Intersectionality as a Normative and Empirical Paradigm." *Politics & Gender* 32: 248–53.
- . 2007b. "When Multiplication Doesn't Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(1): 63–79.
- Harvey, David. 2007. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1977. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hoy, David C. 2004. *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-Critique*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Institute for Women's Policy Research. 2010. *Fact Sheet: The Gender Wage Gap: 2009*. Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research.
- Jackson, Harry. 2007. "Black Gays Aggressively Enlist in the Culture War," March 12. http://townhall.com/columnists/harryjacksonjr/2007/03/12/black_gays_aggressively_enlist_in_the_culture_war Accessed June 15, 2011.
- Jones, Robert, and Daniel Cox. 2011. "Liberal, with Conservative 'Vibrations': African-American Protestants and the Struggle over Legal Rights for Gay and Lesbian Couples." In *Faith, Politics, and Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States*, ed. David Rayside and Clyde Wilcox. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Jordan-Zachery, Julia. 2007. "Am I a Black Woman or a Woman Who Is Black? A Few Thoughts on the Meaning of Intersectionality." *Politics & Gender* 3: 254–71.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University.
- Kunjufu, Jawanza. 2005. *Keeping Black Boys out of Special Education*. Chicago: African American Images.
- Lasswell, H.D., and Abraham Kaplan. 1950. *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry*. New York: Yale University Press.

- Lewis, G. Craige. 2011. "Why Blacks Should Be Homophobic." April 15, <http://gcraige.blogspot.com/2011/04/why-blacks-should-be-homophobic.html> Accessed June 7, 2012.
- Lincoln, C. Eric, and Lawrence Mamiya. 1990. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Lovett, Frank. 2010. *A General Theory of Domination and Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lynch, Frederick. 1989. *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action*. New York: Praeger.
- Maryland Marriage Alliance 2012. <https://petition.marylandmarriagealliance.com/mma/petition/hb438>; <http://act.marylandmarriagealliance.com/5407/tell-maryland-lawmakers-protect-marriage/> Accessed June 3, 2012.
- Matsuda, Mari. 1991. "Beside My Sister, Facing the Enemy: Legal Theory out of Coalition." *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1183–192.
- McCall, Leslie. 2005. "The Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs* 30(3): 1771–800.
- Mitchell, Henry. 2004. *Black Church Beginnings: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Moore, Mignon. 2010. "Black and Gay in L.A.: The Relationships Black Lesbians and Gay Men Have with their Racial and Religious Communities." In *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, ed. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón. New York: New York University Press.
- Movement Advancement Project, Family Equality Council, and Center for American Progress 2011. *LGBT Families Of Color: Facts At A Glance*. <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbt-families-of-color-facts-at-a-glance.pdf> Accessed August 23, 2012.
- Muller, Jerry. 1997. *Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- National Black Church Initiative. 2012. "Current NBCI Programs." www.naltblackchurch.com/healing-family.html# Accessed June 1, 2012.
- Norval, Aletta, and Yannis Stavrakakis. 2000. *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*. New York: Manchester University Press.
- Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant. 1986. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s*. New York: Routledge.
- Parker, Star. 2004. "Impact of Gay Marriage on Black Community." July 13, <http://www.urbancure.org/article.asp?id=2999> Accessed June 17, 2011.
- Pettit, Phillip. 1999. *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. 2010. "Majority Continues to Favor Gays Serving Openly in Military." October 6, <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1755/poll-gay-marriage-gains-acceptance-gays-in-the-military> Accessed December 2, 2011.
- Phelan, Shane. 1994. *Getting Specific: Postmodern Lesbian Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Pulera, Dominic. 2006. *Sharing the Dream: White Males in Multicultural America*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Sahgal, Neha, and Greg Smith. 2009. "A Religious Portrait of African Americans." January 30, <http://www.pewforum.org/A-Religious-Portrait-of-African-Americans.aspx> Accessed December 1, 2011.
- Shapiro, Ian. 2012. "On Non-domination." *University of Toronto Law Journal* 62(3): 293–335.
- Shelby, Tommie. 2007. *We Who Are Dark: The Philosophical Foundations of Black Solidarity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Strolovitch, Dara. 2007. *Affirmative Advocacy: Race, Class, and Gender in Interest Group Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sullivan, Nikki. 2003. *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. New York: New York University Press.
- Toledo Journal. 2008. "Cyrstal Dixon Notes Unfairness in Who Can Say What." May 20, <http://thetoledojournal.com/News/search/ArchiveContent.asp?NewsID=88630&tsID=> Accessed July 15, 2011.
- Troller, Susan. 2010. "Why Charter School for African-American Boys Is Needed." *Wisconsin State Journal* November 12, http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/education/local_schools/article_740aed70-edd1-11df-9e8d-001cc4c03286.html Accessed June 9, 2012.
- Wadsworth, Nancy. 2011. "Intersectionality in California's Same-Sex Marriage Battles: A Complex Proposition." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(1): 200–16.
- Walton, Jonathon. 2009. *The Ethics and Aesthetics of Black Televangelism*. New York: New York University Press.
- Weber, L. 2004. "A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality." In *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*, ed. S. Hesse-Biber and M. Yaiser. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Weldon, Laurel. 2008. "Intersectionality." In *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*, ed. Gary Goertz and Amy Mazur. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Young, Iris. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. 2006. "Intersectionality and Feminist Politics." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 193–209.