



Violence against Queer People: Race, Class, Gender, and the Persistence of Anti-LGBT Discrimination

Doug Meyer

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Violence against lesbians and gay men has increasingly captured media and scholarly attention. But these reports tend to focus on one segment of the LGBT community—white, middle class men—and largely ignore that part of the community that arguably suffers a larger share of the violence—racial minorities, the poor, and women. In *Violence against Queer People*, sociologist Doug Meyer offers the first investigation of anti-queer violence that focuses on the role played by race, class, and gender.

Drawing on interviews with forty-seven victims of violence, Meyer shows that LGBT people encounter significantly different forms of violence—and perceive that violence quite differently—based on their race, class, and gender. His research highlights the extent to which other forms of discrimination—including racism and sexism—shape LGBT people’s experience of abuse. He reports, for instance, that lesbian and transgender women often described violent incidents in which a sexual or a misogynistic component was introduced, and that LGBT people of color sometimes weren’t sure if anti-queer violence was based solely on their sexuality or whether racism or sexism had also played a role. Meyer observes that given the many differences in how anti-queer violence is experienced, the present media focus on white, middle-class victims greatly oversimplifies and distorts the nature of anti-queer violence. In fact, attempts to reduce anti-queer violence that ignore race, class, and gender run the risk of helping only the most privileged gay subjects.

Many feel that the struggle for gay rights has largely been accomplished and the tide of history has swung in favor of LGBT equality. *Violence against Queer People*, on the contrary, argues that the lives of many LGBT people—particularly the most vulnerable—have improved very little, if at all, over the past thirty years.

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