

The Intersection of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC Identities

By [Ariane Resnick, CNC](#) | Updated on February 02, 2022

✓ Medically reviewed by [Monica Johnson, PsyD](#)

Most everyone is aware of the discrimination that people belonging to the [LGBTQ+](#) community and people of color face. However, many people don't realize the compounded life challenges a person faces when they are part of both communities. That's because they deal with the societal challenges of belonging to the LGBTQ+ community and the challenges of being of color. They may be subjected to both lesbo/[homophobia](#), biphobia, and/or trans(phobia/misogyny) as well as racism simultaneously and at different times throughout life.

Though conversations about the experiences of people who occupy both of these minorities aren't widespread, it's surprisingly common for people to fall under both identity umbrellas: 42% of people in the United States who identify as LGBTQ+ are also a person of color. That's nearly half of the LGBTQ+ population.

Ahead, learn about what it means to belong to the LGBTQ+ community and be a person of color and how you can consider a new way of thinking that can support LGBTQ+ people of color.

What Does LGBTQ+ Stand For?

This acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer or questioning. The plus sign at the end is a signifier for the additional identities that also fall under the umbrella. Those include [intersex](#), [asexual](#), [two-spirit](#), [non-binary](#), and more.

Nonbinary people are trans and are included under the T in LGBTQ, but historic erasure makes it important to name them especially. LGBTQ+ people are essentially people who either are attracted to the same or similar genders, people who are transgender including nonbinary, or both.

Related: [What Does the LGBTQ+ Acronym Mean?](#)

What Does BIPOC Stand For?

BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and a person of color isn't White or isn't only White. People of color are Black, Brown, and/or Asian. A person of color can also be multiracial, with lineages from multiple races.

A person of color may be identifiable as coming from their lineage, or they may be [racially ambiguous](#).

What Is a Multiple Minority?

A multiple minority is a person who falls under more than one umbrella minority category. LGBTQ+ and BIPOC together are one example. Other examples of people who would be considered a multiple minority are someone who is Black and disabled, or a person who is disabled and queer.

Related: [What Queer Individuals with Marginalized Identities Hope You Recall After Pride](#)

The Life Experiences of LGBTQ+ BIPOC

Now that you understand what it means to be of color and LGBTQ+, you may be wondering how this affects a person. Let's examine the various ways in which being these multiple minorities often impacts a person's life.

Living as a Multiple Minority

The biggest challenge of being both LGBTQ+ and a person of color is being subjected to compounding systems of oppression such as homophobia, biphobia, racism, and transphobia. It is more complex than the usual forms of discrimination because either can happen within your own community, rather than only being discriminated against from other groups.

Research shows that people who are LGBTQ+ and BIPOC experience more [microaggressions](#) than their single-minority counterparts.

Additionally, youth who are LGBTQ+ and BIPOC face many additional challenges

Additionally, youth who are LGBTQ+ and BIPOC face many additional challenges over youth who are only LGBTQ+ or BIPOC. They are statistically less likely to be [out to their families](#), more likely to have low self-esteem, more likely to be depressed, and have an elevated HIV risk.

Racism in LGBTQ Culture

People who are LGBTQ+ and of color may not find the LGBTQ+ community as welcoming as one would anticipate. White supremacy does exist in all areas of society. Even in queer, liberal havens such as San Francisco, racism within the LGBTQ+ community is a huge problem.

LGBTQ+ BIPOC community members in San Francisco note that they are less likely to have health insurance or [access to health care](#), are more likely to experience homelessness, and encounter racism on dating apps.

Homophobia in Communities of Color

In the same vein as BIPOC who are LGBTQ+ can experience racism within the queer community, people of color may experience homophobia within their racial communities. For example, statistically, more Black people consider homosexuality "wrong" than White people do. This is due to homophobic ideals being an intrinsic part of the enforcement of white supremacy and anti-Blackness on Black communities by White society.

Additionally, there is reportedly less homophobia in second-generation families than in the first generation. For the offspring of parents who were immigrants, this may be particularly challenging as the LGBTQ+ person of color has to deal with their parents' homophobia in addition to any difficulties they may face by living in a new country.

The Need for Resilience

Because of how much homophobia and racism LGBTQ+ people of color face, they are often resilient in order to survive in this society. Children of color may experience racism from an early age in school, and those who are also LGBTQ+ can be victims of homophobia as well.

The stress of being a multiple minority continues through adulthood, and LGBTQ+ people of color may find less community strength than their White counterparts.

When Personal Is Political

Another facet of living as an LGBTQ+ person of color is that there may be stress stemming from the idea that an individual represents a demographic, and LGBTQ+ BIPOC represent multiple demographics.

The adage that "[the personal is political](#)" comes from the idea that we interact with systems of privilege and oppression at all times, so individuals with one or more marginalized identities are not able to have a personal life that is separate from knowledge of those systems because they are consistently being harmed and subsequently having their attention drawn to the existence of those systems.

However, over time the statement has also grown to mean that our actions are meaningful on a larger scale. What we do as individuals can be scrutinized by the public, often based on our demographics. This may be incredibly stressful for people who represent multiple demographics to others.

Related: [What You Might Not Know about Queer History](#)

How to Support LGBTQ+ BIPOC

Now that you know about the stresses of being a multiple minority, you might want to [take action to support](#) people who are more marginalized than yourself. Let's look at an easy and effective way to go about that.

Intersectionality

The idea of intersectionality is about looking at different areas of identity and examining how they overlap. Don't worry; it's not nearly as complex as it sounds, and we've already been talking about it quite a bit.

[The Center for Intersectional Justice defines intersectionality](#) as "fighting discrimination within discrimination, tackling inequalities within inequalities, and protecting minorities within minorities." That means that when you look at racism, you also look at those who may experience homophobia, too, or when you look at homelessness, you don't just focus on the experiences of White unhoused people, but those of unhoused people of color too.

[To practice intersectionality](#), the main thing you need to do is shift focus from one area of a problem and instead look at the bigger picture. For a feminist issue, that

means not only looking at how a problem impacts White women but also going deeper to find out how it impacts women of color.

Intersectionality is a lens through which you can view the world, making you a more conscientious person. It also makes you a kinder, and more caring person, because you'll be paying more attention to the various ways that other people are discriminated against and working to stop them within your world.

Read Next: [6 LGBTQ+ Influencers Who Are Owning What It Means to “Be Yourself”](#)

7 Sources

Verywell Mind uses only high-quality sources, including peer-reviewed studies, to support the facts within our articles. Read our [editorial process](#) to learn more about how we fact-check and keep our content accurate, reliable, and trustworthy.

1. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. [LGBT Demographic Data Interactive](#).
2. Advocates for Youth. [The Impact of Homophobia and Racism on GLBTQ Youth of Color](#).
3. San Francisco AIDS Foundation. [A conversation on white supremacy and racism in the queer community](#).
4. Glick SN, Golden MR. [Persistence of racial differences in attitudes toward homosexuality in the United States](#). *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr*. 2010;55(4):516-523.
doi:10.1097/QAI.0b013e3181f275e0
5. Röder A. [Immigrants' attitudes toward homosexuality: socialization\) religion, and acculturation in European host societies](#). *International Migration Review*. 2015;49(4):1042-1070.
doi:10.1111/imre.12113
6. Truong, N. L., Zongrone, A. D., & Kosciw, J. G. (2020). [Erasure and resilience: The experiences of LGBTQ students of color, Black LGBTQ youth in U.S. schools](#). New York: GLSEN.

7. McConnell EA, Janulis P, Phillips G, Truong R, Birkett M. Multiple minority stress and lgbt community resilience among sexual minority men. *Psychol Sex Orientat Gend Divers*. 2018;5(1):1-12. doi:10.1037/sgd0000265