

Political Participation and Political participation of LGB Americans:
Effects of Resources, Sexual Orientation Identity, and Racial Identity

Tristan Lenzo
tlenzo@unm.edu
Department of Political Science
1 University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals are an understudied group within the Political Science literature. While there has been some analysis of the LGB community, such as wage gaps, political ideology gaps, effects of success on mobilization, and even factors of mobilization, very few take race of LGB respondents into consideration (Douglas 2015, Schaffner and Senic 2006, Kane 2010, Swank and Fahs 2013). This paper combines resource-model, group-identity-model, and racial identity variables to test the effects of each on vote frequency and political participation. We run each set of variables against two separate independent variables: vote frequency and political participation. With that, we are able to test whether resources, group awareness, or racial and gender identity play a larger role in determining both vote frequency and political participation engagement.

Our analysis uses survey data from the Pew Research Center in their Survey of LGBT Americans from 2013. The survey was conducted by the GfK Group using their KnowledgePanel, its nationally representative online research panel. GfK Group surveyed 1,197 individuals who previously identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender on their annual profile survey for GfK Group. All of the members in GfK Group are recruited through probability sampling methods, including random-digit dialing and address-based sampling. The sampling group originally included 3,645 individuals who were eligible to take the Pew survey, of whom 1,924 were asked to take part, with the rest being eliminated due to either having been no longer active in the panel, or from being a household member of someone who was randomly selected to participate. Pew recognizes that “it is possible that some LGB individuals who would be unwilling to disclose their status in other contexts are willing to identify themselves as LGB in this panel” but that “the level of trust established between respondents and the survey organization is likely to be high.” Further, the survey was conducted online, which “is likely to

elicit more honest answers from respondents.” It should also be noted that GfK Group does provide internet access for their panelists so that they may participate in the survey. While not definitively removing online sample-bias, this contribution does help alleviate online bias.

Specific research on electoral activism within the LGB community is slim, but does exist (Swank and Fahs 2013, Kane 2010, Rollins and Hirsch 2003). Most researchers suggest that mobilization of the LBGT community is due to some group efficacy and awareness of social problems specific to the community (Swank and Fahs 2013, Kane 2010). The resource model of political participation holds very well for white individuals in general (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) and is likely to be significant in this analysis, as the original survey was composed of 66 percent white respondents. Swank and Fahs have an analysis of intersectionality of gender and race of individuals “who engage in Gay and Lesbian Rights Activism,” which is similar to our research question. We would like to expand on this research question to determine whether resource model variables, framing variables around the LGBT identity, or racial and gender variables are most important to vote frequency and political involvement. Our main objective is to expand on the literature to understand the multidimensional effects of intersectionality on the general gay and lesbian population, and to determine whether having an intersectional racial identity affects participation.

In our analysis, we find that resource-model variables are the most consistently significant determinants of vote frequency but LGBT identity framing variables as most important to political participation. We find there to be no statistically significant difference in vote frequency between whites, Hispanics, and blacks. However, we do see significant decreases in civic engagement for LGBT issues for both black and Hispanic respondents. Lesbian women, on the other hand, are less likely to vote often but no more or less likely to engage in political

activity for LGBT issues. Interestingly, the interaction variable for race and gender reveals in our regression analysis that Hispanic females are more likely to vote than their male peers.

Literature Review

The two most widely held ideologies of political participation surround resources of voters, and group identities and group consciousness. The decision to vote is for some a rational choice based on resources like time, political efficacy and knowledge, and having the need to be involved to protect their own monetary resources (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Others, such as racial minorities have fewer resources and vote more often because of their own personal circumstances and interests. Political science has paid a great deal of attention to how race affects political participation, and has even helped to answer the same question for other groups such as religious minorities, gender minorities, and even the LGB community. It is difficult to study these smaller groups though due to a lack of available data. Those who have researched the LGB community in particular have helped to explain the wage gap between LGB racial minorities (Douglas and Steinberger 2015), how legal change effects political mobilization (Kane 2010), the ideological gap of sexual minorities (Schaffner and Senic 2006), and factors impacting electoral activism among gays and lesbians (Swank and Fahs 2013).

Many studies are able to include some variables capturing economic and social resources and even some analysis on the factors of group identity (Swank and Fahs 2013, Rollins and Hirsch 2003, Schaffner and Senic 2006, Swank and Fahs 2012). Race, however, is still an important factor in the LGB community and indeed other minority groups not already classified based on race. Existing studies do little to analyze how race effects political participation and political participation of LGB individuals. We hope to expand upon the existing literature by

answering how the the general LGB community fits into each of these models and how race contributes to voting and political participation for LGBT rights.

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady in 1995 laid out exactly how resources are relevant to political participation in the United States. They conclude that time, money, and skills are very powerful predictors of political participation, and expanded upon the traditional socioeconomic status model of political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Essentially, being more involved in a church, having a higher income, and having more free time increases the likelihood of participating in politics, such as contributing money to a candidate, writing to a representative, and voting. Others such as Paula McClain might argue that this model does not adequately explain African American voting behavior, which is motivated more by conscious decisions for group-interest and having a sense of linked-fate with racial peers (McClain et. al 2009). McClain argues that this group identity model should not necessarily be extrapolated to other groups other than African Americans due to the specific history the African American community has endured which contributes to their sense of group consciousness and linked fate. Regardless, she notes that others have tried to do just that: measure the presence of group consciousness of other racial minorities. These two perspectives create two distinct theories for determinants of political participation in the United States: one based around economic resources such as education, church attendance, income, and age, and the other based on group identity and consciousness with fellow peers.

The LGB community is unique in that, although a minority group, it does not necessarily revolve around one common identity. The name itself includes lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered, and some include queers or asexual people as well. However, any individual may have additional identities based on race or religion and it is not necessarily true that their sexual

identity takes precedent over their gender or racial identity. The literature suggests, though, that the LGB community does operate on some level as a cohesive minority group, which is particularly evident by the wide ideological gap between them and their straight counterparts, and their corresponding mobilization campaign around target issues (Swank and Fahs 2013, Schaffner and Senic 2006).

Schaffner and Senic (2006) identify that LGB individuals are almost twice as likely to be members of the Democratic Party than the Republican Party. Much of this gap is to the struggle to obtain economic benefits such as healthcare and spousal benefits than in the interest of pursuing civil rights (Schaffner and Senic 2006). The researchers argue this distinction is likely due to the difficulty of achieving civil rights, making then a less ideal goal for the LGB movement. When political issues for the LGBT community are successfully changed through mobilization efforts, overall mobilization benefits at least temporarily, according to Melinda Kane (2010). This means that as the LGBT community approaches their overall political goals, they are more likely to continue to mobilize, but only if the success is seen to be due to the mobilization of the LGB community rather than by the efforts of others.

LGB individuals, and particularly LGB racial minorities, also experience a pay gap, but in the opposite direction of what would be expected. Interestingly, gay racial minorities earn more than their heterosexual counterparts while white gay individuals make less than their counterparts (Douglas and Steinberger 2015). Racial minority lesbians make more than what would be expected based on their gender and race, but still less than their heterosexual counterparts. For LGB individuals, economic background is unlikely to affect political involvement, which is instead more motivated by social movement characteristics such as being

involved in an LGB organization, having experienced a hate crime, and being publicly open about sexual identity (Swank and Fahs 2013).

Racial identity is and will likely always be an important factor in American political research. Race was one of the central research questions for political scientists, and many have investigated the effects of black and Latino identity on mobilization (Smith 1981 and Nuño 2007), the effect of black and Latino identities on candidate evaluations (Sullivan & Arbuthnot 2009 and Manzano & Sanchez 2010), and even the effects of white racial attitudes in the 2008 election (Segura and Valenzuela 2010). Race indeed has a clear place in political science research, and should be at least considered as contributing variables for statistical research.

How race affects the political participation and political participation of LGB minorities has yet to be answered, largely due to the difficulty in researching the LGB community and the continued difficulty of small sample sizes and inadequate data. As such, research on political participation of LGB individuals have done little to incorporate the effects of racial identity, relying on socioeconomic variables and factors of identity framing. Though the interaction between race and sexual orientation has been investigated for the pay gap, little work on political participation has included race as a variable. Considering the centrality of race in American Politics (Hutchings and Valentino 2004), it seems necessary to at least consider how a racial identity impacts political participation and political participation of sexual orientation minorities.

Theory

The LGB population is a sizeable portion of the US electorate, making up nearly two-thirds the size of the Latino population (Schaffner and Senic 2006). Researchers agree that the

LGB community overall is solidly liberal, but little is known about the determinants of their civic and political engagement, and even less is known about how rates vary between racial subgroups (Schaffner and Senic 2006).

General research on political participation is founded on two models: the resource model and the group identity model. Brady, Verba, and Schlozman in their seminal work in 1995 have become the bastion of research on political participation. They conclude that resources including money, civic skill, time, church involvement, and age “have powerful effects on overall political activity,” (Brady 1995). The other primary model for political participation, although arguably solely for the African American community, is the group identity model which argues that for group-conscious individuals, their political decisions are motivated less by resources but more by the motivation to better their community (King 2005). Many researchers at least agree that race is a central aspect in American Politics, and should be used as an investigative variable in research (Hutchings 2004, McClain 2009, King 2005).

Sexual minority individuals are more likely to experience harassment and assault in their high school years (Olsen 2014). It seems likely that individuals with a strong identity, both racial and sexual, might be affected differently by each. There is not much literature discussing the effects each identity may have on individuals, partly due to the difficulty in researching this question. Some extrapolation can be done for racial identities based on previous research, though, primarily for African Americans and to a lesser extent Latinos.

African Americans, as King (1995) describes, are less motivated by resources and more by their group identity. Douglas and Steinberger (2015) interestingly find that gay racial minorities, particularly men, earn more than their heterosexual counterparts, which may affect the political participation rates of LGB racial minorities. White gay men, on the other hand, earn

less than their heterosexual counterparts. Douglas and Steinberger find mixed results concerning the incomes of lesbian women, though they find evidence to suggest that lesbian women make more than would be expected for their sexual and racial identities, but less than their heterosexual counterparts. It is important to note, though, that white gay males still earn more on average than minority gay males, at least according to Douglas and Steinberger (2015).

If the resource model is accurate for explaining LGB political participation, we would expect to see the highest rate of political participation among white LGB individuals, followed by African Americans and Hispanics. If this data could be tested against the general population, we would expect the LGB racial minorities to participate at higher levels than their heterosexual counterparts. Hispanics are overall one of the least likely groups to turnout to vote. In 2012, the Pew Research Center found that only 48 percent of eligible Hispanic voters turned out, compared to 66 percent of Blacks and 64.1 percent of whites (Lopez 2013). As such, it is likely that voting rates among Hispanic LGB individuals in the survey would be lower than that of African Americans and whites. It is unclear whether that pattern for Hispanics would extend to LGB Americans, as there is not theoretical framework to assume the general electoral participation rates would be similar to sexual minority groups. We can however extrapolate expected participation rates based on the expected incomes of sexual racial minorities.

There is little research on the effects of an LGB identity on voting and political participation rates, and even less research which combines intersectional analysis of sexual identity and race. Considering that resource model variables are the most likely indicators of voting, it seems likely that political participation of LGB individuals would be more likely to be driven by resources such as income and education, and less motivated by a group identity. With

the data available in the Pew Research Center Survey, political participation rates can be calculated for each LGB group by race. With this, we would predict:

H1: LGB individuals with more resources, including a higher income and greater educational attainment, will be more likely to claim to vote frequently.

H1a: Resources have no effect on vote frequency of LGB individuals.

This resource model approach, though, does little to capture the group identity of LGB minorities. Measuring group identity and collective consciousness of LGB individuals is difficult. Swank and Fahs (2013) find that experiencing a hate crime increases an LGB individual's chances of being a political activist. The Pew Research center unfortunately does not ask whether a respondent has experienced a hate crime, they do ask several questions regarding whether a respondent has been subject to physical or verbal assault, discrimination in the workplace and/or in religious settings, or been subject to verbal slurs and jokes. Considering Swank and Fahs research with similar variables, these questions may be used as a replacement for experiencing a hate crime but may not accurately reflect group identity. However, the more generalized questions of the Pew survey may be more applicable, as they may be able to capture those who have experienced some forms of discrimination but not a direct hate crime. This provides a testable hypothesis:

H2: Increased discrimination a respondent experiences increase the chance they would be to vote or become civically engaged for LGB-specific issues.

H2a: Discrimination of LGB individuals has no effect on political participation or voting participation.

These two hypothesis are only able to capture the theories concerning the resource model and the group identity model, respectively, of the LGB Americans in the survey. A third hypothesis is

needed to test the effects of race on vote frequency and civic engagement for LGB issues. Although it is not standard to incorporate three hypotheses into a research paper, we believe three separate analyses are needed to successfully answer which group of variables has the greatest impact on vote frequency and political participation. Because of the lack of literature on the effects of intersectionality of race and sexual orientation, it is difficult to theorize how having a racial identity might affect participation. The only existing literature by Swank and Fahs (2012) suggests that race plays little role in determining political activism of LGB individuals except that white lesbians are less likely to be political activists than lesbians of color. The resource model is likely to play a large role on political participation and political participation of LGB Americans, and as such it could be theorized that white LGB individuals, who earn more than their racial minority peers, would still be more likely to be civically engaged and vote frequently. The remaining hypothesis should be taken lightly, and only as a framework to understand the research objective.

H3: White LGB Americans are more likely to be civically engaged and more likely to vote frequently than their African American and Hispanic peers.

H3a: LGB Americans are similarly civically engaged and equally likely to vote regardless of their individual race. Racial identity is subsequent to their sexual identity.

These three hypotheses provide a framework to analyze the LGB community based on their political participation and vote frequency. We can hope to learn whether how their resources, experiences with their sexual orientation, and racial identity affect their engagement and participation. The methods for analyzing the survey data is described in the following section.

Data and Methods

How do various resource, identity, and racial variables affect political participation and vote frequency of LGB Americans? Does awareness of sexual identity due to discrimination affect political participation? How does having a double identity of a sexual orientation and a racial identity affect political participation and political participation? Are LGB Americans mobilized more by their sexual orientation, racial identity, or their individual resources? We are able to analyze political participation and self-reported vote frequency using data from a 2013 Survey of LGB Americans from the Pew Research Center. The survey was conducted by the GfK Group using their KnowledgePanel, its nationally representative online research panel. GfK Group surveyed 1,197 individuals who previously identified as LGB on their annual profile survey for GfK Group. All of the members in GfK Group are recruited through probability sampling methods, including random-digit dialing and address-based sampling. The sampling group originally included 3,645 individuals who were eligible to take the Pew survey, of whom 1,924 were asked to take part, with the rest being eliminated due to either having been no longer being active in the panel, or who were a household member of someone who was randomly selected to participate. Pew recognizes that “it is possible that some LGB individuals who would be unwilling to disclose their status in other contexts are willing to identify themselves as LGB in this panel” but that “the level of trust established between respondents and the survey organization is likely to be high.” Further, the survey was conducted online, which “is likely to elicit more honest answers from respondents.” It should also be noted that GfK Group does provide internet access for their panelists so that they may participate in the survey. While not definitively removing online sample-bias, this contribution does help alleviate online bias.

Transgender individuals have a unique experience from that of gays and lesbians and including them might not be completely accurate to the data. While it is possible to include transgender respondents in the data analysis, their gender identity would have to be verified against their sex, which we used throughout the analysis in our regressions. It is not immediately clear that all transgender respondents answered questions of gender, sex, and gender identity consistently, which would have to be verified if they were to be included in the analysis. Additionally, transgender individuals may or may not view themselves as members of the LGBT community due to their unique personal experiences and their relationships with others in the LGBT community. With these complications in mind, we decided to drop the transgender respondents in the survey. We dropped 45 respondents who identified as transgender, and another 9 who refused the question, bringing the total to 54 dropped respondents from the original survey data. With the transgender respondents removed, the total survey included 1,143 respondents. Considering the small ratio of transgender respondents to the overall survey, it is unlikely that the decision to drop these individuals will change the overall data. We would like to do further analysis to test the unique effects of a transgender identity on vote frequency and political activism for LGBT rights.

We analyze two primary dependent variables to measure general political participation of LGB Americans. First, we analyze self-reported vote frequency. Second, we analyze self-reported political engagement for LGBT rights, which we calculated based on several questions from the survey concerning involvement in activism surrounding LGBT rights. With two dependent variables, rather than one, we are able to create a more accurate picture of LGB political participation. Similarly, by keeping the dependent variables separate, we are able to distinguish between voting and more engaged forms of participation such as rallying, engaging

in market protests, and donating to campaigns or organizations. The variables used to measure this civic participation will be discussed briefly. Both dependent variables are ordinal, allowing to use a standard regression model for each set of variables. We separately ran the same tests using an OLOGIT regression, but decided on the OLS as there was little to no difference in statistical significance between the models, and the regression allows the possibility to run a robust regression as well as view outliers more easily. Swank and Fahs (2013) utilize a stepwise-approach to investigate the added effects of resource and framing variables on the political engagement of LGB Americans. Unfortunately using this approach in our models showed little additive-effects between resource, framing, and racial/gender variables. We ultimately decided only to use one mode encompassing all variables, for each dependent variable.

The Pew Research Center survey used for the analysis has questions on vote frequency on an ordinal scale from “Always” to “Seldom,” and includes questions of political participation around LGB-specific issues, including whether a respondent has marched in a protest, contributed money to a political candidate or organization, and whether the respondent has chosen to buy or not to buy certain products due to a company or candidates stance on LGB issues. In this case, both vote frequency and political participation are self-reported which may not be entirely accurate. Using both dependent variables helps to alleviate discrepancies and creates a clearer picture of political engagement of LGB Americans, distinguishing between voting and more engaged methods of participation like market protests or donating to candidates.

We adjusted the respondent's vote frequency only for ordinal direction, reversing "Always" from a response of 1 in the original data to a response of 4 in the analysis, and “seldom,” from 4 in the original direction to 1 in our analysis. We used this ordinal scale as a dependent variable in both of our models discussed below. We chose not to code “seldom” as

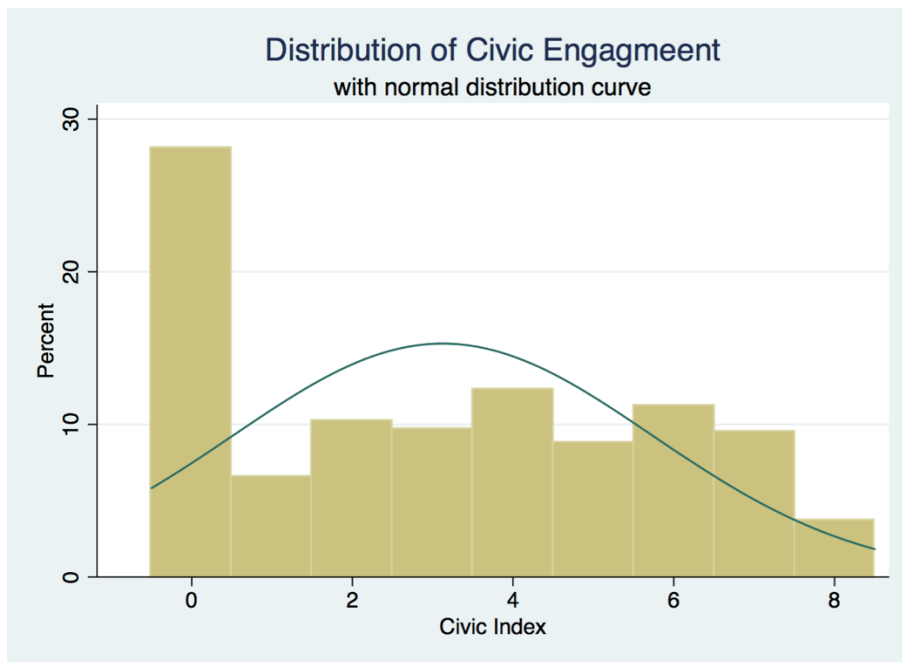
zero, as the response does not necessarily indicate a total reluctance to vote. The survey included only a few questions on political participation, and all of the questions are specific to LGB issues. Many researchers try to use general questions of civic participation, including whether a respondent has voted, signed a petition, written a letter to a congressperson, attended a meeting where decisions are made, or made a speech or presentation, while others use measures such as interest in campaigns (Swank and Fahs 2013, Brady et al 1995, Nuño 2007). We created a count variable for political participation, which takes into account whether the respondents had bought a product or service because of a company's stance on LGB rights, attended a rally or protest, or had donated to a political candidate or campaign. These were the only civic-related questions in the survey. The respondents could choose whether they had a. never done the activity, b. done the activity *but not* within 12 months, or c. have done the activity within 12 months [italics added for emphasis and clarification]. We chose to weight these responses as ordinal, giving more weight to those who have engaged in these activities within the past 12 months. We counted "never" responses as zero, "yes but not within 12 month" responses as one, and "yes within 12 months" responses as two. This method may be convoluted, as creating an ordinal value from an inconsistent timescale could misrepresent the respondents' engagement in these activities. However, collapsing these responses using a dummy variable would give equal weight to those who may have engaged in an activity a single time as those who have done it recently and who likely more intimately remember such activity. Respondents who answered "have done the activity within 12 months," and "have done the activity but not within 12 months," would be coded identically as a dummy variable, which oversimplifies respondents who may more frequently engage in these activities and who would otherwise be weighted as two. Further, those who have not engaged in one of these activities within a year may not be as likely to in the first

place, which again suggests the importance of giving more weight to respondents who have done these activities at least somewhat recently. The distribution of these responses is as follows:

Table 1: Frequency of Responses to Questions of Political participation in the 2013 Pew Research Center Survey of LGB Americans

Survey Question: Have you ever...	Yes, in 12 Months	Yes, not in 12 Months	No, never
Bought a certain product or service because the company supports LGB rights?	358 (31.82%)	300 (26.67 %)	467 (41.51%)
Decided NOT to buy a certain product or service because the company is not supportive of LGB rights?	450 (39.96%)	212 (18.83%)	464 (41.21%)
Attended a rally or march in support of LGB rights?	122 (10.83%)	407 (36.15%)	597 (53.02%)
Donated money to politicians or political organizations because they support LGB rights?	253 (22.55%)	230 (20.50%)	639 (56.95%)

Figure 1: Distribution of Index of Political participation, with normal distribution curve.

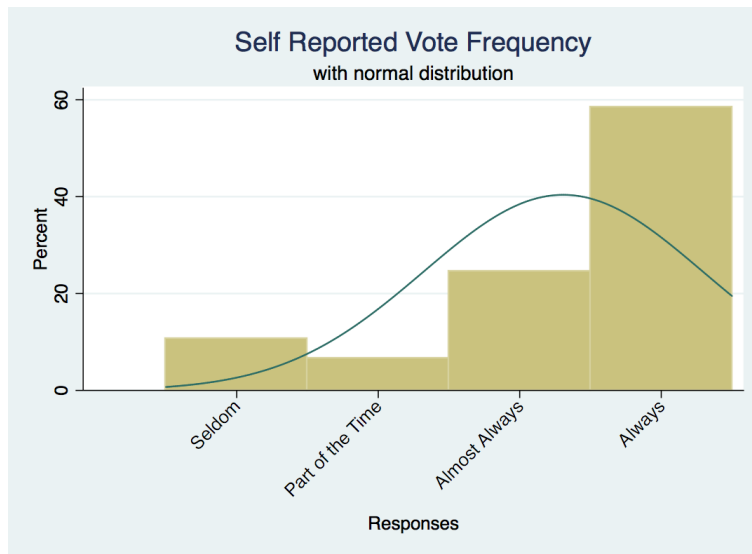


With the exception of the outlying zeros, the remaining respondents similarly follow a normal distribution. It is intriguing that such a high portion of respondents have never engaged in any of these activities, including market protests, donating to a candidate or organization, and attending a rally or march. This outlying group of respondents signifies the importance of also including an ordinal variable for vote frequency, which is provided in the survey.

Recognizing that this method of indexing civic engagement around LGBT-specific issues as convoluted, we conducted a factor analysis test to verify that the variables load consistently, and conducted a Cronbach alpha test to verify their internal consistency. The alpha coefficient of scale reliability was .8093 for these variables, indicating their appropriateness as a value. A more comprehensive approach might be to use this factor, rather than a count variable, as a substitute for a dependent variable measuring civic engagement. We did not feel it was theoretically appropriate to weight any of the activities included in the measure, and therefore maintained the count variable.

The distribution of vote frequency is much more standard, with most respondents claiming to always vote. This distribution is helpful in understanding the most basic of political activities—voting. With this variable being original to the survey, this variable may be more helpful in understanding overall political participation of LGB minorities, as it does not suffer potential conflict of data manipulation and indexing, like the civic engagement index. The distribution of self-reported vote frequency in the survey is highly skewed towards always voting. It is unclear how that could affect data output; more rigorous comparison would need to be conducted between the LGB respondents and the general population, which is not the goal of this study.

Figure 2: Distribution of vote frequency, with normal distribution curve.



Swank and Fahs (2013) use a stepwise approach to analyze the added-effects of resource model and framing model variables to test the added benefit in their R2 value. Our initial approach was to follow this methodology, but little added-effects were noted in the R2 value in either our OLOGIT or OLS regressions. Full stepwise models can be found in the appendix for clarification. Despite our unified approach, we still categorize our independent variables into three categories: resource model variables including education, income, and church attendance; framing variables, such as our scale for discrimination and whether a respondent is public about their sexual identity, and finally; race and gender variables. These race and gender variables allow us to further investigate the differences in voting and political engagement between lesbian women and gay males, as well as the difference in these activities between racial minorities.

Resource Model Variables

The resource-model variables used are standard socioeconomic variables, and are relevant to the discussion of political participation based on Verba, Schlotzman, and Brady's 1995 work laying out their importance. We include data from the survey on income, education,

age, and church attendance as measures of resources, which follows other research on political participation (Swank and Fahs 2013, McClurg 2003).

Income

We used income as a main indicator of resources, which is consistent with Verba, Schlotzman, and Brady's work. Income was ordinal on a scale of 1 to 8, and ranged from 1. Less than \$20,000, to 8. \$150,000 or more. Unfortunately the intervals are somewhat inconsistent, making it difficult to estimate the true average income of respondents. The intervals between \$20,000 and \$50,000 is a moderate \$10,000, but then changes to 5. \$50,000 to \$75,000, then changes again to 7. \$100,000 to \$150,000. The summary of the variable places the mean at 4.04, which would be somewhere between \$40,000 to \$70,000. We verified the original data and replaced non-responses as missing values in the data.

Age

Age is categorized straightforwardly as an ordinal variable, in intervals of 10 years (after age 24), including 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, and 75+. We similarly verified that there were no minors in the sample and that there were no non-responses. Surprisingly there were neither any nonresponses or any minors in the survey. We include age as a resource model variable, again as Verba, Schlotzman, and Brady recognize its importance on voting and political activity.

Education

Education was unfortunately limited in several ways. Although the scale was ordinal and fairly standard, the survey did not allow respondents to indicate whether they held an advanced degree. The question only allowed for respondents to select they had a "Bachelor's degree or higher," which oversimplifies postsecondary education and limits the applicable measure of education on

the dependent variables. The remainder of the questions were standard, from “less than high school” to “some college” and “Bachelor’s degree or higher.” We again verified there were no non-responses. We otherwise maintained the variable as is, considering the coding was consistent with direction.

Church Attendance

This is the only main resource-model variable that required adjustment in the data. The original codebook did not maintain direction with the appropriate coding. For example, a respondent who never attends church would have been coded as a 5. We recoded church attendance so that the same person would be coded as zero, and that a respondent who goes to church more than once a week would be coded as a 4. The other responses were that they go seldom, a few times a year, once or twice a month, or once a week. This change only facilitates an easier comprehension of results tables, which is important for clarity.

Discrimination and Group Membership

Measuring group identity and consciousness for LGB Americans is difficult, and virtually impossible with the data available in the pew survey. Swank and Fahs (2013) used “framing” variables which included whether respondents have experienced a hate crime, are public about their sexual orientation, and a measure of group efficacy. We follow their approach as best as possible with the available data. We are able to include a measure of discrimination as a heuristic for group awareness, whether a respondent is or has been a member of an LGBT organization, and to what degree important people around them know of their sexual orientation.

Swank and Fahs used a question in their survey to measure group efficacy: “When gays and lesbians work together, they can solve the problems facing them.” No such question existed in the Pew Research Center survey used in this analysis. However, there were questions on

whether a respondent has experienced discrimination because of their sexual orientation. Since group efficacy is not a potential variable in this analysis, we created an index of discrimination which could contribute to a sense of identity awareness.

Discrimination Index

The survey included several questions asking whether a respondent has experienced being threatened or physically attacked; been the subject to slurs or jokes; received poor service in restaurants, hotels, or other places of business; been made to feel unwelcome at a place of worship or religious organization; been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay, or promotion; and/or has been rejected by friends and family members. For each question, the respondent could answer that it has happened a. never happened b. has but not within the past 12 months or c. has happened in the past 12 months.

We recoded each of the original responses into new variables while replacing nonresponses as missing values. We gave more weight to more recent occurrences as a pseudo ordinal variable, similar to the index used for civic engagement for LGBT issues. A respondent who answered that they had never experienced a form of discrimination would be coded as 0 in the new variable, and a respondent who had experienced a form of discrimination within a year would be coded as 3. We then used each of these new variables to calculate a count variable which we used as an index for discrimination. In the index, an individual could have a score between 0 and 12, with those at 0 having never experienced the above forms of discrimination, and those at 12 having experienced each form of discrimination within a year. There were only 9 respondents who had a discrimination index-score of 12, with the plurality of respondents, 324 to be exact, having never experienced these forms of discrimination. We used a factor analysis to test that these variables load only to the same factor appropriately, and also used a Cronbach

alpha test for internal consistency. The overall scale of reliable for these variables .7904, indicating their applicability in this scale.

It would be a stretch to use these variables as a measure of group awareness, which is not necessarily our intention. It stands to reason, at least, that those believing their sexual orientation is the reason for discrimination or even perceived discrimination would be more cognizant of their sexual orientation over those who either do not identify their sexual orientation as a barrier or do not experience any discrimination because of it. Rather than using a proven measure of group awareness, like Swank and Fahs question on group efficacy, we are using respondent's perceived experience of discrimination as a measure of how they view their sexual orientation in relation to their daily lives. It is not necessarily clear whether these responses are valid, as some respondents could hide their sexual identity and therefore experience no discrimination.

Public Sexual Orientation

Thankfully the original survey data included a question asking to what degree an individual was public about their sexual orientation. A respondent could indicate how many "important people in their lives" know of their sexual orientation. The respondents could choose on a scale from "none" to "all or most of them." We reversed the data only for direction so that "none" was indicated as zero rather than 4, and that "all or most" was indicated as a 3 in our data analysis. We conducted a Pearson's correlation test to determine the interdependence of discrimination and whether an individual is public about their sexual orientation. The Pearson's correlation coefficient was .327, indicating a medium correlation. The survey includes 68 respondents who responded that "none of the important people in their lives" knew about their sexual identity. Of these, 52 scored a zero on our index of discrimination. It is possible these individuals are simply not cognizant of how others perceive their sexual orientation because no

one around them has been directly told about their sexual orientation as LGBT. The remainder of the respondents skewed slightly to being out about their sexual orientation.

LGBT Group Membership

We add one more measure of identity awareness, which is membership in LGBT specific organizations, following Swank and Fahs (2013) approach. A heightened awareness of one's sexual orientation likely drives membership in LGB specific groups as those not conscientious of actively involved with their sexual identity would have no reason to join an LGB organization. Those who either do not recognize being LGB as important to their personal identity would be less likely to join LGBT specific organizations. The survey unfortunately does not allow respondents to distinguish what types of groups in which they are involved, and as such respondents could be involved with inherently political groups. This somewhat conflates the use of this independent variable to test civic engagement for LGBT issues and even vote frequency, as members in a political organization would be highly likely, but not necessarily guaranteed, to also be involved in these activities. However, there are a multitude of non-political LGB specific organizations, such as gay choruses, PFLAG, and various resource centers. Additionally, being a member of an organization which is political does not necessarily mean respondents are actively engaged in the organization by going to meetings or participating regularly. Being a "member" might simply mean donating to and receiving mail from organizations. It could even be possible that should the organizations be social. The social nature increases likelihood of being involved in these activities. This correlation wouldn't necessarily negate the use of this dependent variable, but might be approached with caution.

Because these specific distinctions are not noted in the survey, direct responses on political participation are a better measure of their actual political engagement. For this reason,

we categorized membership in LGBT organizations as an independent variable separate from political participation. We include group membership as an independent variable to test whether socialization increases the likelihood of voting or being civically engaged. This method is similar to that of Swank and Fahs (2013), who used LGB group membership as an independent variable for a measure of mobilization structure. To test correlation between membership and the other framing variables, we conducted another Pearson correlation test. The results show a slightly higher correlation between both membership and group awareness (.4064) as well as between membership and being out about sexual orientation (.3862). This moderate correlation indicates that those who are involved in LGBT-specific organizations are somewhat likely to be public about their sexual orientation as well as have a higher awareness of discrimination they may face. This correlation is not necessarily surprising, though, given all variables focus around an individual's socialization around and awareness of their sexual identity.

We recognize that none of these variables can be considered as measures for group identity which is more difficult to measure first because of the misapplication of group-identity on other minority groups (McClain 2009) and second because the variables used in creating the index for discrimination aren't accurate indicators of group awareness or group efficacy. We can only assume that they are relevant as those who do not respond to having experienced any of the discrimination events or have been a member of an LGB organization may not have a high sense of identity awareness as they don't think of their sexual identity as a struggle to daily life activities and are not involved in group-specific organizations. Our variables therefore cannot accurately capture those who are LGB but neither face discrimination nor are involved in LGB organizations. An appropriate question on group efficacy would more accurately capture these individuals.

Race and Gender

Race

The original survey allowed respondents to select their race as either white, black, Hispanic, “Other, non-Hispanic,” or “2+ races.” We decided not to utilize other and 2+ respondents in the survey, as their sample size would have been too small to reasonably analyze. We also replaced nonresponses as missing values as we have for the remainder of the variables.

We utilized race as a factor variable, which allows the minority racial groups to be compared against the white group in the regression. This preserves for the most part the original data, and prevents the need for recoding race into either dummy variables or categorical variables. After dropping other races and 2+ races, we labeled the categories appropriately for race. The remainder of the data included 866 white respondents, 78 black respondents, and 119 Hispanic respondents. Although the sample is relatively small for racial minorities, it is a large enough sample to do reasonable analysis. More research could be done on these racial groups with more comprehensive data.

Gender

We converted gender into a dummy variable so that males are coded as zero and females are coded as one. The original question simply asked whether respondents are “Male” or “Female,” and the question was asked for all respondents, regardless of whether they identified as transgender. This particular survey design contributed to our earlier decision to remove transgender respondents. We checked for and dropped individuals who did not respond to this question.

In addition to regressing race as a gender variable in our models, we also used interactions between race *and* gender to separate racial and gender minorities, such as male African American and Hispanic Women. This allows for a more comprehensive analysis of how race may affect gays and lesbians differently. The interactions between race and gender is slightly different than Swank and Fahs’ (2013) analysis of political activism of LGB racial minorities, but along the same principle. Using an interaction variable is a simple way to test differences between a group and the base, in this case the white respondents. With an interaction, the results can be seen directly in the standard results table in our regressions. We removed the non-calculated lines from the results table, such as male Hispanics and African Americans, as well as the interaction for white females which simply are not calculated in any meaningful way when using an interaction variable. Our only concern is the sample size of minorities, which may be a barrier to meaningful analysis. The number of observations for these groups is low, but still high enough to allow for analysis. The cross-tabulation for race and gender is as follows:

Table 2: Race and Gender of Respondents in the 2013 Pew Research Center Survey of LGB Americans

Gender	Race			Total
	White	Black	Hispanic	
Male	396 45.73	29 37.18	58 48.74	483 45.44
Female	470 54.27	49 62.82	61 51.26	580 54.56
Total	866 100.0	78 100.0	119 100.0	1,063 100.0

The original survey data is composed of relatively well distributed demographics, though is potentially over representative of white respondents, and also includes slightly more females than males.

These independent variables, income, education, age, church attendance, an index of discrimination, membership in an LGBT organization, to what degree a respondent is public with their sexual orientation, and race and gender used in a regression will help clarify variables of political participation for LGB Americans, while also adding to the literature on whether race has a significant effect on voting and political participation for LGB Americans. We hope to clarify whether resources, personal experience and socialization, or racial identity play a larger role in determining political participation, in voting and civic activities specific to LGB issue support.

Results

Table 3 shows the regression results, which show that for vote frequency, resource model variables and being a member of an LGBT organization are the only significant variables. Surprisingly the coefficients for the resource model variables are much larger for the civic engagement index. The framing variables are much more significant to civic engagement for LGBT issues, which inherently makes sense considering these all are concerning identity variables. It seems that experiencing discrimination, being involved in an LGBT organization, and being open about your sexual orientation increases the likelihood that LGBT Americans are to either engage in market protests, attend a rally or march for LGBT issues, or donate to a campaign or organization due to their stance on LGBT issues. The coefficients for being out and

having experienced discrimination are relatively large, implying that these factors are large determinates of whether an individual is likely to engage in these activities for their sexual orientation. We find no significant differences in vote frequency for racial minorities, but do find that racial minorities seem to engage less in political issues specific to LGBT rights. For both black and Hispanic respondents, the coefficients are negative for civic engagement and are statistically significant. Females on the other hand are in general less likely to say they vote frequently but no more or less likely to engage in these civic activities for LGBT issues, while black females are more likely to claim to vote frequently.

The resource model variables are not surprisingly significant factors for vote frequency, which is consistent with Verba, Schlotzman, and Brady (1995). What is particularly interesting though is the high coefficients these same resource model variables have on the civic engagement index for LGBT issues. It seems that having a higher income and a greater education significantly increases the chance that an individual has engaged in one of the civic activities. Age, though, is not a significant variable for civic engagement, indicating that all ages of LGBT respondents are equally likely to have engaged in some way for LGBT rights issues. One interesting thing to note for the civic engagement index is the negative coefficient for church attendance. Although nominal, this could imply that being attending church more frequently slightly decreases the likelihood of participating in these civic activities for LGBT rights issues. This would be an interesting variable to investigate more closely.

Having experienced discrimination is only likely to effect a respondents engagement for LGBT rights issues, and has no statistical significance on their likelihood to vote more frequently. Our independent variable for LGB group membership holds high significance and a very high coefficient, suggesting that this independent variable is highly correlated with civic

engagement. It's likely that those who responded to being involved in an LGB organization are in political-oriented organizations encouraging members to engage in these forms of participation, or that their already high social capital from being involved also increases their likelihood to participate civically. Interestingly, this significance of group membership is also true for vote frequency but to a much lesser extent. LGB Individuals who are engaged in an LGB specific organization are slightly more likely to vote and much more likely to engage in market protests, attend a rally or march, or donate to a candidate or organization for their stance on LGBT issues. than those who are not.

Black racial identity does not have any significance on vote frequency but does have significance for political participation, suggesting that white and Black LGB individuals claim to vote at similar rates but that Blacks LGBT respondents are much less likely to engage in market protests, attend a rally or march, or donate to political candidates. The same is true for Hispanic respondents, though to a lesser extent. The coefficients for Hispanic and black respondents indicate that Hispanics are over half as likely to participate in these activities as their white peers, while blacks may only engage nominally. The female dummy variable hardly shows any significance in either vote frequency or political participation, but has significance at $p < .005$ in vote frequency, with a coefficient of $-.386$, indicating that females might be less likely to vote as often as their male peers. Black LGBT females, though are much more likely to vote than their gay black male peers, with a coefficient of $.661$ at $p < .005$. This indicates that Black LGBT females are over two thirds as likely to vote often as their black male counterparts. For a clearer picture of how race and gender impact the estimated civic engagement score and expected vote frequency, we ran a marginsplot for each independent variable. Figure 3 shows this distribution of expected self-reported vote frequency as well as expected civic engagement score by race and

gender. Unfortunately, the regression was not able to calculate the interaction for Hispanic females as the sample size was too small.

Figure 3: Marginsplot for expected vote frequency by race and gender

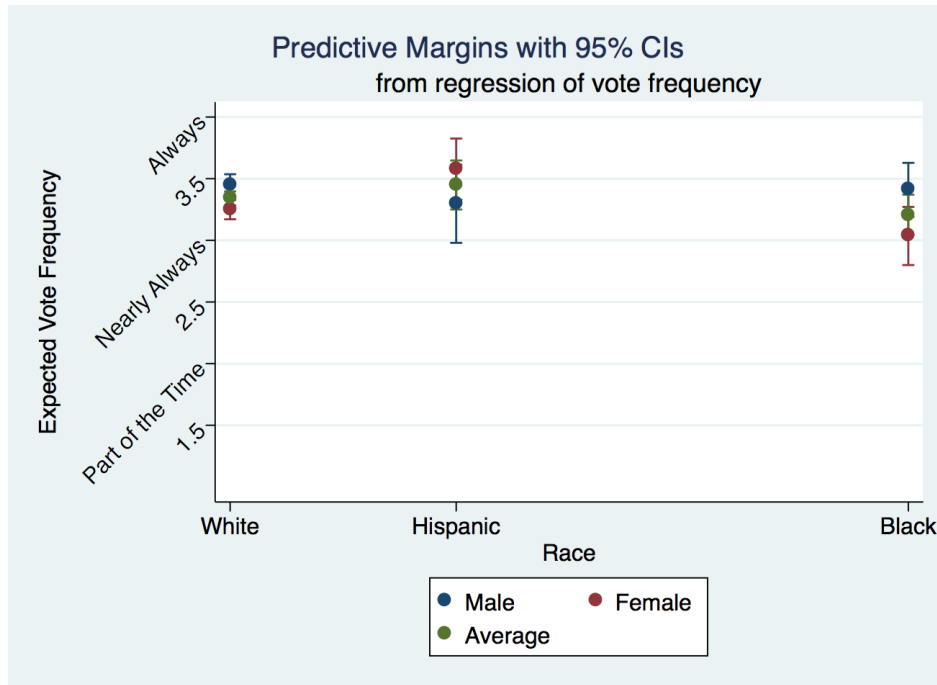


Figure 4: Marginsplot for expected civic engagement index score by race and gender

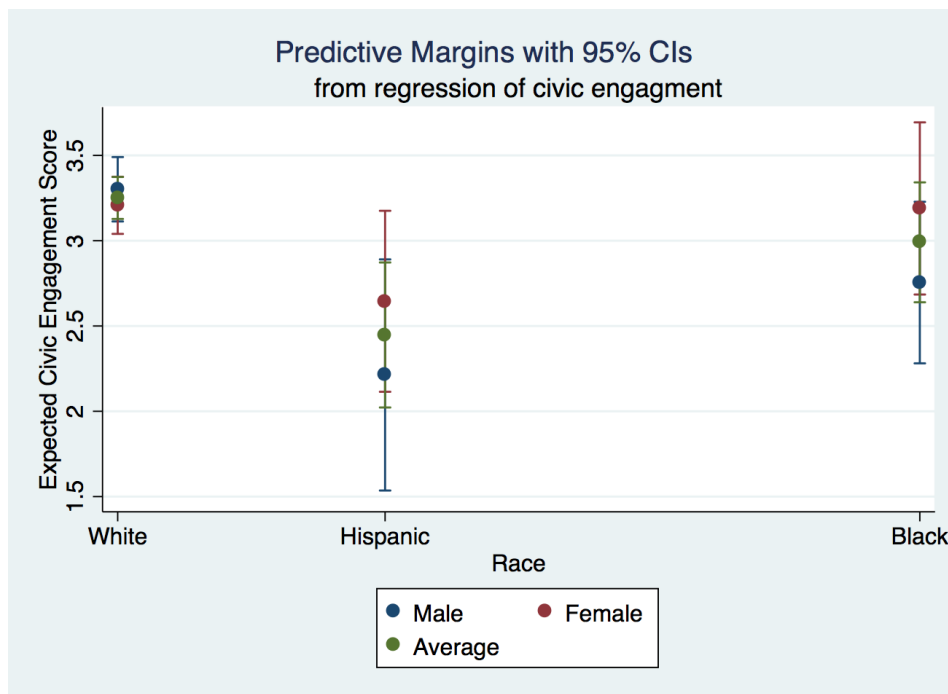


Table 3: OLS Results for main models

	(1) Vote Frequency	(2) Civic Engagement for LGBT Issues
Income	0.0422** (3.17)	0.143*** (4.97)
Age	0.156*** (8.62)	0.0351 (0.90)
Education	0.207*** (5.35)	0.428*** (5.11)
Church Attendance	0.0533** (2.79)	-0.0979* (-2.36)
Discrimination	0.0220 (1.79)	0.255*** (9.62)
Membership in an LGBT Organization	0.135*** (3.37)	1.436*** (16.55)
OUT	0.0356 (1.11)	0.467*** (6.77)
Black	-0.151 (-0.90)	-1.121** (-3.10)
Hispanic	-0.0391 (-0.32)	-0.538* (-2.04)
Female	-0.386* (-2.36)	0.304 (0.86)
White##Females	0.182 (1.05)	-0.425 (-1.14)
Black##Females	0.661* (2.54)	0.119 (0.21)
Constant	1.718*** (11.25)	-1.340*** (-4.06)
Observations	1006	997
R^2	0.255	0.529

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Discussion and Conclusion

The regression models suggest that voting practices and political participation of LGB Americans are motivated by their resources, awareness of their sexual orientation, and their racial identity. Racial and gender interactions had little effect on these dependent variables, except in regards to vote frequency of black female LGB respondents. Black and Hispanic LGB respondents were just as likely to claim to vote frequently, but black respondents were much less likely to participate in civic activities for LGBT rights such as deciding or deciding not to buy a product, to attend an LGB rally or march, or to donate to political candidates or organizations for their support of LGB rights. Hispanic LGB respondents were no less likely to participate civically than their white counterparts, and lesbian respondents participate at similar levels as well. At first glance, this might mean that black gay males are less likely to be motivated by their sexual identity and more motivated by their racial identity. What really is interesting is the lack of participation in LGBT rights issues by racial minorities.

We find evidence to support and reject many aspects of the hypotheses. We find support for H1: LGB individuals with more resources, including a higher income and greater educational attainment, will be more likely to claim to vote frequently. Additionally, we find support for H2: Increased discrimination a respondent experiences increase the chance they would be to vote or become civically engaged for LGB-specific issues. However, in this case we do not find full support of H2, as respondents are only more likely to engage for LGBT issues if they have experienced discrimination. We can conclude that LGB Americans who are conscious of their sexual identity in their daily lives are more likely to participate civically for LGB rights. Finally, we find some support for H3: White LGB Americans are more likely to be civically engaged and more likely to vote frequently than their African American and Hispanic peers. Although the

coefficients for vote frequency for racial minorities are negative, they are not statistically significant. We cannot conclude that racial minorities are less likely to vote compared to their white peers, but we can conclude that racial minorities are less likely to engage in LGBT specific forms of civic engagement. Overall we find strong support significance for resource and identity framing variables in relation to the LGBT population. We believe these results indicate that LGBT racial minorities vote and participate differently than their white peers, especially when engaging civically in support of LGBT rights.

Future studies of LGB civic participation may look at more broad forms of political participation, and may ask specific questions of group efficacy. Additionally, future research could include more specific questions on voting, and may even be able to include verified data. Our study was limited in several ways, particularly by relying on self-reported vote frequency, which is highly unreliable. Group identity and group efficacy should be investigated further for LGBT Americans, and even more investigation should be done for LGBT racial minorities to determine whether LGBT racial minorities are motivated by their race, sexual orientation, or some combination. It would be fascinating to research why LGBT racial minorities are less likely to engage in LGBT-rights specific forms of political engagement, and such a focused survey might be able to answer this question.

Future analysis might need to consider the effects of legalizing same sex marriage in 2015, as well. It is likely that the LGB community's mobilization has dramatically changed as a result of solidifying their largest mobilization-issue. The LGB identity, though, is not lost and still will play some role in people's lives and their political decisions. We did not take the change in political landscape into account for this analysis, as all data available in the survey was prior to the legalization of same sex marriage.

We hope that the information gleaned from this analysis furthers political science literature in the future, as well as contributes to the overall understanding of minority political participation for LGB Americans. In sum, the political participation of LGB Americans is primarily motivated by resource-model variables and identity-framing variables, such as income and education or discrimination, membership in an LGBT organization, or having a public sexual orientating respondents who experience forms of discrimination in their place of worship, workplace, family, or in their daily lives are more likely to engage in specific mobilization strategies for LGB rights, such as deciding to buy or not buy a specific product, participate in a rally or protest, or contribute money to a candidate or campaign due to support for LGB rights. Interestingly racial minorities are no less likely to vote than their peers but are much less likely to engage with LGB-specific issues.

The racial distinction implies that LGB African Americans and Hispanics are less motivated by their sexual orientation than their racial identity. Regardless, all LGB Americans are primarily motivated by their resources and ability to participate, which is consistent with Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's findings on political participation (1995).

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	Vote Frequency			Civic Engagement for LGBT Issues		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Income	0.0427** (3.28)	0.0414** (3.15)	0.0422** (3.17)	0.173*** (4.72)	0.150*** (5.42)	0.143*** (4.97)
Age	0.182*** (10.67)	0.182*** (10.63)	0.156*** (8.62)	0.0523 (1.08)	0.0583 (1.61)	0.0351 (0.90)
Education	0.254*** (6.86)	0.212*** (5.62)	0.207*** (5.35)	0.836*** (7.97)	0.443*** (5.57)	0.428*** (5.11)
Church Attendance	0.0543** (2.93)	0.0441* (2.35)	0.0533** (2.79)	-0.0237 (-0.45)	-0.124** (-3.13)	-0.0979* (-2.36)
Discrimination		0.0279* (2.34)	0.0220 (1.79)		0.237*** (9.42)	0.255*** (9.62)
Membership in an LGBT Organization		0.140*** (3.54)	0.135*** (3.37)		1.486*** (17.74)	1.436*** (16.55)
OUT		0.0380 (1.22)	0.0356 (1.11)		0.492*** (7.45)	0.467*** (6.77)
Black			-0.151 (-0.90)			-1.121** (-3.10)
Hispanic			-0.0391 (-0.32)			-0.538* (-2.04)
Female			-0.386* (-2.36)			0.304 (0.86)
White##Females			0.182 (1.05)			-0.425 (-1.14)
Black##Females			0.661* (2.54)			0.119 (0.21)
Constant	1.562*** (13.11)	1.478*** (10.81)	1.718*** (11.25)	-0.529 (-1.57)	-1.687*** (-5.85)	-1.340*** (-4.06)
Observations	1123	1080	1006	1103	1071	997
R ²	0.219	0.243	0.255	0.121	0.530	0.529

OLS Stepwise results
t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

OLOGIT Stepwise

	Vote Frequency			Civic Engagement for LGBT Issues		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Income	0.112*** (3.59)	0.113*** (3.50)	0.115*** (3.37)	0.119*** (4.44)	0.143*** (5.05)	0.133*** (4.53)
Age	0.430*** (10.06)	0.442*** (9.98)	0.386*** (8.14)	0.0462 (1.33)	0.0496 (1.34)	0.0267 (0.66)
Education	0.480*** (5.67)	0.390*** (4.43)	0.406*** (4.37)	0.628*** (7.89)	0.472*** (5.54)	0.455*** (5.08)
Church Attendance	0.141** (3.08)	0.119* (2.51)	0.152** (3.03)	-0.0108 (-0.28)	-0.122** (-2.95)	-0.0964* (-2.24)
Discrimination		0.0647* (2.18)	0.0502 (1.59)		0.239*** (8.90)	0.260*** (9.21)
Membership in an LGBT Organization		0.380*** (3.79)	0.371*** (3.55)		1.363*** (14.66)	1.342*** (13.96)
OUT		0.0811 (1.09)	0.0892 (1.13)		0.543*** (7.44)	0.507*** (6.69)
Black			-0.287 (-0.69)			-1.068** (-2.87)
Hispanic			-0.156 (-0.51)			-0.488 (-1.87)
Female			-0.759 (-1.88)			0.234 (0.65)
White##Females			0.235 (0.55)			-0.320 (-0.84)

Black##Females			1.057 (1.66)			0.0434 (0.07)
cut1						
Constant	1.271*** (4.50)	1.503*** (4.51)	0.994** (2.61)	1.691*** (6.54)	3.350*** (10.26)	2.973*** (8.15)
cut2						
Constant	1.941*** (6.81)	2.178*** (6.48)	1.694*** (4.42)	2.029*** (7.79)	3.830*** (11.55)	3.434*** (9.29)
cut3						
Constant	3.425*** (11.48)	3.725*** (10.65)	3.322*** (8.42)	2.502*** (9.48)	4.540*** (13.34)	4.154*** (11.00)
cut4						
Constant				2.928*** (10.94)	5.184*** (14.87)	4.813*** (12.49)
cut5						
Constant				3.497*** (12.81)	6.063*** (16.84)	5.730*** (14.49)
cut6						
Constant				3.971*** (14.28)	6.754*** (18.30)	6.444*** (15.96)
cut7						
Constant				4.758*** (16.56)	7.827*** (20.40)	7.541*** (18.07)
cut8						
Constant				6.174*** (19.37)	9.517*** (22.91)	9.201*** (20.55)
Observations	1123	1080	1006	1103	1071	997
Pseudo R^2	0.105	0.120	0.126	0.032	0.174	0.173

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$