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[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

**A Failed Economy Hurts Gay Taxpayers More  
Inclusion**

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BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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In the face of a financial Armageddon, the economy has become the center of the campaign, where it should have been all along. But the moment all Americans have been waiting for - the McCain-Obama debate - was a yawn.

The melodrama and histrionics of whether the debate would happen titillated anxious taxpayers hopes about a recovery and taunted our worse fears about the \$700 million bailout rescue package for Wall Street, potentially drowning those of us residing on Main Street. But for those looking for a clash of the Titans on this issue we got instead a clash of ideologies and temperaments, along with a visual clash - a young African American outsider challenging and old white-haired fixture of government.

Neither candidate addressed how a failing economy hurts the LGBTQ community. And, sadly, no one was expecting it, including my community.

But neither had a taxpayer-friendly solution to Wall Street's mess. Instead, each exchanged sharp criticism of the other's record on economic plans for the country.

So let's take a look:

Obama emphatically states that working Americans need help in this economy and if in office, his administration will develop "a more stable and permanent solution" to the financial crisis.

"What we're looking at right now is to provide the Treasury and the Federal Reserve with as broad authority as necessary to stabilize markets and maintain credit," Obama told the Associate Press.

"We need a more institutional response to create a system that can manage some of the underlying problems with bad mortgages, help homeowners stay in their homes, protect the retirement and savings of working Americans."

But when asked to present a detailed economic plan Obama said he would not present his plan until the Treasury and Federal Reserve have presented theirs.

Why?

"It is critical at this point that the markets and the public have confidence that their work will be unimpeded by partisan wrangling, and that leaders in both parties work in concert to solve the problem at hand."

Whereas Obama has a "Not-telling-you yet" rescue package for the economy, McCain has a "Blame - Obama" package.

McCain blames Obama, via blaming the Democrats too, for not taking immediate action to stop the current financial meltdown.

"The crisis on Wall Street started in the Washington culture of lobbying and influence peddling, and he was square in the middle of it," McCain said of Obama.

McCain criticizes Obama for his ties to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, for taking large campaign contributions from both, collecting a sizable sum \$126,349 from those sources, which is only second to his buddy Senate Banking Committee Chairman Sen. Christopher Dodd, who has received \$165,40, and for the former head of Obama's vice presidential search team, Jim Johnson, receiving a multimillion-dollar severance deal after stepping down as Fannie Mae CEO.

"Maybe just this once he could spare us the lectures, and admit to his own poor judgment in contributing to these problems," McCain said.

But Obama is for advocating tax increases on people making over \$250,000 a year and cutting taxes on the middle class. McCain's not.

During the first debate, McCain tried to show the American electorate that Obama is just not ready for the job. And he drilled in his point with constant refrains, like, "I'm afraid Senator Obama doesn't understand" and "What Senator Obama doesn't seem to understand" and "Senator Obama still doesn't understand."

However, when asked two days after this debate with Obama if he would support a \$700 billion Wall Street bailout package that has been brokered by the Bush administration and Congress, McCain said on Sunday's ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopoulos," Hopefully yes. This is something that all of us will swallow hard and go forward with. The option of doing nothing is simply not an acceptable option."

But truth be told, neither candidate, in my opinion, knows how to patch up Wall Street's mess. And we Main Street residents have cause to fret about failing banks jeopardizing Social Security, Medicare, and the few dollars and cents that trickle down to our social programs. For example, aside from HIV/AIDS prevention programs that will be slashed

if not all together gone, our Medicare and Social Security benefits will be slashed disproportionately more than the rest of the population, if we are partnered / married, simply because we are LGBTQ taxpayers. Why? With only two states recognizing same-sex marriage we not only are forced to file separate income tax forms but as a consequence, we are also thrown into higher tax brackets. And to add insult to injury, our Social Security benefit packages won't benefit our partners like those of heterosexuals.

All of us hope for a speedy solution to our country's financial crisis. But one, I say, that takes into account the way all its taxpayers share households, including its LGBTQ partnered and married citizens.

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**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member, the Rev. Irene Monroe, is a religion columnist, theologian, and public speaker. A native of Brooklyn, Rev. Monroe is a graduate from Wellesley College and Union Theological Seminary at Columbia University, and served as a pastor at an African-American church before coming to Harvard Divinity School for her doctorate as a Ford Fellow. Reverend Monroe is the author of [Let Your Light Shine Like a Rainbow Always: Meditations on Bible Prayers for Not-So-Everyday Moments](#) . As an African American feminist theologian, she speaks for a sector of society that is frequently invisible. Her website is [irenemonroe.com](http://irenemonroe.com). Click [here](#) to contact the Rev. Monroe.

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

[Click Here To](#)

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