



Waiting for Lightning to Strike: The Fundamentals of Black Politics

Kevin Alexander Gray

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The year that saw an African American run for the presidency—as a viable contender—for the first time in US history also witnessed a truly remarkable silence—one that was scarcely coincidental. In all the millions of words written about the political ascent of one black man, there was virtually nothing about the descent of black leadership into well-nigh total ineffectiveness. Barack Obama's personal itinerary was mapped in the minutest detail. The larger itinerary of African Americans was mostly ignored.

Kevin Alexander Gray is a civil rights organizer in South Carolina. He is also a contributing editor to *Black News*, was a former president of the South Carolina ACLU, and was Jesse Jackson's South Carolina campaign manager in 1988. There's no keener mind, no sharper eye, focused on the condition of black politics. Gray's take is radical, so his focus is always ample and humane. In these passionate pages, he takes his readers into areas of darkness—South Carolina's heritage of slavery, for example—and into the vibrancy and heat of James Brown and Richard Pryor. Gray's intellectual footwork is as sure as Muhammad Ali's in his prime, and the KO is as deadly. No one should venture a yard into the rough terrain of black politics and culture in America today without reading Gray's *Waiting for Lightning to Strike*.

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