

# GAY/ LESBIAN ADOPTION

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## DISCLAIMER!!!

The views expressed in this presentation are as factual as possible. (i.e. Please don't attack group members. They are not expressing personal opinion just information from research found on the subject.)

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## True Story:

- Two men fall in love and one day they get a call from a long lost cousin who has just been arrested on drug charges. She realized that she would be in jail for a couple of months and asked them to watch her baby boy while she was in the slammer.

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## One year later...

- The two men are still taking care of and adore baby number one. The cousin never has and never will call them back. One day they get a call saying, "Your cousin, who was on drugs, has given birth and abandoned her second baby boy in a local park. Because you already have the first one, we are giving you the option to foster this child before we send it out to a foster home." So, the two men said "Yee haw!"...

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## Yet another year later...

- Social services calls again this time telling the gay couple that the cousin was pregnant again and in order to prevent the baby from being abandoned at all, they were going to just offer the couple the baby to begin with. They gladly accepted a new baby girl. The next year the same thing happened but with a baby boy. Again they took the child in making a family of six parented by two gay men.

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## Things look up...

- The Deforest family is then invited to the White House by President Clinton as representatives of the face of the new American Family- Black/ White/ Puerto Rican family with two gay parents.

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## But not for long...

- Rick, the cousin, got sick and the extended family didn't see him for 4 months. When they finally did see him, he had lost 60 pounds and the family was worried he had AIDS. It turned out he had cancer and died two weeks later. The children, two in highschoolers, and two middle schoolers, are now left with their white adoptive father, on a janitor's salary, and their friends start asking questions and the boys start getting in fights...

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## What does it mean?

- Could this have happened to a straight couple? Yes.
- Were they good people? Yes.
- Will the repercussions be noticeable?

Lets find out..

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## We are going to discuss...

- The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Timeline (LGBT)
- Cons of GL Marriage
- Pros of a GL Marriage
- What it means for the children

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## Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Timeline

- LGBT timeline from a psychological research perspective
- LGBT adoption timeline (*general*)
- Current acceptance of LGBT adoption
  - Europe
  - North America

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### Pre- 1990's

- 1957: Psychologist Evelyn Hooker's Study
- 1972: First gay studies program began Sacramento State University.
- 1973: APA removes homosexuality from the handbook of disorders
- Late 70's: Research on the children of lesbian and gay parents

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### 1990's

- Simon LeVay <sup>(91')</sup>
  - observed that the male brain could take two different forms, depending on one's sexual preference.
- World Health Organization <sup>(92')</sup>
  - removes homosexuality from the *International Classification of Disease (ICD-10)*

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80's a  
Gene

- 1984: California p  
bill
- 1996: First legisla



to same-sex marriage  
legislature defines  
ision  
Defense of Marriage

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## 2000 to present

- 2000: Over 600,000 same gender households were counted in U.S.
- 2002 Sweden legalizes adoption for same-sex couples
- 2004 Belgium legalizes adoption for same-sex couples
  - Pres. Bush calls for amendment banning same-sex marriage.
- 2005 Same-sex marriage is legalized in Spain and Canada, along with adoption.

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## Gay Adoption: Europe



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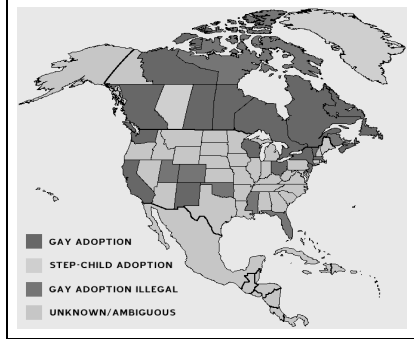
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# Gay Adoption: North America



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## Cons of Gay Adoption

By Kasey Peterson

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**Negative Effects on Children adopted by Gay or Lesbian Couples**

- Social marginalization and harassment by other kids.
- Children can also be harassed by adults who disapprove.
- Gays and lesbians are seen to be “unstable”.
- Children have sexual identity confusion.
- Kids have no choice.

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- **Concerned Women for America calls gay couples “Motherless and fatherless families”.**
- **CWA President Sandy Rios adds.... “Telling the public that a homosexual couple can raise a child as effectively as a married couple is on par with telling them that a single mom provides as complete parenting as a mom and dad couple”**

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- **Individuals who are most likely to hold negative attitudes towards gay and lesbian couples are.....**
- **Highly traditional men who believe homosexuality is a life choice.**
- **Someone who doesn’t know or hasn’t befriended or even worked with a gay or lesbian individual.**
- **People who are religious.**

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## Random Information

- 60% of Americans disapprove of legally sanctioning gay couples to adopt.
- 42% oppose allowing gays or lesbians to teach.

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Crawford, I., Mcleod, A., Zamboni, B. D., and Jordan, M. B. (1999). Psychologists Attitudes Toward Gay and Lesbian Parenting. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 30. Retrieved Feb. 1, 2007,

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PRO GAY ADOPTION

MATT JACKMAN

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## GAY ADOPTION



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## GAY ADOPTION

- Quality of life for children.
- Alternatives
  - Foster care
    - About 30% of children in foster care have severe emotional, behavioral, or developmental problems

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## GAY ADOPTION

- Do children receive sufficient gender roles?
  - Relaxed sex typed play
  - Relaxed stereotypical career goals.
  - Single parent homes?

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## GAY ADOPTION

- Are children with gay parents more likely to become homosexual adults?
  - Gay parents vs. Homosexual parents
  - Twin studies
    - Biological / environmental factors



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## GAY ADOPTION

- Psychological effects
  - More sensitive to issues related to homosexuality
  - Receive more “teasing” with no long term effects.
  - More tolerant of diversity
  - More nurturing of young children

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## GAY ADOPTION

- Countries that currently allow gay adoption
  - Guam, Andorra, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom
  - Also in some parts of
    - Canada and the U.S., Denmark, Germany, Iceland, and Norway

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# What It Means for the Kids

By Mark Barnhurst

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Looking at children with Gay, Lesbian, and bisexual parents

- much of the research we find about children in families with parents that are homosexual helps us see what it might be like for kids adopted by homosexual couples.

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## Experiences of children with GLB parents

Principal says,  
"Everyone has to have a father"

Girl's reply,  
"I don't. I have a donor."



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## what is it like for children with lesbian parents?

- Kids define their family differently as they age.
  - Teenagers tend to see the relationship of having a mom and her lesbian partner as hard to deal with.
  - Younger children tend to see it as more normal.
  - teenagers social development:  
Going through puberty and having friends ask about family has been hard for these kids
- This information came from an article in Journal of family therapy (2006) 28: 175-199*

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Children with Gay, Lesbian and bisexual Parent have a additional decision to face as they grow up how open or closed do they want to be about their family structure

- 61% of young kids told at least one close friend about their lesbian mother
- 39% did not tell anyone about their family situation
- As young adults children were more proud of their "family identity" when their mother allowed the child to decide who they would share or not share this information with.

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- Goldberg, A. (2006). Talking About Family: Disclosure Practices of Adults Raised by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual parents. *Journal of Family Issues*, 28 (1), 100-131. retrieved February 19, 2007 from Ebsco Host database.
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