

Daniel Pollak

ENGL 015

April 28, 2008

Gay Adoption Should Be Fully Legal

Gay couples have every right to adopt a child as do heterosexual couples. Gay parents should be judged by the same standards that heterosexual parents are. If they are stable, loving, and caring, then they should be allowed to adopt the child or children.

Studies have shown that over ½ a million children are in foster care and that over 100,000 of these children are waiting to be adopted. Unfortunately, only 20,000 qualified parents adopt such children each year. That leaves 80,000 children that are left in often very dangerous households and environments. Gay couples should be allowed to adopt children because many times, the childhood that a child will receive under a gay parent will most likely be much better than any type of upbringing that the child will get from a foster parent.

Gay couples are like any other people and are quite able of being great parents, just like heterosexual couples are able of being great parents. At the same time gay couples as well as heterosexual couples are capable of being bad parents. Gay couples cannot and should not be labeled bad parents because this is just outright discriminatory. The American Academy of Pediatrics reported that, “parents’ sexual orientation alone cannot predict their ability to provide a supportive home environment for children.” This statement is not only correct, but is also basic common sense.

Gay couples know that their adopted children really need role models from both genders. “It would seem that same-sex parents can compensate for the absence of a father or mother in the family by involving their children with friends and their extended family.” As

single mothers often incorporate uncles and grandfathers in the lives of their children, gay couples can incorporate friends and family to allow the child to have role models from both genders. A good example of this is the show Full House which still appears on ABC Family and Nick at Night. Danny Tanner lost his wife when their three daughters were at a very young age. So to help out Danny, his brother in law Jesse, and their friend Joey, moved in to help raise the girls. The family grew very tight and despite the fact that the three girls had basically three dads, they also had role models such as Jesse's wife Becky, and others that helped the girls through "girl" situations. The girls turned out great, and had three fathers and many women role models to help shape who they were. While this was only on a television show, instances like this happen often. We have family friends that know of a male gay couple that adopted sons. They get long great with the sons, and the sons love their two dads, which they call one dad and one father. They have many family members and friends that are female and the boys have influence from both genders. The boys have grown up to be successful heterosexual guys.

There are many people and groups that are avidly apposed to allowing gay couples to be able to adopt children. Tom Adkins in his essay *Traditional Mother and Father* suggests that, "gay and lesbian couples may be unsuitable as parents in part because they are relatively unstable, implying that their relationships tend to be shorter than those of heterosexual couples. This statement is not only discriminatory and wrong, but also seemingly untrue. There are so many heterosexual couples that get divorced that it seems unlikely that gays that take the initiative to adopt children will be the type to get divorced and if they do it will be just like a heterosexual couple getting a divorce. In response to the discriminating part of what Adkins said, "Suppose, for example, there's more suicide,

depression, promiscuity, and domestic violence among blacks than among whites. Would such findings justify a ban on adoptions by blacks? If not, why would they justify a ban on adoptions by gays?” There is no reason to make the whole ethnic group suffer if just a few within the group have a history of violence. Therefore there is no reason to make homosexuals unable to adopt children when just a few within the group might have shorter relationships, etc. Gay people are like all other people and come from all different ethnic backgrounds. The only difference is that they have a different sexual orientation than the average person.

The fact that we must focus on is that there are children out there that are in unfit and unsafe homes, and the fact that these kids are continuing to suffer in these surroundings because society is discriminating against gay couples right to be able to adopt. According to Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council gays should not be allowed to raise kids. He stated, “Children are not guinea pigs and should not be used as pawns in some grand social experiment.” I do totally agree that kids should not be exposed to some grand social experiment. But we do know for a fact that foster homes in some areas of the United States are extremely unhealthy places for children to remain in. Being adopted by gay parents would not be a social experiment because we cannot have accurate results. We can never know how the same child would have turned out if he had or didn't have homosexual parents. Common sense makes it known that these children who are in unhealthy foster homes would be much better off in the homes and upbringing of parents who are heterosexual as well as parents who are homosexual. “Many children are uprooted frequently and switched from location to location so that they are never able to put down

roots and experience a long-term stable family environment. Adoptions provide the stability that children need,” no matter what their adoptive parent’s sexual orientation is.

Gay individuals are no different than straight individuals except for their sexual preference. They are equals. The fact that a couple is of the same-sex should not ban them from being allowed to adopt children. It has even been said that, “Any gay parent hurrying to the day-care at 6 pm can tell you that he has more in common with straight parents than his child-free gay friends do.” By allowing these children to have gay parents rather than having a drug-addicted foster mother, is an advantage no matter what anyone says. Gay couples are equals to straight couples and should be allowed to adopt children based on their background in violence rather than their sexual orientation. Gay couples know that their adopted kids need role models from both sexes and strive to introduce them to family that is of the opposite sex. Overall, while a same-sex couple and family might not be the typical family, it is still a successful family, and has the possibility to thrive as a family just like any mother-father based family.

Should Gay and Lesbian Couples Be Allowed to Adopt?

Some studies have shown that more than five hundred thousand children are in foster care and over one hundred thousand of those children are waiting to be adopted. Unfortunately, each year only twenty thousand qualified parents adopt such children. Many of these children are considered “unadoptable” because they are too old, have significant health problems, or are minorities. Frequently, child welfare agencies place these “unwanted” children into foster-care homes, some of which are admittedly substandard. This lack of qualified parents (as well as a lack of competent foster-care workers) makes the situation critical. Many children—perhaps hundreds of thousands—are trapped in a foster-care system that is stretched to its limits: a child in foster care can have lived in as many as twenty foster homes by the time he or she is eighteen. In Florida, a child in the foster-care system was “lost” and never located. In Arkansas, the foster-care system was so inefficient that it was placed under court supervision. Not surprisingly, children in foster care suffer from substance abuse, delinquency, and academic problems to a much greater degree than children raised with their birth parents in two-parent households.

In response to this situation, many states have liberalized their foster-care and adoption policies. In order to find suitable couples, welfare agencies have made the options of adoption and foster care available to a wider range of adults—many of whom would have been ineligible in the past. Now single parents, people with physical disabilities, and poor families can take children into their homes. Many gay and lesbian couples are also attempting to join this group, but they are being met with resistance. Supporters of gay and lesbian rights say that gay parents should be judged by the same standards that heterosexual parents are: if they are stable, loving, and caring, they should be allowed to adopt or serve as foster parents. In other words, a parent’s sexual orientation should not be the sole criterion for denying that person adoption or foster-care rights. Many people—some of them well intentioned—strongly oppose this position. They say that a family should consist of a mother and father who are married to each other. In addition, they say that children need both male and female role models. Finally, they say that gays and lesbians do not have stable relationships, so they would not be good parents. So far, most states do not allow gays and lesbians to adopt or serve as foster parents, but the situation—at least in some states—is changing. The supreme courts of Delaware, Massachusetts, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, as well as the lower courts in many other states, have ruled in favor of gay adoption.

The Marriage Law Project

<http://marriagelaw.cua.edu/>

A part of the Catholic University of America, this project is “a public interest legal assistance program that seeks to reaffirm marriage as the union of one man and one woman.” This site provides information on legislation, public policy, issues, and arguments regarding same-sex marriage in order to advance their belief that marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Adoption Education Center

<http://www.adoptions.com/aecgaylez.html>

Provides resources for FAQs about gay and lesbian adoption as well as links to other sources of a wide range of standpoints and backgrounds.

Lesbian and Gay Rights

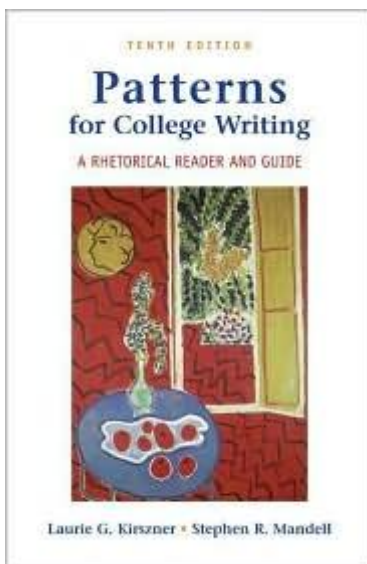
<http://www.aclu.org/LesbianGayRights/LesbianGayRightsMain.cfm>

This ACLU Web site features press releases and information on gay parents and adoption as well as domestic partnership, civil unions, and marriage.

Technical Report: Coparent or Second-Parent Adoption by Same-Sex Parents

<http://www.aap.org/policy/020008t.html>

This site features the full text of the American Academy of Pediatrics’s February 2002 report on same-sex parents.



***Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide* by [Laurie G. G. Kirszner](#), [Stephen R. Mandell](#), [Stephen R. Mandell](#), [Stephen R. Mandell](#) (Editor)**

Publisher: Bedford/St. Martin's
Pub. Date: May 2006
ISBN-13: 9780312445867
Sales Rank: 47,592
864pp

• Edition Number: 10