

Do Homosexual Parents Pose Risks to Children?

A number of studies claim that children raised in gay and lesbian households fare no worse than those reared in traditional families. However, much of that research fails to meet acceptable standards for psychological research; it is compromised by methodological flaws and driven by political agendas. The deficiencies of studies on homosexual parenting include reliance upon an inadequate sample size, lack of random sampling, lack of anonymity of research participants, and self-presentation bias.

On the other hand, there is an abundance of evidence to demonstrate the dangerous consequences of homosexual behavior and the unstable nature of homosexual relationships. And despite the weaknesses of the research focused specifically on homosexual parents, there is significant evidence that their children suffer, particularly in the area of sexual adjustment.

Meanwhile, a well-established and growing body of evidence (amply documented in FRC's companion volume, *The Family Portrait*) shows that both mothers and fathers provide unique and irreplaceable contributions to the raising of children. Children reared in traditional families by a mother and father are happier, healthier, and more successful than children raised in non-traditional environments.

The claim: Children of homosexuals are “no different”

- Silverstein and Auerbach are examples of those who claim there is no essential difference between traditional mother-father families and homosexual-led families: “Other aspects of personal development and social relationships were also found to be within the normal

range for children raised in lesbian and gay families.” They suggest that “gay and lesbian parents can create a positive family context.”

Louise B. Silverstein and Carl F. Auerbach, “Deconstructing the Essential Father,” *American Psychologist* 54 (June 1999): 397–407.

- This conclusion is echoed in the official statement on homosexual parenting by the American Psychological Association’s Public Interest Directorate, authored by openly lesbian activist Charlotte J. Patterson of the University of Virginia:

“In summary, there is no evidence that lesbians and gay men are unfit to be parents or that psychosocial development among children of gay men or lesbians is compromised in any respect....Not a single study has found children of gay or lesbian parents to be disadvantaged in any significant respect relative to children of heterosexual parents.”

Charlotte J. Patterson, “Lesbian and Gay Parenting,” *American Psychological Association Public Interest Directorate* (1995): 8.

This conclusion, however, is not as confident as it appears. In the next paragraph, Patterson qualifies her statement.

- Echoing Cramer’s concern from a decade earlier, she writes: “It should be acknowledged that research on lesbian and gay parents and their children is still very new and relatively scarce....Longitudinal studies that follow lesbian and gay families over time are badly needed.” The years have passed since Patterson’s admission of the inadequacy of homosexual parenting studies, and we still await definitive, objective research substantiating her claims.

Ibid.

Weaknesses of Homosexual Parenting Studies

- Appearing in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*, a review of twenty studies on homosexual parenting found the following: “The generalizability of the studies is limited. Few studies employed control groups and most had small samples. Almost all parents were Anglo-American, middle class, and well educated. Measures

for assessing gender roles in young children tend to focus on social behavior and generally are not accurate psychological instruments. Therefore it is impossible to make large scale generalizations...that would be applicable to all children.”

David Cramer, “Gay Parents and Their Children: A Review of Research and Practical Implications,” *Journal of Counseling and Development* 64 (April 1986): 506. See also Frederick W. Bozett, “Gay Fathers: A Review of the Literature,” in *Homosexuality and the Family* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989), 152.

Homosexual parenting claims based on flawed research

- Patterson also acknowledges that “research in this area has presented a variety of methodological challenges,” and that “questions have been raised with regard to sampling issues, statistical power, and other technical matters (e.g., Belcastro, Gramlich, Nicholson, Price, & Wilson, 1993).”

She adds, revealingly:

- “In addition, homosexual parenting research has been criticized for using poorly matched or no control groups in designs that call for such controls....Other criticisms have been that most studies have involved relatively small samples [and] that there have been inadequacies in assessment procedures employed in some studies.”

Patterson, “Lesbian and Gay Parenting,” 2.

Though she admits to serious methodological and design errors that would call into question the findings of any study, Patterson makes the astonishing claim that “even with all the questions and/or limitations that may characterize research in the area, none of the published research suggests conclusions different from those that will be summarized below.” But any such conclusions are only as reliable as the evidence upon which they are based. If the alleged evidence is flawed, then the conclusions must likewise be considered suspect.

- In a study published in the *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, P. Belcastro et al. reviewed fourteen studies on homosexual parenting according to accepted scientific standards. Their “most impressive finding” was that “all of the studies lacked external validity. The conclusion that there are no significant differences in children raised by

lesbian mothers versus heterosexual mothers is not supported by the published research data base.”

P. A. Belcastro et al., “A Review of Data Based Studies Addressing the Affects of Homosexual Parenting on Children’s Sexual and Social Functioning,” *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 20 (1993): 105, 106.

- Similarly, in their study of lesbian couples in *Family Relations*, L. Keopke et al. remark, “Conducting research in the gay community is fraught with methodological problems.”

L. Keopke et al., “Relationship Quality in a Sample of Lesbian Couples with Children and Child-free Lesbian Couples,” *Family Relations* 41 (1992): 225.

A careful reading of studies used to lend support to homosexual parenting reveals more modest claims than are often attributed to them, as well as significant methodological limitations:

- “Nearly all of the existing studies of homosexual parenting have major deficiencies in sampling: They use a small sample size; they fail to obtain a truly representative sample due to sources of sampling bias; they do not use a random sample; or they use a sample with characteristics that are inappropriate for the crucial development research question involved in the study.”

J. Paul Guiliani and Dwight G. Duncan, “Brief of *Amici Curiae* Massachusetts Family Institute and National Association for the Research and Therapy of Homosexuality,” Appeal to the Supreme Court of Vermont, Docket No. S1009-97CnC.

Inadequate sample size

Studies examining the effects of homosexual parenting are weakened by inordinately small sample sizes:

- After finding no significant difference between a group of nine children raised by lesbians and a similar group of children raised by heterosexual parents, S. L. Huggins admitted, “The meaning and implications of this finding are unclear, and the small sample size makes any interpretation of these data difficult.”

S. L. Huggins, “A Comparative Study of Self-esteem of Adolescent Children of Divorced Lesbian Mothers and Divorced Heterosexual Mothers,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 18 (1989): 134.

- A report by J. M. Bailey et al. in *Developmental Psychology*, commenting on studies of the children of gay and lesbian parents, notes

that “available studies [are] insufficiently large to generate much statistical power.”

J. M. Bailey et al., “Sexual Orientation of Adult Sons of Gay Fathers,” *Developmental Psychology* 31 (1995): 124.

- S. Golombok and F. Tasker admit in their follow-up study of children reared by lesbians, “It is possible that the small sample size resulted in an underestimate of the significance of group difference as a result of low statistical power (Type II error).”

Susan Golombok and Fiona L. Tasker, “Do Parents Influence the Sexual Orientation of Their Children? Findings from a Longitudinal Study of Lesbian Families,” *Developmental Psychology* 32 (1996): 9.

- Elsewhere the same authors caution that negative effects of children reared by lesbians “could have remained undetected because of the relatively small sample size. Therefore, although discernible trends were identified, caution is required in interpreting these results.”

Fiona L. Tasker and Susan Golombok, “Adults Raised as Children in Lesbian Families,” *Developmental Psychology* 31 (1995): 213.

- In his study published in *Child Psychiatry and Human Development* comparing the children of homosexual and heterosexual mothers, G. A. Javaid frankly admits that “the numbers are too small in this study to draw any conclusions.”

Ghazala A. Javaid, “The Children of Homosexual and Heterosexual Single Mothers,” *Child Psychiatry and Human Development* 23 (1993): 245.

- J. Bigner and R. B. Jacobson state in the *Journal of Homosexuality*: “Those who do study gay fathers may be frustrated by the difficulties of obtaining valid and adequate sample sizes. Most often, researchers must deal with many methodological problems in locating and testing gay fathers in numbers sufficiently large to make acceptable statistical analyses of data. For this reason, what is known currently about gay fathers is weakened by these methodological problems. It is practically impossible to obtain a representative sample of gay fathers, and those studies published to date frequently utilize groups of white, urban, well-educated males for study because of convenience sampling.”

Jerry J. Bigner and R. Brooke Jacobson, “Adult Responses to Child Behavior and Attitudes Toward Fathering: Gay and Nongay Fathers,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 23 (1992): 99–112.

- In her study of lesbian families, Patterson admits to sampling bias: “Some concerns relevant to sampling issues should also be acknowledged. Most of the families who took part in the Bay Area Families Study were headed by lesbian mothers who were White, well educated, relatively affluent, and living in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. For these reasons, no claims about representativeness of the present sample can be made.”

Charlotte J. Patterson, “Families of the Lesbian Baby Boom: Parent’s Division of Labor and Children’s Adjustment,” *Development Psychology* 31 (1995): 122.

- Similarly, N. L. Wyers, in his study of male and female homosexual parents that appeared in *Social Work*, acknowledges that his study “cannot be considered representative” and that “therefore, the findings cannot be generalized beyond the sample itself.”

Norman L. Wyers, “Homosexuality in the Family: Lesbian and Gay Spouses,” *Social Work* 32 (1987): 144.

Lack of random sampling

Researchers use random sampling to ensure that the study participants are representative of the population being studied (for example, homosexuals or lesbians). Findings from unrepresentative samples have no legitimate generalization to the larger population.

- L. Lott-Whitehead and C. T. Tully admit the inherent weaknesses in their study of lesbian mothers: “This study was descriptive and, therefore, had inherent in its design methodological flaws consistent with other similar studies. Perhaps the most serious concerns representativeness....Probability random sampling...was impossible. This study does not purport to contain a representative sample, and thus generalizability cannot be assumed.”

Laura Lott-Whitehead and Carol T. Tully, “The Family Lives of Lesbian Mothers,” *Smith College Studies in Social Work* 63 (1993): 265.

- L. Wyers acknowledges that he did not use random sampling procedures in his study of lesbian and gay spouses, rendering his study “vulnerable to all the problems associated with self-selected research participants.”

Wyers, “Homosexuality in the Family,” 144.

- Golombok et al. write of their study: “A further objection to the findings lies in the nature of the samples studied. Both groups were volunteers obtained through gay and single-parent magazines and associations. Obviously these do not constitute random samples, and it is not possible to know what biases are involved in the method of sample selection.”

Golombok et al., “Children in Lesbian and Single-parent Households: Psychosexual and Psychiatric Appraisal,” *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 24 (1983): 569.

Lack of anonymity of research participants

Research procedures guaranteeing complete anonymity are necessary to prevent a source of bias as to who will consent to participate as a research subject and ensure the truthfulness and candor of their answers.

- B. Harris and P. H. Turner point out in the *Journal of Homosexuality*: “Most gay/lesbian parents who participate in such research are concerned about their parenting and their children, and most have established a public gay identity. ‘Closet’ gay parents are difficult to identify, and their problems may be quite different from those of more openly gay parents.”

Mary B. Harris and Pauline H. Turner, “Gay and Lesbian Parents,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 12 (1985): 104.

- Harris and Turner employed superior research techniques to ensure the complete anonymity of their research subjects. As a result, in contrast to other studies, they reported problems associated with being a homosexual parent that had gone unreported by earlier studies: “Perhaps the anonymity of the present sampling procedure made subjects more willing to acknowledge those problems than those in earlier studies.”

Harris and Turner, “Gay and Lesbian Parents,” 112.

Self-presentation bias

A lack of random sampling and the absence of controls guaranteeing anonymity allow subjects to present a misleading picture to the researcher that conforms to the subject’s attitudes or opinions and suppresses evidence that does not conform to the image he or she desires to present.

- In their National Lesbian Family Study, N. Gartrell et al. found that eighteen of nineteen studies of homosexual parents used a research procedure that was contaminated by self-presentation bias. Gartrell mentions the methodological problems of one longitudinal study of lesbian families: “Some may have volunteered for this project because they were motivated to demonstrate that lesbians were capable of producing healthy, happy children. To the extent that these subjects might wish to present themselves and their families in the best possible light, the study findings may be shaped by self-justification and self-presentation bias.”

Nanette Gartrell et al., “The National Lesbian Family Study: Interviews with Prospective Mothers,” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 66 (1996): 279.

- Harris and Turner admit, with regard to their study: “There is no way of knowing how representative the sample is....The high proportion of gay subjects who indicated a willingness to be interviewed suggests that they were perhaps unusually interested in the issues raised in the questionnaire and thus willing to divulge their homosexuality to the researchers. Moreover, even though the questionnaire was anonymous, the gay parents may have been particularly biased toward emphasizing the positive aspects of their relationships with their children, feeling that the results might have implications for custody decisions in the future. Thus, all generalizations must be viewed with caution....Because all uncorroborated self-report data are subject to biases, and because parents may deliberately or unconsciously minimize the extent of conflicts with their children, these findings cannot be accepted at face value.

Harris and Turner, “Gay and Lesbian Parents,” 111, 112.

Conclusion

In their thorough review of homosexual parenting studies, Robert Lerner and Althea K. Nagai found insufficient evidence to support the oft-repeated mantra that homosexual households are “just like” traditional families:

- “We conclude that the methods used in these studies are so flawed that these studies prove nothing. Therefore, they should not be used in legal cases to make any argument about ‘homosexual vs. heterosexual’ parenting. Their claims have no basis.”

Robert Lerner and Althea K. Nagai, *No Basis: What the Studies Don't Tell Us About Same Sex Parenting* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 2001): 6.

Is the Homosexual Lifestyle Suitable for the Rearing of Children?

Homosexual relationships are characteristically unstable and are fundamentally incapable of providing children the security they need.

Homosexual promiscuity

Studies indicate that the average male homosexual has hundreds of sex partners in his lifetime.

- A. P. Bell and M. S. Weinberg, in their classic study of male and female homosexuality, found that 43 percent of white male homosexuals had sex with five hundred or more partners, with 28 percent having 1,000 or more sex partners.

A. P. Bell and M. S. Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 308, 309; See also A. P. Bell, M. S. Weinberg, and S. K. Hamersmith, *Sexual Preference* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

- In their study of the sexual profiles of 2,583 older homosexuals published in *Journal of Sex Research*, Paul Van de Ven et al. found that “the modal range for number of sexual partners ever [of homosexuals] was 101–500.” In addition, 10.2 percent to 15.7 percent had between 501 and 1,000 partners. A further 10.2 percent to 15.7 percent reported having had more than 1,000 lifetime sexual partners.

Paul Van de Ven et al., “A Comparative Demographic and Sexual Profile of Older Homosexually Active Men,” *Journal of Sex Research* 34 (1997): 354.

- A survey conducted by the homosexual magazine *Genre* found that 24 percent of the respondents said they had had more than 100 sexual partners in their lifetime. The magazine noted that several respondents suggested including a category of those who had more than 1,000 sexual partners.

“Sex Survey Results,” *Genre* (October 1996), quoted in “Survey Finds 40 percent of Gay Men Have Had More Than 40 Sex Partners,” *Lambda Report*, January 1998, 20.

- In his study of male homosexuality in *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in Past and Present Times*, M. Pollak found that “few homosexual relationships last longer than two years, with many men reporting hundreds of lifetime partners.”

M. Pollak, “Male Homosexuality,” in *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in Past and Present*

Times, ed. P. Aries and A. Bejin, translated by Anthony Forster (New York, NY: B. Blackwell, 1985), 40–61, cited by Joseph Nicolosi in *Reparative Therapy of Male Homosexuality* (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1991), 124, 125.

Promiscuity among homosexual couples

Even in those homosexual relationships in which the partners consider themselves to be in a committed relationship, the meaning of “committed” typically means something radically different than in heterosexual marriage.

- In *The Male Couple*, authors David P. McWhirter and Andrew M. Mattison report that in a study of 156 males in homosexual relationships lasting from one to thirty-seven years: “Only seven couples have a totally exclusive sexual relationship, and these men all have been together for less than five years. Stated another way, all couples with a relationship lasting more than five years have incorporated some provision for outside sexual activity in their relationships.”

David P. McWhirter and Andrew M. Mattison, *The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 252, 253.

Most understood sexual relations outside the relationship to be the norm, and viewed adopting monogamous standards as an act of oppression.

- In *Male and Female Homosexuality*, M. Saghir and E. Robins found that the average male homosexual live-in relationship lasts between two and three years.

M. Saghir and E. Robins, *Male and Female Homosexuality* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1973), 225.

- In their *Journal of Sex Research* study of the sexual practices of older homosexual men, Paul Van de Ven et al. found that only 2.7 percent of older homosexuals had only one sexual partner in their lifetime.

Van de Ven, et al., “A Comparative Demographic and Sexual Profile,” 354.

- A study published in the journal *AIDS* in 2003 found that among homosexual men in the Netherlands, the “rate at which men with a steady partner acquire casual partners” averaged eight per year. Homosexual men without a “steady partner,” on the other hand, were found to “acquire” an average of 22 casual sex partners per year.

Maria Xiridou, et al., “The contribution of steady and casual partnerships to the incidence of HIV infection among homosexual men in Amsterdam,” *AIDS* 17 (2003): 1031.

Are there any differences between homosexual ‘couples’ and heterosexual spouses?

The figures on homosexual promiscuity stand in stark contrast to the statistics regarding sexual fidelity within marriage:

- A nationally representative survey of 884 men and 1,288 women published in *Journal of Sex Research* found that 77 percent of married men and 88 percent of married women had remained faithful to their spouses.

Michael W. Wiederman, “Extramarital Sex: Prevalence and Correlates in a National Survey,” *Journal of Sex Research* 34 (1997): 170.

- In *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*, E. O. Laumann et al. conducted a national survey that found that 75 percent of husbands and 85 percent of wives never had sexual relations outside of marriage.

E. O. Laumann et al., *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), Table 5.15, 216.

- A telephone survey conducted for *Parade* magazine of 1,049 adults selected to represent the demographic characteristics of the United States found that 81 percent of married men and 85 percent of married women reported that they had remained faithful to their spouses.

M. Clements, “Sex in America Today: A New National Survey Reveals How our Attitudes are Changing,” *Parade*, August 7, 1994, pp. 4–6.

While the rate of fidelity within marriage cited by these studies remains far from ideal, there is a magnum order of difference between the negligible lifetime fidelity rate cited for homosexuals and the 75 to 88 percent cited for married couples.

Intimate partner violence within homosexual and lesbian relationships

Homosexual and lesbian relationships are far more violent than traditional married households:

- A study in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* examined conflict

and violence in lesbian relationships. The researchers found that 90 percent of the lesbians surveyed had been recipients of one or more acts of verbal aggression from their intimate partners during the year prior to this study, with 31 percent reporting one or more incidents of physical abuse.

Lettie L. Lockhart et al., "Letting out the Secret: Violence in Lesbian Relationships," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 9 (1994): 469–492.

- In a survey of 1,099 lesbians, the *Journal of Social Service Research* found that "slightly more than half of the [lesbians] reported that they had been abused by a female lover/partner. The most frequently indicated forms of abuse were verbal/emotional/psychological abuse and combined physical-psychological abuse."

Gwat Yong Lie and Sabrina Gentlewarrier, "Intimate Violence in Lesbian Relationships: Discussion of Survey Findings and Practice Implications," *Journal of Social Service Research* 15 (1991): 41–59.

- In their book *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence*, D. Island and P. Letellier postulate that "the incidence of domestic violence among gay men is nearly double that in the heterosexual population."

D. Island and P. Letellier, *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence* (New York: Haworth Press, 1991), 14.

- A battering victimization study of 2,881 homosexuals published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that "the 5-year prevalence of physical battering among urban MSM (22.0 percent) was significantly higher than either the annual prevalence of severe violence (3.4 percent) or the annual prevalence of total violence (11.6 percent) among a representative sample of women who were married or cohabiting with men.... This study demonstrates that intimate partner abuse among urban MSM is a very serious public health problem."

Gregory L. Greenwood, et al, "Battering Victimization among a Probability-based Sample of Men Who Have Sex with Men," *American Journal of Public Health* 92 (December 2002): 1966–1967.

The low rate of intimate partner violence within marriage

A little-reported fact is that homosexual and lesbian relationships are far more violent than are traditional married households:

- The Bureau of Justice Statistics (U.S. Department of Justice) reports that married women in traditional families experience the lowest rate of violence compared with women in other types of relationships.

“Violence Between Intimates,” *Bureau of Justice Statistics Selected Findings*, November 1994, 2.

- A report by the Medical Institute for Sexual Health concurred: “It should be noted that most studies of family violence do not differentiate between married and unmarried partner status. Studies that do make these distinctions have found that marriage relationships tend to have the least intimate partner violence when compared to cohabiting or dating relationships.”

Health Implications Associated With Homosexuality (Austin: The Medical Institute for Sexual Health, 1999), 79.

Substance abuse among lesbians

- A study published in *Nursing Research* found that lesbians are three times more likely to abuse alcohol and to suffer from other compulsive behaviors: Like most problem drinkers, 32 (91 percent) of the participants had abused other drugs as well as alcohol, and many reported compulsive difficulties with food (34 percent), codependency (29 percent), sex (11 percent), and money (6 percent). Forty-six percent had been heavy drinkers with frequent drunkenness.”

Joanne Hall, “Lesbians Recovering from Alcoholic Problems: An Ethnographic Study of Health Care Expectations,” *Nursing Research* 43 (1994): 238–244.

Difference in life expectancy between male homosexuals and heterosexuals

Another factor contributing to the instability of male homosexual households, which raises the possibility of major disruption for children raised in such households, is the significantly reduced life expectancy of male homosexuals.

- In chapter 6 of this booklet, a study in the *International Journal of Epidemiology* on the mortality rates of homosexuals is cited. The study concludes that the “life expectancy at age twenty for gay and bisexual men is eight to twenty years less than for all men.”

Robert S. Hogg et al., “Modeling the Impact of HIV Disease on Mortality in Gay and Bisexual Men,” *International Journal of Epidemiology* 26 (1997): 657.

- In 1990, Wayne Tardiff and his partner, Allan Yoder, were the first homosexuals permitted to become adoptive parents in the state of New Jersey. Tardiff died in 1992 at age forty-four; Yoder died a few months later, leaving an orphaned five-year-old.

Obituaries, *The Washington Blade* (July 16, 1992): 23.

The Consequences for Children

Problems in social and academic adjustment

One significant study in an Australian journal has received too little attention in the American debate over homosexual parents. Sotirios Sarantakos, a sociologist, reported in the journal *Children Australia* on a study he conducted that avoided many of the pitfalls of most such studies.

- He compared “a sample of 174 primary school children living in three different types of families...58 children of heterosexual cohabiting couples, 58 children of heterosexual married couples and 58 children of homosexual (47 lesbian and 11 gay) couples,” all of which included “at least one of their biological parents.” The children were “matched according to age, gender, year of study, and parental characteristics (education, occupation, and employment status).”

Sotirios Sarantakos, “Children in three contexts: Family, education and social development,” *Children Australia*, Vol. 21, No. 3, (1996), 23.

- The ratings of children’s achievement in this study were “collected primarily from teachers and only secondarily from parents and children.”

Ibid., 24

The author notes that this subjects the results to possible bias on the part of the teachers. (However, it *avoids* the risk of bias that comes from *self*-reporting on the part of homosexual parents and their children, who may have a vested interest in trying to show how successful they are.)

It should also be noted that all of the children in this study were being raised by *couples*, not by single parents. This does away with the argument that what

is important for kids is having *two* parents (of any gender), rather than having a mother and a father specifically.

Sarantakos found that the children of married couples did the best, and the children of homosexual couples did the worst, in nine out of thirteen measures:

- Language
- Mathematics
- Sport
- Sociability
- Attitude to School and to Learning
- Parent-School Relationship
- Sex Identity (i.e., gender roles)
- School-Related Support (e.g., parents' help with homework)
- Parental Aspirations (for their children's education and career)

There were only three areas in which the children of homosexuals scored higher:

- Social Studies
- Personal Autonomy (of the child)
- Household Tasks (i.e., the contribution children make to them)

The report says “there were no statistically significant differences...regarding control and punishment of children.”

Ibid., 24–28.

The author concludes:

- “Overall, the study has shown that children of married couples are more likely to do well at school, in academic and social terms, than children of cohabiting heterosexual and homosexual couples.”

It's important to note that the author does *not* have an anti-homosexual agenda. In fact, he warns:

- “Before one jumps to conclusions encouraging homophobia and traditionalism, other relevant factors must be considered.” Nevertheless, he states, “In this study, married couples seem to offer the best environment for a child’s social and educational development.”

Ibid., 29.

Sexual identity confusion among children raised in homosexual and lesbian households

There is growing evidence that children raised in such households headed by homosexuals are more likely to engage in sexual experimentation and in homosexual behavior.

- Studies indicate that 0.3 percent of all adult females report having practiced homosexual behavior in the past year, 0.4 percent have practiced homosexual behavior in the last five years, and 3 percent have ever practiced homosexual behavior in their lifetime.

A. M. Johnson et al., “Sexual Lifestyles and HIV Risk,” *Nature* 360 (1992): 410–412; R. Turner, “Landmark French and British Studies Examine Sexual Behavior, including Multiple Partners, Homosexuality,” *Family Planning Perspectives* 25 (1993): 91, 92.

- A study in *Developmental Psychology*, however, found that 12 percent of the children of lesbians became active lesbians themselves, a rate which is at least four times the base rate of lesbianism in the adult female population.

Tasker and Golombok, “Adults Raised as Children in Lesbian Families,” 213.

- Numerous studies indicate that while nearly 5 percent of all males report having had a homosexual experience sometime in their lives, the number of exclusive homosexuals is considerably less: Between 1 and 2 percent of males report exclusive homosexual behavior over a several-year period (see Chapter 2).

ACSF Investigators, “AIDS and Sexual Behavior in France,” *Nature* 360 (1992): 407–409; J. M. Bailey et al., “Sexual Orientation of Adult Sons of Gay Fathers,” *Developmental Psychology* 31 (1995): 124–129; J. O. G. Billy et al., “The Sexual Behavior of Men in the United States,” *Family Planning Perspectives* 25 (1993): 52–60; A. M. Johnson et al., “Sexual Lifestyles and HIV Risk,” *Nature* 360 (1992): 410–412.

- However, J. M. Bailey et al. found that 9 percent of the adult sons of homosexual fathers were homosexual in their adult sexual behavior: “The rate of homosexuality in the sons (9 percent) is several times higher than that suggested by the population-based surveys and is consistent with a degree of father-to-son transmission.”

Bailey et al., “Sexual Orientation of Adult Sons of Gay Fathers,” 127–128.

- Even though they attempted to argue otherwise, Golombok and Tasker’s study revealed in its results section a clear connection between being raised in a lesbian family and homosexuality: “With respect to actual involvement in same-gender sexual relationships, there was a significant difference between groups....None of the children from heterosexual families had experienced a lesbian or gay relationship.” By contrast, five (29 percent) of the seventeen daughters and one (13 percent) of the eight sons in homosexual families reported having at least one same-sex relationship.

Tasker and Golombok, “Do Parents Influence the Sexual Orientation?” 7.

- R. Green et al. writing in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, reported that the few experimental studies that included even modestly larger samples (13–30) of boys or girls reared by homosexual parents found “developmentally important statistically significant differences between children reared by homosexual parents compared to heterosexual parents. For example, children raised by homosexuals were found to have greater parental encouragement for cross-gender behavior [and] greater amounts of cross-dressing and cross-gender play/role behavior.”

Richard Green et al., “Lesbian Mothers and Their Children: A Comparison with Solo Parent Heterosexual Mothers and Their Children,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 15 (1986): 167–184.

- In the *American Sociological Review*, authors Judith Stacey and Timothy J. Biblarz alluded to the “political incorrectness” of their finding of higher rates of homosexuality among children raised in homosexual households: “We recognize the political dangers of pointing out that recent studies indicate that a higher proportion of children of lesbian parents are themselves apt to engage in homosexual activity.”

Judith Stacey and Timothy J. Biblarz, “(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter,” *American Sociological Review* 66 (2001): 174, 179.

- Stacy and Biblarz also reported “some fascinating findings on the number of sexual partners children report,” including: “The adolescent and young adult girls raised by lesbian mothers appear to have been more sexually adventurous and less chaste....In other words, once again, children (especially girls) raised by lesbians appear to depart from traditional gender-based norms, while children raised by heterosexual mothers appear to conform to them.”

Stacey and Biblarz, *Ibid.*

Greater incidence of incest in homosexual parent families

- A study in *Adolescence* found: “A disproportionate percentage—29 percent—of the adult children of homosexual parents had been specifically subjected to sexual molestation by that homosexual parent, compared to only 0.6 percent of adult children of heterosexual parents having reported sexual relations with their parent....Having a homosexual parent(s) appears to increase the risk of incest with a parent by a factor of about 50.”

P. Cameron and K. Cameron, “Homosexual Parents,” *Adolescence* 31 (1996): 772.

Anecdotal evidence

Although anecdotal evidence alone cannot prove definitively the existence of specific trends in the lives of children with homosexual parents, it is often employed in news stories that extol the virtues of some specific homosexual couple and the love between them and the children they are raising. However, one rarely hears such stories balanced by the personal testimonies of children traumatized by the same experience. Yet there are many such children, as demonstrated by a remarkable pro-homosexual book titled *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*. Despite the oft-repeated claim of “no difference,” the editor of this collection of first-hand accounts admits:

- “Their lives, both their emotional lives and public lives, are affected by our lifestyles.”

Louise Rafkin, editor, *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives* (Pittsburgh: Cleis Press, 1990), 10.

Following are a number of excerpts from this book, with the names and ages of the writer. While most of these people end up defending their lesbian

mothers, much of the trauma they have experienced is still evident in their candid reflections:

- **Kyneret Hope (25 years old)**

“I experienced [lesbian] separatism as a constant level of anger and negativity.... That was part of the lifestyle I knew, but there was also a down side: men were called mutants, straight women were considered disowned sisters who wasted woman-energy on men, and other lesbians were sometimes accused of being government spies sent to infiltrate and undermine the community. Anyone who was not like us was evil, and I had to be careful not to cross over to the enemy’s camp.”

Kyneret Hope, “Of Lesbian Descent,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 59.

- **Michael (27 years old)**

“Lesbians should not fill their children with their own fears and hatreds. I say this after considering the causes of needless pain in my past, and my troubles understanding the present.... I do recall our wishing our mothers were more attentive to us than to each other. We kids would get together and have sex, males or females in any combination—unbeknownst to our parents, but ironically I don’t think any of us really knew what our mothers’ lesbianism really meant.... Since my parents had sex with the same sex (my mother with other women, my stepfather with me), I had not understood that homosexuality was wrong. Also, at the time I couldn’t figure out my own sexuality because I was having sex with people of both sexes.... Until I was sixteen or so, I was sexually abused by many straight men [sic], ‘friends’ of my mother’s whom I was occasionally left with. I wondered, what was going on on this planet? The end result of all of this abuse is that today I don’t trust people. Period.... Lesbians who hate or fear men take this out on boy children. I suspect that the same thing might happen with gay fathers and girl children.”

“Out of the Pain,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 110–116.

- **Carla Tomaso (grew up in the 1950s)**

“I’ve been angry with my mother all my life. The fact that she kept boundaries between me and her sexual experiences with women when I was a child made me feel that she was choosing others over me, that I wasn’t important. It also probably sexualized her for me

in an inappropriate way...But I don't seem to have problems with being a lesbian myself...In fact, I think my mother showed me that lesbianism is a possibility..."

Carla Tomaso, "I'm Always Looking for My Mother," in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 140–41.

- **Kathlean Hill (20 years old)**

"I just remember thinking that all lesbians felt the same way my mother felt about everything. If that were true, then all lesbians would talk about men as crude, destructive, dishonest, sleazy creatures that were really not supposed to exist. They were a mistake. Yet while she told me these things, she also taught me to question authority. I began my questioning right about there; I chose not to believe her. At this point I already thought lesbianism meant treating men as inferior. From there I decided that lesbians were a bunch of hypocritical women. Just a bunch of women who preach freedom and individuality, yet their values and beliefs were basically homogeneous. So, at a very young age, lesbianism looked like a bleak future to me. Terre called my sister and me 'baby dykes,' making us wear these small hand-crafted lesbian signs she had made for us by a local lesbian jeweler. Both my sister, Maureen, and I have always been extremely resentful of that. It always seemed so unfair to label a child's sexuality so young."

Kathlean Hill, "Change and Consistency," in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 150.

- **Carey Conley (21 years old)**

"I built up a great deal of fear and frustration. I was angry that I was not part of a 'normal' family and could not live with a 'normal' mother. I wondered what I did to deserve this. Why did my biological mother let a lesbian adopt me? How could she think that this life was better than what she could have given me?...During these years I talked with my sister about my feelings and problems. We discussed how we didn't understand my mother and her lifestyle. We talked of how we resented her for placing us in such a situation, all the while knowing how hard it would be for us."

Carey Conley, "Always Changes" in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 157–59.

- **Adam Levy (23 years old)**

"I have always had an accelerated knowledge of sexual education due

to the nature of my mother's and her first lover's occupations. They were both physical and sex education teachers for the Board of Education in New York City....I think the combination of my knowledge, coupled with the feeling that there are no rules about sexual behavior, may make it appear to some that I enjoy variety when it comes to women. The reality is that I am in no hurry to find a lifetime mate; therefore I find myself always looking for new possibilities....Meanwhile, I made up my own rules. Rules which I created out of the freedom allowed me by my parents, especially that of my mother's sexual preference. When mom broke the big rule—the one that says only men and women get married—I began to question other rules which had designs on my life.”

Adam Levy, “Mom Breaks the Big Rule,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 163–64.

Even more poignant are the comments by some of the youngest children of lesbian parents:

- **Katie and Tessa O’Neal (10 and 13 years old)**

“We have talked about how some gay women dress like men and how some men dress like women. I think that is really weird, and I don’t understand why they do it. I think it must be really hard on their kids, too.”

Katie and Tessa O’Neal, “A Real Big Secret,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 40.

- **Zea (13 years old)**

“I don’t have many men in my life, so I’m not as comfortable around them as I would like to be.”

“Like Sisters,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 124.

- **Guilemere (5 years old)**

“Some friends ask me questions about my moms, and I get embarrassed and scared to answer. And sometimes mad that I don’t have brothers and sisters. I really want more kids in our family....Once I told Aunt Shari and mommy to get married to men and have babies. Then they could tell the men to live in another state!”

“Making Family,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 130.

- **Lovenia (9 years old)**

“Once in a while I wish my dad was in my life, because I never knew him as my father.... Sometimes I talk to my mother about it, and I have told her that she has made my life difficult.”

“It Just Happens to Be,” in *Different Mothers: Sons and Daughters of Lesbians Talk About Their Lives*, 142–44.

Jakii Edwards was raised by a lesbian mother and has written an entire book about it. She summarizes the experiences of such children this way:

- “We constantly wonder if we will eventually become gay. There is humiliation when other kids see our parents kissing a same-sex lover in front of us. Trust me, it’s hard on the children, no matter how much they love their gay parent. The homosexual community may never admit it, but the damage stemming from their actions can be profound.”

Jakii Edwards with Nancy Kurrack, *Like Mother, Like Daughter? The effects of growing up in a homosexual home* (Vienna, VA: Xulon Press, 2001), 8.

A Political Agenda: Redefining Marriage and Family

It is not the intention of homosexual activists simply to make it possible for homosexuals and lesbians to partake of conventional married life. By their own admission they aim to change the essential character of marriage, removing precisely the aspects of fidelity and chastity that promote stability in the relationship and the home:

- Paula Ettelbrick, former legal director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, has stated, “Being queer is more than setting up house, sleeping with a person of the same gender, and seeking state approval for doing so.... Being queer means pushing the parameters of sex, sexuality, and family, and in the process transforming the very fabric of society.”

Paula Ettelbrick, quoted in William B. Rubenstein, “Since When Is Marriage a Path to Liberation?” *Lesbians, Gay Men, and the Law*, (New York: The New Press, 1993), 398, 400.

- Homosexual writer and activist Michelangelo Signorile goes so far as to redefine the term *monogamy*: For these men the term “monogamy” simply doesn’t necessarily mean sexual exclusivity.... The term “open

relationship” has for a great many gay men come to have one specific definition: A relationship in which the partners have sex on the outside often, put away their resentment and jealousy, and discuss their outside sex with each other, or share sex partners.

Michelangelo Signorile, *Life Outside* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 213.

- The views of Signorile and Ettelbrick regarding marriage are widespread in the homosexual community. According to the *Mendola Report*, a mere 26 percent of homosexuals believe that commitment is most important in a marriage relationship.

Mary Mendola, *The Mendola Report* (New York: Crown, 1980), 53.

- Former homosexual William Aaron explains why even homosexuals involved in “committed” relationships do not practice monogamy: In the gay life, fidelity is almost impossible. Since part of the compulsion of homosexuality seems to be a need on the part of the homophile to “absorb” masculinity from his sexual partners, he must be constantly on the lookout for [new partners]. Consequently the most successful homophile “marriages” are those where there is an arrangement between the two to have affairs on the side while maintaining the semblance of permanence in their living arrangement.

William Aaron, *Straight* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972), 208, cited by Joseph Nicolosi in *Reparative Therapy of Male Homosexuality*, 125, quoted by Robert H. Knight in “How Domestic Partnerships and ‘Gay Marriage’ Threaten the Family,” Family Research Council, *Insight* (June 1994), 9.

Supporters of homosexual “families” raise questions about their suitability for children

- In their study in *Family Relations*, L. Koepke et al. observed, “Even individuals who believe that same-sex relationships are a legitimate choice for adults may feel that children will suffer from being reared in such families.”

Koepke, et al., “Relationship Quality in a Sample of Lesbian Couples with Children and Child-free Lesbian Couples,” 228.

- Writing in the *Journal of Homosexuality*, J. J. Bigner and R. B. Jacobson describe the homosexual father as “socioculturally unique,” trying to take on “two apparently opposing roles: that of a father (with all its usual connotations) and that of a homosexual man.” They describe

the homosexual father as “both structurally and psychologically at social odds with his interest in keeping one foot in both worlds: parenting and homosexuality.”

Bigner and Jacobson, “Adult Responses to Child Behavior and Attitudes Toward Fathering,” 174, 175.

Children really need a mom and a dad

The importance of the traditional family has been increasingly verified by research showing that children from married two-parent households do better academically, financially, emotionally, and behaviorally. Meanwhile, they also experience much lower rates of many social pathologies, including:

- premarital childbearing;

Kristin A. Moore, “Nonmarital School-Age Motherhood: Family, Individual, and School Characteristics,” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 13 (October 1998), 433–457.

- illicit drug use;

John P. Hoffman and Robert A. Johnson, “A National Portrait of Family Structure and Adolescent Drug Use,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 60 (August 1998), 633–645.

- arrest;

Chris Coughlin and Samuel Vucinich, “Family Experience in Preadolescence and the Development of Male Delinquency,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (May 1996), 491–501.

- health, emotional, or behavioral problems;

Deborah A. Dawson, “Family Structure and Children’s Health and Well-Being: Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (August 1991), 573–584.

- poverty;

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, *America’s Children: Key Indicators of Well-Being 2001*, Washington, D.C., 14.

- or school failure or expulsion.

(Dawson, op.cit.).

- These benefits are then passed on to future generations as well,

because children raised by married parents are themselves less likely to cohabit or to divorce as adults.

Paul R. Amato and Alan Booth, *A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997, 111–115.

These benefits do not arise simply from having two adult caretakers. Children have a specific need for both a mother and a father.

- Blankenhorn discusses the different but necessary roles that mothers and fathers play in children's lives: "If mothers are likely to devote special attention to their children's present physical and emotional needs, fathers are likely to devote special attention to their character traits necessary for the future, especially qualities such as independence, self-reliance, and the willingness to test limits and take risks."
- Blankenhorn further explains: "For the child, from the beginning, the mother's love is an unquestioned source of comfort and the foundation of human attachment. But the father's love is almost a bit farther away, more distant and contingent. Compared to the mother's love, the father's must frequently be sought after, deserved, earned through achievement."

David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 219.

Author and sociologist David Popenoe confirms that mothers and fathers fulfill different roles in their children's lives.

- In *Life without Father* Popenoe notes, "Through their play, as well as in their other child-rearing activities, fathers tend to stress competition, challenge, initiative, risk taking and independence. Mothers in their care-taking roles, in contrast, stress emotional security and personal safety."
- Parents also discipline their children differently: "While mothers provide an important flexibility and sympathy in their discipline, fathers provide ultimate predictability and consistency. Both dimensions are critical for an efficient, balanced, and humane child-rearing regime."

David Popenoe, *Life Without Father* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 144, 146.

In his analysis of human cultures, the eminent Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin argued that no society has ceased to honor the institution of marriage and survived. Sorokin considered traditional marriage and parenting as the fulfillment of life's meaning for both individuals and society:

- “Enjoying the marital union in its infinite richness, parents freely fulfill many other paramount tasks. They maintain the procreation of the human race. Through their progeny they determine the hereditary and acquired characteristics of future generations. Through marriage they achieve a social immortality of their own, of their ancestors, and of their particular groups and community. This immortality is secured through the transmission of their name and values, and of their traditions and ways of life to their children, grandchildren, and later generations.”

Pitirim Sorokin, *The American Sex Revolution* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1956), 6, 77–105.