

A journal article
review of children of
lesbian and gay
parents



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Article review Marriage between gays and lesbians has been a source of intense debate for quite some time as laws and policies that would help regulate such marriages has not yet been constitutionally framed. More recently conception and adoption of children by such couples is also being widely discussed in several states. There have been several doubts raised regarding the rearing of children by such parents and their subsequent overall development. The article provides a reflection on the legal and psychological issues concerning child care by gay and lesbian populations. One major aspect concerning gay and lesbian families is the diversity of the family structure as apart from the couple other people might also be involved in the family structure if in case the couple decide to conceive a child using a donor sperm or a surrogate mother in case of lesbians and gays respectively. In some cases, heterosexual couples after having children might undergo a change in sexual preferences that might result in divorce and eventual legal problems about the custody of the children. Legal problems are also encountered when gay or lesbian couples who have adopted children decide to separate. To begin with, there is considerable variation among various states across the world in recognizing marriage between the same sexes. While a mere 5 states in the US legally recognize same-sex marriages, many other states recognize such marriages conducted in other states or offer limited recognition or do not support them at all. While there are civil unions for these couples in certain states, they are denied of any kind of federal benefits. In most cases people who argue against legalization of same-sex marriages cite child rearing as a major reason. However laws have been more kind on the children of gay and lesbian parents as they are eligible for health care and insurance and would

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be protected by law if their parents are married legally. The legal issues surrounding the custody of children and visitation by such parents have also come under scrutiny citing reasons such as the parent's relationship with a same-sex individual may have adverse effects on the mind of the children. The court rulings in this aspect in several states is divided as some courts have ruled a favorable opinion while others have maintained that individuals with same-sex partners would not make a good parent as it might have a bad influence on the child. While legal issues still loom large with respect to lesbians and gay people taking custody of their own children, laws governing adoption of children by same-sex parents also vary considerably between several states. In the US, such adoptions are strictly barred in states such as Florida, while the laws in California are more lenient in allowing openly lesbian gay partners to adopt children. These individuals could either opt for stranger adoptions where the legal ties between the child and its biological parent is severed or for second parent adoptions when one of the partner is a legal parent for the child and the other partner could apply for parental status. Apart from the legal issues lesbian and gay parents also face several social issues concerning the child, more specifically the gender orientation of the child. While the American Psychiatric Association argues that it is not imperative that a growing child must display its conformity to a specific gender, however the society at large still expects that children show behavior according to their gender. There have been several research that has studied the preferences and gendered behavior of children growing with lesbian or gay parents and those with heterosexual parents and most of these studies have found no differences in the preferences of these children.

Many studies focusing on the gender identity have also reported that almost <https://assignbuster.com/a-journal-article-review-of-children-of-lesbian-and-gay-parents/>

all the children grow as heterosexuals only. Another factor which has also been extensively researched is the personal and behavioral development of these children and it has been shown that there are no particular differences between the two groups of children. The social relationships of these children are also no different from those brought up by heterosexual parents.

However, the issue of peer pressure and harassment of children who grow up with homosexual parents are being studied as some children have reported such teasing and negative comments from their peers. All these reports have been studied with both children and adolescents and there is no significant difference in the growth and development of both these age groups with homosexual parents. It has also been argued by many that such circumstances only provide a positive environment for the child and that there should be any problems associated with custodian rights or adoption of children by lesbian and gay parents.

Thus, in conclusion research studies have constantly maintained that such parents behave like any normal heterosexual parent and these could be provided during legal debates relating to the family functioning of such individuals. Hence suitable laws and policies should be framed to protect the legal rights of lesbian and gay individuals and their children.

References

Patterson, C. J. (2009). Children of Lesbian and Gay parents: Psychology, Law and Policy. *American Psychologist*, 727-736.