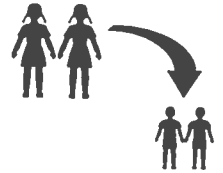


SECOND GENERATION

Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals who have
Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Parents



Issue #2, Fall 1994

For newsletter subscriptions, send \$5 to
COLAGE
2300 Market Street, Box 165
San Francisco, CA 94114

For information, questions, & contributions, please contact
Second Generation, c/o Dan Cherubin, 57-59 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003
phone: (212) 673-2926
or via e-mail: cherubin@nyplgate.nypl.org

A Letter from Our Founder—by Dan Cherubin

Welcome to our second issue! The response to the first one was great, so we knew we had to continue. These months have just flown by, and so much has happened with Second Generation!

First off, we now have an agreement with COLAGE (that's Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, for those of you not in the know) for them to distribute our newsletter. This, naturally, makes us very happy as we now can pool our resources and cut our costs. Special thanks to Stefan Lynch for pushing the idea. See more about COLAGE later in the newsletter. (They deserve a plug unto themselves!)

I'd also like to say thanks to those fellow SGers who saw us at the march and braved the heat to walk with us part way or just stopped to say hi. Extra thanks to Alex Fagelson who lent us her soccer ball to use as ballast for our banner. Quick thinking in a time of crisis. See Brook's article later on for a full account of our adventure.

I'd like to take this space to talk about a subject less bubbly. One problem we did face at the March, as well as in general with other groups, is the fact that the image of children and gay/lesbian/bi/trans groups don't always seem to mix. When we first started the group, our name included the term "g/l/b children of g/l/b parents." This seemed to conjure up the image of a bunch of 7-year olds. It seems funny, but I was amazed to find that people were scared of us. Someone once asked if I was just the adult supervisor of the group! When I explained that our average age is late 20's/early 30's, I usually have to add, "remember, we are all *somebody's* children."

Unfortunately, when we deal with other groups, many are somewhat hostile. A common comment is "Well, this has nothing to do with me!" Well, the Gay Scrabble Club has nothing to do with me, but I'm still willing to support it, or at least mention the group to friends of mine who might be interested. That's all we really ask for, respect, support and communication. NAMBLA aside, not every mention of gays and children should be so shocking.

Even parents aren't immune. At the March, I handed out lots of our cards to gay parents. The majority of people around us had children in strollers. So I handed them the card with the line, "Hey, you never know! Keep the card for a few years!" Now, this was done mainly in jest. But some people did not find this funny. And these were gay and lesbian parents! I hope we are around in 15 years or so. Some of those kids may need a group like ours.

I think that's why I rant about this so much. The Community (call it what you will) is growing and expanding and getting more visible each day. Same-sex parents are all the rage in the media. I can understand the party line of "I can raise normal kids, too" to appease any over-eager social workers and evil judges. But we Second Generation people are there, too. And, if the parade was any indication, there's probably gonna be a lot more of us who are open about it. I hope when people say "We're here, we're queer," they won't blanch at the fact that Junior is saying it with them.

Well, on to another rant. As you can see in this newsletter, there are articles by me, Brook, and Maria. In other words, the same three as last time! We need contributions. The plan is to publish twice (*continued*)

a year (Spring and Fall), so get those pencils ready. I'm especially interested to hear from anyone doing any Second-Generation-like projects (films, books, songs, etc.). Hey, shameless self-promotion is welcome here! Please! I can only rave for so long!

Anyway, I hope you all enjoy this issue. Read on! Extra special thanks and kisses to all my moms and to mah main squeeze, Adam.

* * * * *

Message from Maria—by Maria Yadaseska

It's hot and friendly in South Florida. There are plenty of opportunities awaiting me both professionally and socially. I'm trying to get a Second Generation group going with the help of West Palm Beach P-FLAG.

There are gay twelve-step groups where the people are friendly, and I hope to meet Second Generation people. That's where the majority of my friends are from.

At a lesbian rap group at Compass, one of the women offered me a job as a nurse's aide based on my nursing home experience. Right now, I'm in the process of registering my vehicle to get me back and forth to work. I am looking in to getting nurses' aide training at PIC.

Compass, the local gay & lesbian community center, has a P-FLAG group. The leader gave me a lot of political literature about a gay-rights bill which passed in Palm Beach County. Now there is no discrimination allowed in housing or employment.

Life is good. I hope Second Generation can open a local chapter. Although I have lived with a lover before, living with a man is not the same as living with a woman. We have a rock-solid relationship and plan on having a commitment ceremony next year.

Hi to all Second Generation children!

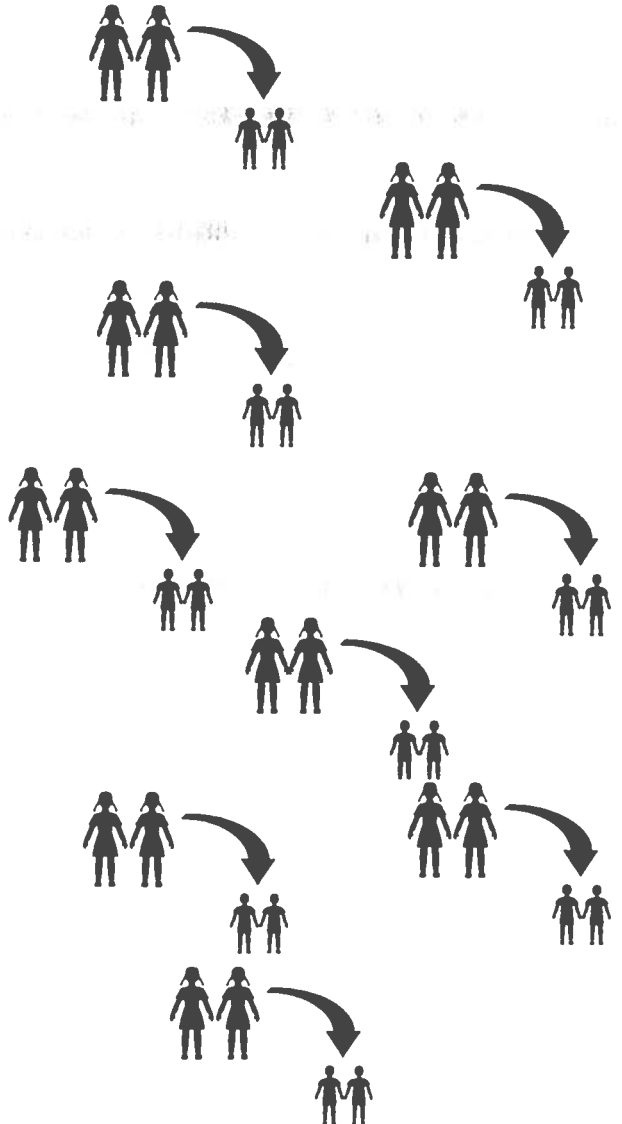
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SECOND GENERATION EVENTS

Aside from our usual monthly meetings here in NYC, Second Generation meets with other groups to promote outreach and support. In the next few months we will be meeting with P-FLAG Long Island, the Hetrick-Martin Institute and Center Kids, plans willing.

As you can see, most of our events are East-Coast based. We do, however, have members all over the country, especially on the West Coast. If anyone would like to take a stab at setting up a meeting with some group, please let me know. Anyone can be a Second Generation representative. Or, if anyone would like to set up regular SG meetings out of the NYC area, don't hesitate to call or write.

Hey, we *are* everywhere!



The Stonewall Parade—by Brook Randolph Garrett

It wasn't supposed to be a parade. The route was not the traditional one down 5th Avenue, past St. Patrick's and the obligatory homophobes culminating in a wonderfully joyous party on the piers at the end of Christopher Street. We weren't allowed to have a float (no one was). It was going to be a Gay and Lesbian civil rights march to mark Stonewall, a solemn event for some, a downer for others, but a milestone for Second Generation, and they put us, the adults without an obvious place in the parade route into the Parents' and Kids' section. (It's our cross-of-burden—no one knows quite where to put us.) The we in question being the children of parents *like us*, bi's, gays, and lesbians. It's hard to describe who and what you are on a banner, but we were bound and determined to get our

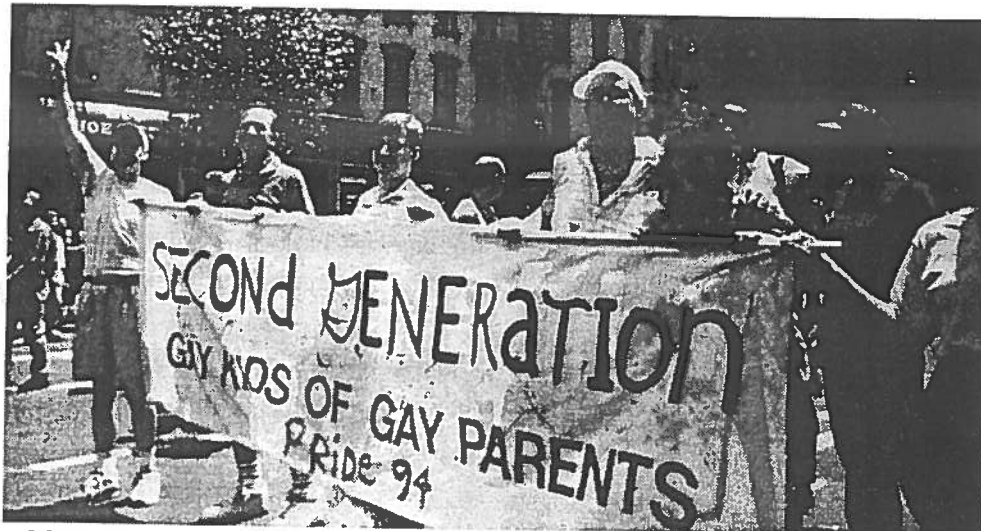
face into the crowd and let people know that we existed. We shouted, we chanted, we made sure that our little group was seen by the thousands who lined the parade route. As we turned the corner, people

would read our banner, get it, and then give us the support that we all were searching for—validation that yes, we too were part of the community, and hopefully our visibility would allow for others to come forward, to participate in the on-going discussion concerning who we are, why we are, and how are. We, Dan and I being the only members of our group, certainly are fact, and not fiction, that this homosexual thing might be genetic.

Dan's mom and her lover came to march in the parade with us; it was nice to at least show the world that yes, here was living proof that a Lesbian can

create a Gay son. She even brought her girlfriend. I, on the other hand, didn't have a parental representative, even though I am a textbook case, as my mother is a lesbian and my father, a gay man. But my parents wouldn't have been comfortable marching in the parade. It hasn't been the easiest for them to come out of their life-long closets, and my trepidation in pushing, or pulling them as it were, into something that I know full well they wouldn't have enjoyed, kept me from putting my personal stamp on the parade proceedings. Friends asked if I have even bothered to ask them to march, which I hadn't, but in the reality of it all, I'm not ready, and neither are they. Pity, isn't it, that on the momentous occasion of the Stonewall Remembrance, I couldn't get it together to get my homosexual parents to march with me on our day of triumph.

Well, it's my life lesson to learn. Hopefully, next parade things will be different in our lives and we will be able to march together...maybe. ¶ The day of the parade was a beautiful one. Sunshine, beautiful blue sky, lovely weather for a parade. It



SGer Brook Garrett, SG supporters Jeff Selbst and Adam Spector (Dan's spouse), SGer Dan Cherubin, Margaret Cherubin (Dan's dyke mom), and SGer Alex Fagelson (partially)

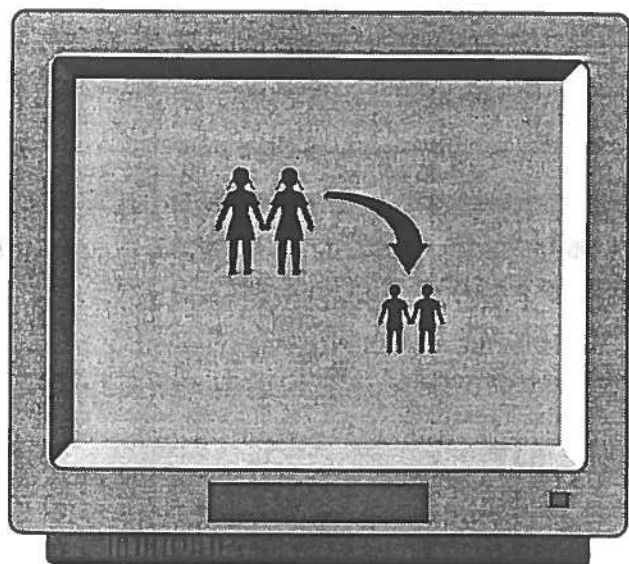
took a while for everyone to get their respective acts together, but with a mile-long rainbow flag, it was obvious that things weren't going as planned, and the waiting proved to be long. But it allowed for people to see us, ask us questions; why, we even got a recruit, a Lesbian college student from State College, PA, who had come with her Gay father to march with his Gay Father's organization. But we nabbed her and increased our ranks.

But it was bittersweet as both Dan and I, the stalwarts of the group, or better yet, the only active members of the group, found that there was (continued)

plenty of interest, plenty of “Oh, I know someone...,” lots of business cards given away, but no follow-through. Frustration can get the best of you, and even during a joyous occasion like the march, we both wanted more: more people, more support, more visibility. But the truth of it seems to me that not everyone in our position feel that they have a need to come out and expose themselves as members of our Second Generation. We get the calls, we get the letters, but the actual bodies remain ghostlike at monthly meeting time. It had been a year since our inception, and we have come a long way, but with the march, we both felt that we might find a few people like us there to join the ranks. Hopefully someone will remember seeing us as we marched up 1st Avenue, or rounded 57th Street; the crowd read our banner and gave us that vocal support we were looking for in the first place—the cheer of acknowledgement.

WE'RE HERE! WE'RE QUEER!! AND SO ARE MOM AND/OR DAD!!!

We'll be there next year, hopefully stronger, wiser, louder, and maybe with a better banner.



SECOND GENERATION HITS THE MEDIA!!

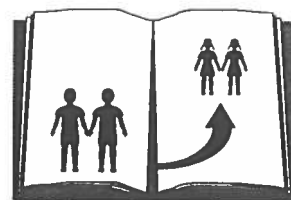
While we don't seem to be in any videos of the March (and believe me, I taped every gay show on cable!), everyone should keep their eyes peeled on CBS this fall. There's going to be some specials about lesbian mothers and their daughters' reactions. This will be featuring at least one member of Second Generation, our own Tamsin Orion from San Francisco!

Much as it sounds like one, this will not be an After School special, but a prime time one.

▼ On the printed format front, check out your local comic store. [I'd print publishing info, but of course, I have none of the books in front of me. Oops!] If you're a fan of Tim Barela's "Leonard & Larry," pick up *Domesticity Isn't Pretty*, a collection of the strips. Hey, even if you're not a fan, you should still check it out! Especially since Larry's younger son comes out of the closet, sending his gay father into shock. A human and hilarious collection.

See if you can find back issues of the now-defunct "Big Ass Comics," which contains Robert Kirby's continuing saga of the gay son and his all too enthusiastic closeted dad. And then there's "Dykes to Watch Out For" from Alison Bechdel. Actually, this isn't Second Generation oriented, but it's great anyway.

—Dan



A WORD ABOUT COLAGE

As I mentioned earlier in the newsletter, COLAGE (Childrens of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) is now graciously distributing this for us. I think the best way to describe COLAGE is to directly quote from their mission statement:

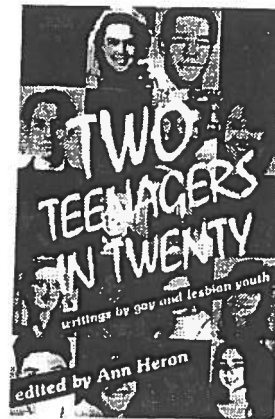
To foster the growth of daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, and bisexual parents of all racial, ethnic and class backgrounds by providing education support and community on local and international levels, to advocate for our rights and those of our families and to promote acceptance and awareness in society that love makes a family.

I can't put it any better. COLAGE has groups for all ages (and I do mean *all*), as well as a pen-pal service and their own newsletter. For more info on COLAGE, as well as to subscribe to our newsletter, write to:

COLAGE
2300 Market St, Box 165
San Francisco, CA 94114

Subscriptions to our newsletter are \$5 for the year. Please send the money to COLAGE and not to me, as hard as it is for me to say no to mail-money.

Book Review



In 1983, Alyson Publications published *One Teenager In Ten*, a collection of writings by gay and lesbian teens, edited by Ann Heron. The stories were strong, wonderful, scary at times, but self-affirming and assuring to a gay teen.

I was 18 in 1983, but I didn't find this book until I was in my late 20's. I only wish I found it earlier.

Now, Ann Heron and Alyson Publications have released *Two Teenagers in Twenty*, an updated version with new stories, as well as stories from the original edition. This one has even two gay siblings. The stories are more powerful than ever, made even more so by the fact that life for gay and lesbian youth has not improved all that much in the 14 years between books.

One story sticks out in my mind. One of the young women in the book tells of going to the library to read *One Teenager in Ten*, and the librarian gives her a hard time. The books are even locked up in a special case! Being a librarian myself, I find wanting to throttle this "colleague" of mine. I can't fathom denying anyone information like that. Then I take a breath and realize I'm in the real world.

While this book is not directly related to Second Generation, I think the stories will strike a chord with anyone who has grown-up gay, lesbian, or bi. Who knows? It's only a matter of time before there's a Second Generation teen book. I only hope that life gets easier.

If anyone knows of a book or movie (or whatever) that they would like to talk about, please send a line to me at the SG address.

—Dan

Second Generation meets in New York City
the first Tuesday of every month at:
The Lesbian and Gay
Community Services Center,
208 West 13th Street,
New York, NY 10011

For information about the Center,
call (212) 620-7310

Second Generation meetings have an open
agenda, and all ideas are welcome.

For more information (or to confirm
meetings), please call (212) 673-2926,
or write:

Second Generation c/o Dan Cherubin,
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New York, NY 10003

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Issue #4, Winter 1995/96

A Message from our Founder -- by Dan Cherubin

Well, here we are nearing the end of 1995. I know, it's a bit later than I wanted the newsletter to appear, but jury duty, illness and new romantic ventures tend to put everything else on hold. I won't bore you with the descriptions of endless sinus infections or the adventure of long distance relationships (there's plenty of groups for that!) but, as a note to all you NYC residents: Bring lots of books, plenty of antibiotics, an appreciation of arcane law and a suspension of disbelief when going on jury duty. It certainly helps! Well, despite the delays, I hope nothing appears TOO out of date here!

I'd like once again to thank people who did contribute to and help with this newsletter, especially Stefan and the gang from COLAGE, who really do make this possible. Always good to have support from friends.

We seem to be growing even more as the months go by. More Second Generationers are making themselves known, and for this I say WHOOOOO!!! Do it!! Make your presence count! We are not just a fluke!

I would like to see more than just a show of hands, though. Our NYC meetings have stopped. Not put on hold, not on hiatus, just stopped.

Getting people to join me in doing that busy work like cold calling, envelope stuffing, or even schlepping to other groups' meetings is becoming more and more difficult. I'm glad everybody thinks it's great we exist, but it's hard to keep on existing if I don't get much help. I know this sounds like a re-hash of old newsletters, but it's more of a problem than before. So, anybody, wherever you are, if you can help, let me know. I'll be eternally grateful. A few moments of your time. It's not THAT hard! (OK, now I'm sounding like Sally Struthers, so I'll stop!!)

What does this mean? (Not sounding like Sally, the part before that!) Well, just because the NYC crowd petered out doesn't mean that your town will. Spread the word. Make SG known. Sit down and write, phone or e-mail me and let me know what's going on. Share your activities, your ups and downs, your stories with us.

All right then, with some new CDS in the player (and a special thanks to Moon Records NYC for providing me the ska soundtrack I need in life!) let's move on. We have some tales of two different Gay Pride Parades, NYC and San Francisco. Now I know, there's lot more than those 2, so if you have any

with boys in high school, she'd mutter about how much better I'd be treated if I were with a woman. That mentality is just as pushy and judgmental as the narrow mindedness of homophobic straight parents.

At college in Boston I was more of a deadhead than a dyke. Getting disillusioned with hippie culture was some of what sent me looking for something closer to home, so to speak. Mostly, though, becoming more and more an aware and vocal feminist made me think hard about the nature of relationships between men and women and women and women as I was experiencing them. It occurred to me that the only reason I sought men out was for sex; for everything else I turned to women. And men, at least the ones I was sleeping with, weren't even very good lovers, so --why not women for sex, too?

Meanwhile, my best friend was roaring out of the closet. We were still hippie chicks, so we would go dancing at the girl bars in our long dresses with flowing hair and sandals. In 1990 Boston, dykes did not wear dresses or have long hair. (I hear not much has changed.) I never met even one woman the entire time we went clubbing there. The attitude seemed to be, "What are these two straight girls doing dancing together in our bar?" Weird.

It took moving to San Francisco for us to realize we could actually be sexual with each other. People are far more comfortable here with variations in sexuality than Boston, Ashland or anywhere else. So I finally felt I could be myself, which was a dyke. I am not comfortable with the word lesbian

Being part of the Second Generation family, I will use this forum as a means to educate, dispel myths and

because for me it had connotations of separatism, which I am philosophically opposed to. Besides, I like the in-your-face-ness of dyke. Or better yet, "femme dyke" spoken by a voluptuous babe with bright red lipstick, a short flirty skirt, and heels. That's me: an in-your-face-femme dyke.



*A Letter to Second Generation--by
Darlena Bird Jimenes*

Dear Second Generation,

In the interest of erasing invisibility, breaking silence and raising consciousness on all levels, I must applaud your efforts and salute the Second Generation Family-- my family!! I am fortunate to be aware of and support Second Generation, and am excited by what changes we can make in the world. Even though I am an anomaly (from the Second Generation perspective) in that both my birth parents are straight (and unfortunately narrow), I consider myself a Second Generation daughter anyway; as I have been truly blessed with the wisdom, herstory and love of all my lesbian grandmothers and mothers in my life who provided the essence of my spiritual nurturing through their lives, words and actions. I am a queer girl who later on in life plans on being the lesbian mom "with the most" one day, by adopting a child or children that will be unconditionally loved and nurtured as Second Generation children - - in a family of love!!!

encourage thought and dialogue with our parents about our existence as lesbian and gay children.

PARADE MEMORIES

New York City -- Dan

At first, the plans for this one seemed to go a lot smoother than last year. First, unlike last year, my best friend wasn't getting married the day before (like last year, where I was the "man/maid of honor"), so there as no "day after" effects going on in my head and body. The parade had also returned to it's traditional route of down 5th Ave. and into the Village. It was a warm day, but not the scorcher it was the year before. And here was Second Generation, making it's 2nd appearance! All systems seemed go!

Then, after many calls and plans, I found that no one was a "definite show". This presented some problems. How could last years banner be carried? Well, a last minute change of plans ensued and I ended up carrying a large sign on a pole. (Special thanks to Miss K for helping with design and cutting!)

So, there I sat on the subway, lodged in with a Gay/Lesbian marching band from Minneapolis. I had started to worry. Would people show up? Would we have problems with any other groups like last year? Would my moms make it after a big day at the Dyke March the day before?

Eventually, I got to the starting point. There, lodged in between the leather groups and the religious groups (someone on the planning committee has a very warped sense of humor!) was the Family/Youth groups. And somewhere nestled in that congregation was Second Generation. The wait began.

Unfortunately, the only ones who showed this year were myself, my two moms, and their straight friend, Nima. It was a smaller group than last time. But we were ready.

As we started walking other people did stop and walk for a bit, including an SG couple! The Connecticut L/G/B/T Youth group behind us spilled over into our space for a raucous, fun, dance filled time (love that drummer!), but we were still kinda small.

My mom, Margaret, was thoroughly enjoying the contingent of infants from the NJ lesbian mothers group in front of us (Time to start looking for those "Lesbian Grandma" pins!) and kept pushing me towards supposedly eligible men. My other mom, Tina, danced her butt off to the kids behind us. We still inspired those bizarre reactions from the crowds (not to mention the protesters in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral!). Some people were incredulous, some cheered wildly, some came up to kiss us. And some people ignored us. One member of one of the gay parents group around us said to me, "Well, my kids really shouldn't march near you." Say what?!? Was I "catching" or something? And her kids looked absolutely mortified.

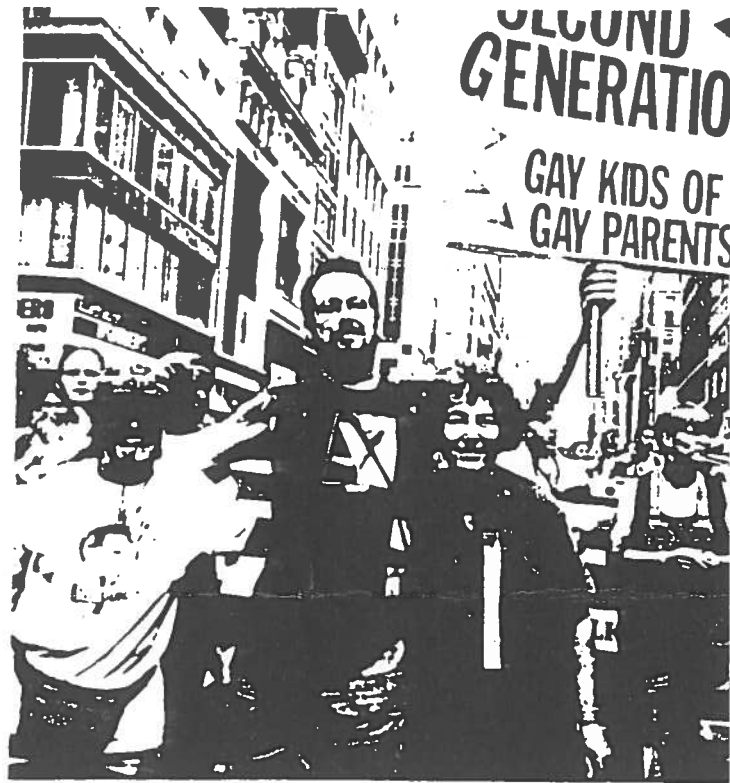
Now before I go off again on my usual tirades, let me say that there were indeed some positive moments, too. A special thanks and a hug to Wayne Steinman and April Martin (and their respective partners). Here is a set of gay dads and a set of lesbian moms who were really nice to us at SG. I'd like to see more parents just not care what a child's sexuality might be, gay parents as well as straight.

While it is always nice to see support from all sorts, it would have also

The weekend of the parade there was a press conference, giving Drago a chance to meet the other Grand Marshalls, Pratibha Parmar, Candace Gingrich and Jose Serria. Drago gave a great speech about the under-representation of the Deaf Gay and Lesbian Community in the mainstream gay press, ironically enough it seemed the press was there only to cover the story about Candace so the other Grand marshalls didn't receive much attention. This was dissappointing, yet soon forgotten when the next day at the main stage after the parade was over, Drago gave a rousing speech about standing up in unity and being empowered to the huge crowd that included members of the Deaf Gay and lesbian community who were positioned in front of the stage.

The most incredible memory of the weekend for me was riding down Market Street as hundreds of thousands of people waved and chered! The morning of the parade there was a bright red convertible with a big banner that read "DRAGO RENTERIA GRAND MARSHALL" waiting for us. Lots of friends from the Deaf community came over to wish her luck and congratulate Drago. Then we got in the car and rode down Market Street, as hundreds of thousands of people waved and cheered! What sight!! It was amazing how, in such a large crowd, many faces are recognizable. Faces of people we work with, play with and care about. Many of those faces should be Grand Marshalls, too. "Hopefully," Drago and I said to each other, "this won't be the LAST Deaf Grand Marshall."

(Hope Berry is a founding co-director of COLAGE, and is an SG member with a gay father and lesbian mother. She works as sign language interpreter.)



Dan and his moms, Tina and Margaret, surrounded by lots of Connecticut l/g/b/t youth at the 1995 NYC parade [photo by Kevin Winkler]



Grand Marshall Drago Renteria (left) at the 1995 SF parade with Co-Grand Marshall Candace Gingrich. [photo by Hope Berry]

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experiences to share as an SGER at any Gay/Lesbian/Bi event, do contribute! [More unsubtle hints to follow.] We also have some other great letters and stories, so I hope you do enjoy it.

And with so much more to type, lets move on. Thanks again to everyone for their help. And I hope everyone has a good winter time, however you choose to celebrate. --Dan



***Revi's Story: Second Generation
by Revolutionary Hope Airborne***

(The following was performed as part of The Lavender Family Circus, a play put on by COLAGE last September).

My mother didn't come out until I was nine, and by then I was already a confirmed little femme. She, being the good Seventies feminist mother, always tried to liberate me from the trapping of feminine beauty in patriarchal society. All I wanted was to have long golden curls, red velvet dresses, and shiny black patent leather shoes with little silver buckles. In every picture of me as a little girl where I'm posed in a pretty dress, I'm smiling: well, if they're going to take photographs of me, I may as well be looking my best, right?

I can imagine now how this must have discombobulated my mother: her feminist daughter, growing up free and encouraged to do and be whatever she wanted, choosing lip gloss and crying herself sick over not being allowed Barbie dolls. After all, my mother at fifteen was forbidden by her mother to leave the house unless she was wearing a bra and lipstick, and she was always butch. Oops! That just slipped out -- my mother thinks butch/femme is heterosexual role playing, so I guess

you'll have to ask her why every single one of her girlfriends has been the kind of women who wears dresses at least once in a while, when my mother hasn't owned one in ten years.

Anyway, despite my unfathomable desires to be beautiful and have pretty things I did manage to grow up "liberated" -- and I've always called myself a feminist. But realizing my queerness was another story entirely. In high school in Ashland, Oregon I hung out with the arty liberals, of whom there were many, Ashland being a theatre town. As a group we were self-named "the drama fags", and while dating only boys I called myself bisexual. When I was asked why I would reply, "Because I don't believe in falling in love with genitalia, I believe in falling in love with another human being." A good arty liberal answer.

The first conscious crush I ever had on another woman was when I was sixteen. She as about twenty-eight, a cute little sport dyke actor friend of my mother's. I probably had a crush on her because she was kinda butch and kinda young, whereas the rest of my mother's friends were hippie country lesbians around forty. You know how most queer parents want their kids to grow up straight as if having heterosexual children proves they did a good job? My mother, always a separatist even when she couldn't live it, encouraged me mightily. I'm not sure how great she would have thought if something had actually come out of this crush, but unrequited love for another woman was a jump in the right direction: lesbianism. My mother always pushed me so hard to be a dyke that if she hadn't also taught me to think for myself, I'd probably be straight and married by now. Whenever I had trouble

with boys in high school, she'd mutter about how much better I'd be treated if I were with a woman. That mentality is just as pushy and judgmental as the narrow mindedness of homophobic straight parents.

At college in Boston I was more of a deadhead than a dyke. Getting disillusioned with hippie culture was some of what sent me looking for something closer to home, so to speak. Mostly, though, becoming more and more an aware and vocal feminist made me think hard about the nature of relationships between men and women and women and women as I was experiencing them. It occurred to me that the only reason I sought men out was for sex; for everything else I turned to women. And men, at least the ones I was sleeping with, weren't even very good lovers, so --why not women for sex, too?

Meanwhile, my best friend was roaring out of the closet. We were still hippie chicks, so we would go dancing at the girl bars in our long dresses with flowing hair and sandals. In 1990 Boston, dykes did not wear dresses or have long hair. (I hear not much has changed.) I never met even one woman the entire time we went clubbing there. The attitude seemed to be, "What are these two straight girls doing dancing together in our bar?" Weird.

It took moving to San Francisco for us to realize we could actually be sexual with each other. People are far more comfortable here with variations in sexuality than Boston, Ashland or anywhere else. So I finally felt I could be myself, which was a dyke. I am not comfortable with the word lesbian

Being part of the Second Generation family, I will use this forum as a means to educate, dispel myths and

because for me it had connotations of separatism, which I am philosophically opposed to. Besides, I like the in-your-face-ness of dyke. Or better yet, "femme dyke" spoken by a voluptuous babe with bright red lipstick, a short flirty skirt, and heels. That's me: an in-your-face-femme dyke.



*A Letter to Second Generation--by
Darlena Bird Jimenes*

Dear Second Generation,

In the interest of erasing invisibility, breaking silence and raising consciousness on all levels, I must applaud your efforts and salute the Second Generation Family-- my family!! I am fortunate to be aware of and support Second Generation, and am excited by what changes we can make in the world. Even though I am an anomaly (from the Second Generation perspective) in that both my birth parents are straight (and unfortunately narrow), I consider myself a Second Generation daughter anyway; as I have been truly blessed with the wisdom, herstory and love of all my lesbian grandmothers and mothers in my life who provided the essence of my spiritual nurturing through their lives, words and actions. I am a queer girl who later on in life plans on being the lesbian mom "with the most" one day, by adopting a child or children that will be unconditionally loved and nurtured as Second Generation children - - in a family of love!!! encourage thought and dialogue with our parents about our existence as lesbian and gay children.

In this respect, I was moved and empowered to take our movement even further, and make parents everywhere aware of our strength, beauty and power of our collective gay existence in all of its context. This demands that I address any concerns, fill in voids and open eyes and ears of our birth families and others in our lives to the full spectrum of human existence.

We gays and lesbians are intrinsically aware of our multi-everything, as diversity is part o our very makeup. Our image which is so perfectly exemplifies our awareness, celebration, pride and solidarity in difference also binds ever so closely in our sameness. It is the Rainbow Flag and we are the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender family. We are the Rainbow Family.

So wrapped up in am I in a blended beautiful life, that is my very being. In every aspect of my life, I am acutely aware of my complete self --- a multi-generationally multiracial, polyethnic, interfaith, globally conscious, creatively explorative, artistically expressive, radically voiced, proud, out lesbian of all colors!!! I felt it was time to make known my feelings to al parents and friends of lesbians and gays on behalf of my collective "family of the heart."

As we continue to survive and exist, we continually redefine and enhance the meaning of families, relationships, communities and human interactions. I would greatly appreciate (along with millions of others worldwide) to full inclusion of all peoples and aspects of our Family in its myriad of contexts. I am one whose voice is emerging and I know I'm not alone. In a true sense of togetherness, we can achieve a sense of understanding of each other that would allow us the strength to knock down any

barriers that are sure to be thrown up or that might be encountered along our journeys and our lives. Peace and Pride!!!

(Bird is a multi-dimensional, interdisciplinary post modern political arts performance activist, sexual minority youth activities coordinator and outreach worker, world-aware queer culture curator and invisibility-erasing advocate and educator who is quirky, absurdist, offbeat, free-spirited, in other words, "The Perfect Mess!")

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jennifer DeMarco, SG member (a lesbian of lesbian moms) and author, is looking for contributions for her company, Pride Publications. As she puts it:

"We're looking for writers of any genre - as long as it's wild, but most especially *artists* for book covers, comics, trading carda and more. We pay very well and are a national company so anyone in the country (or anywhere else for that matter) is welcome. It would make me feel very good to hand some of these jobs to other SGers."

If intersted you can contact **Jennifer at Pride Publications, PO Box 148, Radner, OH 43066-0148**, or call at **(614) 494-2479** or fax **(614) 494 2793**.

Jennifer's recent books, "At the Edge" and "Fall Through the Sky", as well as a piece of hers in the anthology "Listen Up: Voices of the Young Feminist Generation" are available at all better bookstores.

Have anything you'd like to share? Let me know!

PARADE MEMORIES

New York City -- Dan

At first, the plans for this one seemed to go a lot smoother than last year. First, unlike last year, my best friend wasn't getting married the day before (like last year, where I was the "man/maid of honor"), so there as no "day after" effects going on in my head and body. The parade had also returned to it's traditional route of down 5th Ave. and into the Village. It was a warm day, but not the scorcher it was the year before. And here was Second Generation, making it's 2nd appearance! All systems seemed go!

Then, after many calls and plans, I found that no one was a "definite show". This presented some problems. How could last years banner be carried? Well, a last minute change of plans ensued and I ended up carrying a large sign on a pole. (Special thanks to Miss K for helping with design and cutting!)

So, there I sat on the subway, lodged in with a Gay/Lesbian marching band from Minneapolis. I had started to worry. Would people show up? Would we have problems with any other groups like last year? Would my moms make it after a big day at the Dyke March the day before?

Eventually, I got to the starting point. There, lodged in between the leather groups and the religious groups (someone on the planning committee has a very warped sense of humor!) was the Family/Youth groups. And somewhere nestled in that congregation was Second Generation. The wait began.

Unfortunately, the only ones who showed this year were myself, my two moms, and their straight friend, Nima. It was a smaller group than last time. But we were ready.

As we started walking other people did stop and walk for a bit, including an SG couple! The Connecticut L/G/B/T Youth group behind us spilled over into our space for a raucous, fun, dance filled time (love that drummer!), but we were still kinda small.

My mom, Margaret, was thoroughly enjoying the contingent of infants from the NJ lesbian mothers group in front of us (Time to start looking for those "Lesbian Grandma" pins!) and kept pushing me towards supposedly eligible men. My other mom, Tina, danced her butt off to the kids behind us. We still inspired those bizarre reactions from the crowds (not to mention the protesters in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral!). Some people were incredulous, some cheered wildly, some came up to kiss us. And some people ignored us. One member of one of the gay parents group around us said to me, "Well, my kids really shouldn't march near you." Say what?!? Was I "catching" or something? And her kids looked absolutely mortified.

Now before I go off again on my usual tirades, let me say that there were indeed some positive moments, too. A special thanks and a hug to Wayne Steinman and April Martin (and their respective partners). Here is a set of gay dads and a set of lesbian moms who were really nice to us at SG. I'd like to see more parents just not care what a child's sexuality might be, gay parents as well as straight.

While it is always nice to see support from all sorts, it would have also

been nice to see other SGers at the parade with me and my moms. I would really love to see a huge group of us in the future, taking up a huge block of space (and maybe a float), just cheering down the street.

Well, maybe one day.

San Francisco – by Hope Berry

[This originally appeared in CTN Magazine]

The San Francisco Freedom Day Parade is always a special event. Freedom Day in San Francisco is the largest lesbian and gay celebration in the country and already twenty five years old. A special honor is always bestowed on several people, the title of Grand marshal and a position at the start of the parade in a bright new convertible. This year it was an extra special event for me because my girlfriend, Drago Renteria, a member of our very own Second Generation, was given the title of Grand marshal.

[Drago Renteria is a Deaf Chicana Dyke who has worked for the last three years as the Director of the Deaf Gay and Lesbian Center in San Francisco. She is nationally known for creating and publishing the only magazine for the Deaf Lesbian and Gay community, CTN Magazine (for information write to PO Box 144431 SF, CA 94114, or e-mail CTNMAG@aol.com)]

When we first found out that Drago had been selected we were very surprised, we had no idea she was even being considered! She got an e-mail telling her the news. At first we just looked at each other and started giggling.

We both knew what a big honor it would be and how it had the potential to bring some visibility to the Deaf gay and Lesbian community, on top of all this she was the first deaf Grand Marshall in the history of the parade. But, why Drago? How did it happen? The title itself is so awe inspiring, it sounds so serious. We started thinking of all the Deaf people who were older and those who died of AIDS who also deserved this honor. We waited for more information, we almost couldn't believe it!

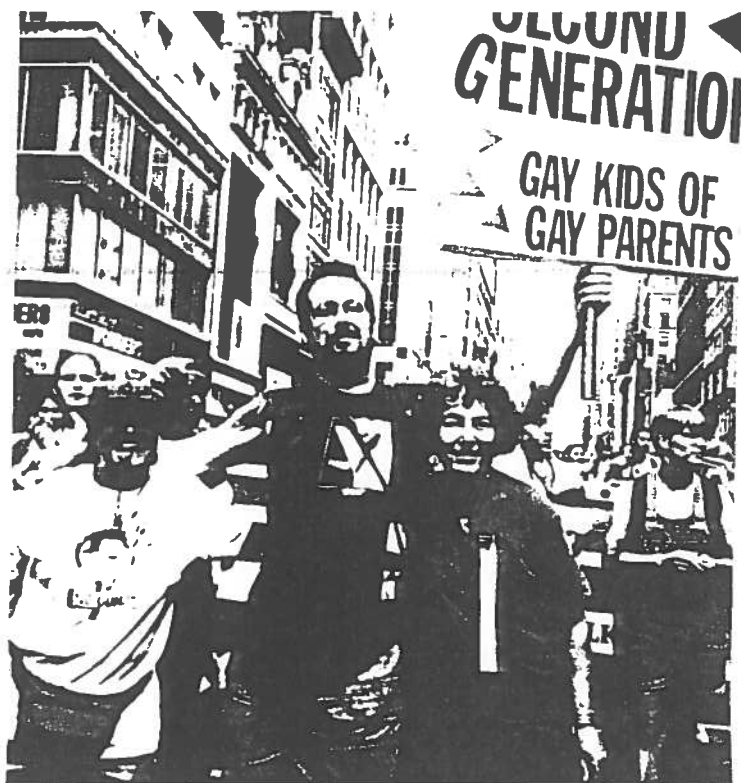
We came to find out that this year's theme was "A World Without Borders" and that there were several people on the Parade Committee who were familiar with Drago's work, mostly with the Deaf Gay and Lesbian Center and also with CTN Magazine. That's how she was nominated. We also found out that there would be a press conference and the opportunity to say something from the stage the day of the parade. This was when it really started to sink in and we started to tell people. Well, in truth I started telling people. We both found out quickly that, "Hi, how are you? Guess what!? I am the Grand Marshal this year!" isn't something that people with even a healthy dose of self-confidence just walk up to their friends and say. So it was left up to me to spread the news!

I enjoyed this part, having an excuse to brag about the woman that I love and have seen work so hard on so many great endeavors, was a lot of fun!! And the reaction was terrific. Deaf and hearing people alike were thrilled that Drago was being recognized and moreover that there was FINALLY A DEAF GRAND MARSHALL (the first ever!!)

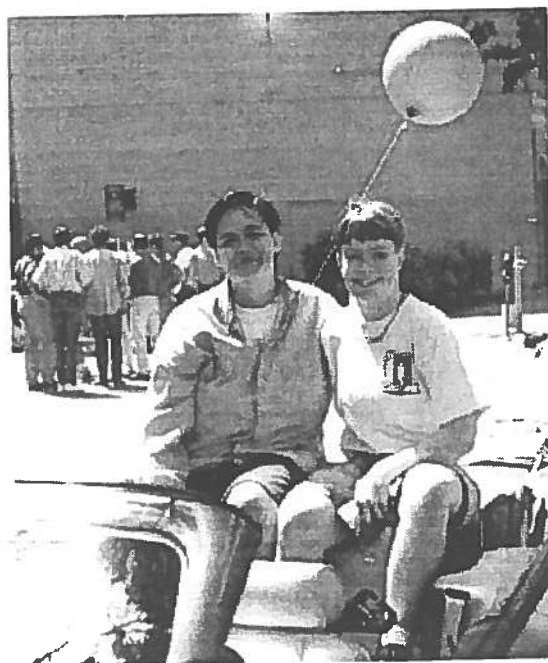
The weekend of the parade there was a press conference, giving Drago a chance to meet the other Grand Marshalls, Pratibha Parmar, Candace Gingrich and Jose Serria. Drago gave a great speech about the under-representation of the Deaf Gay and Lesbian Community in the mainstream gay press, ironically enough it seemed the press was there only to cover the story about Candace so the other Grand marshalls didn't receive much attention. This was disappointing, yet soon forgotten when the next day at the main stage after the parade was over, Drago gave a rousing speech about standing up in unity and being empowered to the huge crowd that included members of the Deaf Gay and lesbian community who were positioned in front of the stage.

The most incredible memory of the weekend for me was riding down Market Street as hundreds of thousands of people waved and chered! The morning of the parade there was a bright red convertible with a big banner that read "DRAGO RENTERIA GRAND MARSHALL" waiting for us. Lots of friends from the Deaf community came over to wish her luck and congratulate Drago. Then we got in the car and rode down Market Street, as hundreds of thousands of people waved and cheered! What sight!! It was amazing how, in such a large crowd, many faces are recognizable. Faces of people we work with, play with and care about. Many of those faces should be Grand Marshalls, too. "Hopefully," Drago and I said to each other, "this won't be the LAST Deaf Grand Marshall."

(Hope Berry is a founding co-director of COLAGE, and is an SG member with a gay father and lesbian mother. She works as sign language interpreter.)



Dan and his moms, Tina and Margaret, surrounded by lots of Connecticut l/g/b/t youth at the 1995 NYC parade [photo by Kevin Winkler]



Grand Marshall Drago Renteria (left) at the 1995 SF parade with Co-Grand Marshall Candace Gingrich. [photo by Hope Berry]

Hope Berry October 24 1993

Today, many children grow up immersed in gay and lesbian culture. Children are growing up in families where traditions include attending Pride events and marches. Family vacations are taken to places such as San Francisco, Key West and Provincetown, and planned in conjunction with women's music festivals. Organizations such as GLPCI (Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition, International) and COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) are teaching children gay and lesbian history, the dynamics of oppression and instilling gay and lesbian pride. Children grow up in homes where gay/lesbian art is hanging on the walls, gay/lesbian writing is on the shelves and the local and national press is on the coffee table. They grow up turning to members of the gay and lesbian community for day to day support and comfort. Boys and girls are being raised to see gender as something that is much different from the either/or way it is represented in the dominant culture. Birthdays, graduations, and holidays are celebrated in gatherings made up of gay men and lesbian women. All of these things serve to distinguish their culture from that of their heterosexually-raised counterparts. Children of lesbians and gay parents are seeing the world around them through lesbian and gay eyes.

Culturally Gay and erotically straight, this is how some children of gay and lesbian parents are starting to identify themselves to members of both the gay and lesbian community and society at large, provoking strong reactions in both communities. The most interesting is the response in the former, ranging from applause and shouts of "yes of course!" to skepticism, resentment and concern. The dialogue that this identification is provoking is indicative of a movement forward in our queer community to see our identification as queer people (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) in this world as an indication of our consciousness, culture and community. Proving, to many, that once and for all, being "queer" is not about what happens in the bedroom but is about how we see ourselves in relation to a world that holds heterosexuality as the assumed, ideal and only valid way of expressing one's intimate self.

Reaction to the term *culturally gay and erotically straight* can not be determined by a person's own identification, lesbian feminist, politically aware men and women, and even gay fathers and lesbian mothers, are all grappling with, what might be, the last piece of their own internalized heterosexism and homophobia. None of the afore mentioned people would argue with the terms 'lesbian culture' or 'queer culture' but they are the same people that resist the notion that children of members of these cultures are indeed valid in assuming that culture as part of their own identity.

Assuming there is a gay and lesbian culture, then like all other cultures, it stands to reason that gay and lesbian culture can indeed be passed on to it's children. Ironically, our community readily acknowledges that one can be enculturated at the age of 15, 20, 30 or forty when one "comes out" as queer. Newly "out" people are seen as 'children' in a sense by other community members. Experience, instead of age, being the determining factor. Members who are more experienced will take the new person under their wing and teach them the social mores, the language, the expectations and expose them to all the rest of the beliefs, role models and ideas that make someone "gay" or "lesbian".

The most profound effect of growing up with Gay and/or Lesbian parents is the realization of the ramifications of homophobia. From verbal assault to death, it is an issue

that gay and lesbian people are faced with the minute they come out and children are faced with when parents come out.. "There are people in this world who want to kill me" one gay father repeatedly warned his two children. To scare them? No, to give them information necessary for their survival. Children are not born as agents of oppression it is learned behavior and by the same token children must be told when society has set them up to be targets of oppression.

It is this knowledge that allows children to develop an incredibly accurate internal gage used when dealing with the world outside their family. They grow up "just knowing" when and who is ok to tell about their families. Which friends are ok to bring home with them and how much to tell them once they get there. This is the very same internal monitoring that goes on inside gay and lesbian people as they navigate their way through the world deciding when to "come out".

So, what about the children raised by gay and lesbian people? Themselves exposed to all the above mentioned aspects of this culture from childhood? Perhaps the most critical element is the consciousness children develop in this cultural context. Awareness of the power of heterosexism and the dangers inherent in homophobia are acquired upon knowing your parent(s) are gay/lesbian. Children immediately begin perceiving their surroundings as something that has to be negotiated in terms of their identity and safety. (This is decidedly different than the experience of gay and lesbian youth who know they don't fit into the heterosexual world and have yet to discover gay and lesbian culture.) Their family structure is often absent from the images they see at school. Teachers and other adults make heterosexist assumptions leaving the child in the position of having to "come out" about their family. Classmates use words like "faggot" when one of their peers really messes up or isn't good enough sending clear and hostile messages to the child about not only their parent but themselves. Given that, like all young children, they not only hold their parents in high regard but rely heavily on them for emotional security.

You have only to notice the near complete absence of a term such as *second generation lesbians or gay men* to realize that our community has some work to do in terms of it's own internalized homophobia.



CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS EVERYWHERE

For Immediate Release
December 15, 1994

For more info contact:
Stefan Lynch, Director of COLAGE (415) 206-1930
or Dan Cherubin, Second Generation Coordinator
(212) 673-2926

SECOND GENERATION GAYS AND LESBIANS?

The second issue of **Second Generation**, a new newsletter by and for lesbian, gay and bisexual daughters and sons of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents, is now available from COLAGE.

This new forum for the second generation of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals takes a tough look at the negative reactions that gay kids of gay parents face in the lesbian and gay community. After a very mixed response from the crowd to the Second Generation contingent in the Stonewall 25 parade, founder Dan Cherubin, comments,

"I can understand the [lesbian and gay parent] party line of 'I can raise normal kids, too' to appease any over-eager social workers and evil judges. But we Second Generation people are their, too. And if the parade was any indication, there's probably gonna be a lot more of us who are open about it. I hope when people say 'We're here, We're queer,' they won't blanch at the fact that Junior is saying it with them."

Second Generation member Hope Berry, the lesbian daughter of a gay dad and lesbian mom, sees very little acknowledgment of gay people with gay parents. "You have only to notice the near complete absence of a term such as *second generation lesbian or gay men* to realize that our community has some work to do in terms of it's own internalized homophobia" The dilemma of coming out to your straight parents and friends is presented as a universal experience for lesbians and gay men.

Stefan Lynch, the Director of Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere says,

"I had always told people that one of the benefits of having lesbian and gay parents is that if the child is gay, he or she would have a much easier time coming out. However after I started really talking to gay people with gay parents, I learned that many lesbians and gay men with lesbian and gay parents had just as difficult time coming out as their friends with straight parents. And there is the added burden of feeling like you are feeding into the homophobic myth that gay parents somehow make gay kids."

The Second Generation Newsletter is produced by Second Generation, a social group that meets monthly at New York's Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center and Children of Lesbian and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE), the only international organization run by and for the daughters and sons of lesbian and gay parents.

The Second Generation Newsletter is published twice a year and is available by sending \$5 to COLAGE, 2300 Market St. #165, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or call (202) 583-8029 and leave a message on our voice mail.

For more information on Second Generation or COLAGE, please call the numbers above.

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CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS EVERYWHERE

March 8, 1996

Dear Friend,

Enclosed is the fourth issue of Second Generation, a newsletter for l/g/b daughters and sons of l/g/b parents. Second Generationers are a unique subset of COLAGE and the l/g/b/t community. We're really happy to offer this newsletter for support, interest and advocate.

If you are not a second generation l/g/b person, then excuse us! We have sent this newsletter to a number of other people on our mailing list who we believe might be interested. If you have never before asked to receive Second Generation, but would like to continue to receive it, please subscribe using the enclosed COLAGE brochure. If you have never requested it, and don't want to continue to receive it, do nothing.

Second Generation is one program of COLAGE. There are some other exciting COLAGE activities which we thought you might be interested in.

First off, you'll find enclosed information on our upcoming conference with the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International, in Minneapolis. COLAGE runs the conference for teens and adults. It's a blast, and if you haven't come in the past I encourage you to make plans this year. There are usually at least a dozen or more adults in their twenties and early thirties w/ l/g/b/t parents, including many SGeners.

And second, if you are one of the internet-inclined, you won't want to miss the lively discussions on our KidsOfGays chat list. After less than a month there are already dozens of youth and adults gabbing away about every topic that relates to us, including SG issues. To subscribe, email majordomo@vector.casti.com. In the body of the message write, subscribe [kidsofgays_yourfirstname_yourlastname <your@emailaddress.here>](mailto:kidsofgays_yourfirstname_yourlastname_your@emailaddress.here)

Finally, since the Second Generation subscribers list has been relatively small, under 100 individuals and another bunch of organizations, we have not been too strict with renewing memberships. However, it's growing, so if you haven't made a recent donation to COLAGE, please consider using the enclosed brochure to do so, and make sure you indicate you'd like to receive Second Generation.

Best wishes,

Stefan Lynch
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www.COLAGE.org!

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