

PRAISE FOR THE WORKSHOP...

"THIS WORKSHOP HELPED ME REALIZE the importance of not only acknowledging family diversity, but also the need to openly discuss different kinds of families and to stress the acceptance of all family configurations."

*Dorothy Williams, second-grade teacher
San Francisco Unified School District*

"THE WORKSHOP THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION PRESENTED to our staff and PTA has left us with a lasting impression. It has led to a continuing discussion on equity and has added yet another perspective to our curriculum."

*Adelina Arámburo, Principal
Buena Vista Elementary School, San Francisco*

PRAISE FOR THE VIDEO...

"AN ELOQUENT PLEA FROM CHILDREN for their teachers' help in fighting one of the most common forms of prejudice in today's schools."

*Erik Strommen, Ph.D., Developmental Psychologist
Director of Research, Children's Television Workshop*

"THESE KIDS ARE CLEAR AS A BELL and exact as a conscience. They're asking only to be considered what they are, children, with families they love. If we don't know how to do that, they will show the way."

*Barbara Kingsolver, author of Beantrees,
Animal Dreams, and Pigs in Heaven*

"THE VIDEO MOVED ME TO TEARS. The voices of these children are so clear and powerful. They embody and exemplify the best of our struggle. I'm so grateful to have witnessed this."

*Intisar Shareef, Ph.D., Early Childhood Education
Professor, Contra Costa College
and San Francisco State University*

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* Please note: The video is in its final form. Preliminary printed materials are available now. Final printed materials will be available by Summer 1995. If you place an order now, we will send you the final materials at no extra charge when they are ready.

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OVERCOMING HOMOPHOBIA IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

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AND
ADMINISTRATORS

*including the video
Both of My Moms' Names Are Judy
and a complete training guide*

a project of

LESBIAN AND GAY PARENTS ASSOCIATION



WHAT DOES THIS WORKSHOP INCLUDE?

Our one-hour workshop for educators and administrators provides tools for intervening when anti-gay slurs occur, for integrating discussion of lesbian and gay people into the curriculum, and for working with parents. It includes a **written guide** for facilitators, **handouts**, and the **10-minute video** “Both of my Moms’ Names Are Judy.” The video presents a racially diverse group of children (ages 7–10) talking about the love they feel for their families, how teasing and the classroom silence about lesbians and gay men affects them, and what they would like to see change.

WHY HAVE A WORKSHOP ON HOMOPHOBIA?

MOST KIDS KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS LESBIAN OR GAY.

Some kids have parents, siblings, other relatives or family friends who are lesbian or gay. Others know of someone in their community, an athlete, or an entertainer. And many kids may discover that they themselves are lesbian or gay.

HOMOPHOBIA EXISTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Kids begin using words like “faggot” and “lesbian” as slurs as early as first grade — even before they know what they mean. Yet teachers rarely present positive images of lesbian and gay people in the classroom. Kids pick up the message: being gay is bad; homophobia is acceptable.

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HARMFUL TO ALL CHILDREN.

Learning to respect lesbians and gay men is part of learning to respect human diversity. Tolerating disrespect for gay people predisposes kids to accept discrimination, harassment, and violence aimed at any group of people viewed as “different.” These are not the moral values we want our children to learn in school.

TALKING ABOUT LESBIANS AND GAY MEN HELPS.

When teachers present age-appropriate material that removes the stigma attached to lesbians and gay men, the incidence of homophobic slurs decreases.

excerpts from the video

BOTH OF MY MOMS’ NAMES ARE JUDY CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS SPEAK OUT



“Kids teased me a lot because of my lesbian parents. They said I was a lesbian because my parents were lesbian — and the teachers didn’t do anything about it.”

—Crystal, age 10



“It would be easier for me to be open about my lesbian moms if teachers would talk to kids about lesbian and gay parents, and they would tell them that they weren’t bad.”

—Eleanor, age 8



“When Charles was getting called ‘gay’ and ‘the cootie boy’ and ‘faggot’ and all that kind of stuff, I felt nervous. Like everybody was against me, against my family.”

—Zack, age 10



“Part of the reason some of the kids felt uncomfortable is that we weren’t talking about it until third grade. And I think that kindergarten, first grade isn’t too young.”

—Rockit, age 10



“I think if everybody got sorta used to the fact that that’s what we were talking about, then there would be a lot of questions. And maybe that’s one of the things that teachers are scared of, that there would be a lot of questions. And they don’t know how to answer them.”

—Julia, age 11

Further Information:

The Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI) publishes a 20-page "Bibliography on Gays and Lesbians and their Families" (\$5.00). It contains up-to-date listings of books, movies, videos and articles in both popular magazines and scientific journals.

An annotated bibliography of "Books for Children with Gay and Lesbian Parents" has over 85 titles of picture books geared for kids from birth to age 10 (\$2.50).

A children's newsletter, *Just For Us*, is written by and for children with lesbian mothers or gay fathers (suggested donation \$10.00).

Copies of *The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook: Creating and Raising Our Families*, by April Martin, Ph.D. (1993), are available through GLPCI -- please send \$15 plus \$2 shipping and handling.

GLPCI's quarterly newsletter, *Network*, is free with your annual membership contribution (\$15 for individuals; \$25 for families). *All mailing information is kept strictly confidential and will never be released to any organization.*

Contact GLPCI for more information, including information on local chapters in your area. Complimentary issues of *Network* are available upon request. Write GLPCI, P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091; or phone: (202) 583-8029.

Love makes a Family!

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We are a group of gay fathers and lesbian mothers from around the world. Our experiences are varied, but we are all determined to be both proud gay men and lesbians and proud and successful parents.

Too often, society denies our existence or tells us that we are not able to be good parents. However, we know that we can love and nurture our children and provide them with a safe environment in which they can mature into loving and productive men and women.

We have formed this organization to help ourselves and others in similar situations to draw upon the rich experiences in both aspects of our lives. We do this by forming supportive groups that help in building positive self-images, by networking with other gay and lesbian parents, and by educating professionals, the media, and the general public to our special strengths and unique concerns.



LOVE
makes a family

The Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI) is a worldwide advocacy and support group for lesbian mothers, gay fathers, their partners and children.

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Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International

The Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI) is a non-profit, tax-exempt advocacy and support group for gay fathers and lesbian mothers. Started in 1979, the Coalition links a network of local gay and lesbian parents and parent support groups.

GLPCI offers numerous programs and materials addressing the wide spectrum of the gay and lesbian parenting experience. Bibliographies of books for both children and parents are available. A quarterly newsletter, *Network*, is mailed to thousands of parents and organizations worldwide. Another newsletter, *Just For Us*, is produced by and for our kids.

One of GLPCI's most popular programs is an annual conference on lesbian and gay parenting issues. This conference enables GLPCI members to experience personal growth through workshops, panel discussions and lectures. Perhaps one of the conference's most important aspects is the opportunity for other gay and lesbian parents to meet with others, letting them know that they are not alone.

WHAT DOES GLPCI OFFER?

- A link to other gay and lesbian parents, parenting groups, and those in parenting roles throughout the world via the *Network* newsletter and the Annual Conference.
- Support for local groups. Assistance in the formation of new groups and one-on-one contact if formation of a local support group is not feasible.
- A clearing house and speakers service for information on gay and lesbian parenting for interested organizations and the media.
- Information and support for parents estranged from their children.
- Resources and support for lesbians and gay men considering parenthood.
- Support for the children of lesbian and gay parents.
- Educational outreach for the general public, legislators and the lesbian and gay community on the concerns of our members.

TOGETHER...A POWERFUL VOICE

Some of us had our children while in a heterosexual marriage. We have come to understand and accept ourselves as lesbians and gay men and learned to cope in a sometimes hostile world.

Some of us have formed loving, committed relationships with gay and lesbian parents. We too have a parenting role influenced by a host of differing circumstances.

Some of us choose to have children in our lives after "coming out." Singly and as couples, we become parents through donor insemination, adoption, surrogacy, and foster parenting.

Some of us are raising infants; some have grandchildren. Some of us share custody; some are estranged from our children. Our backgrounds are diverse. Our experiences are unique, yet similar.

The American Bar Association estimates that there are about four million lesbian and gay parents in the United States. There are millions more from every society on the face of the earth. Together, we can become a powerful and unified voice to combat prejudice and homophobia in the communities in which we live, and to make a better world for ourselves and our children.

JOIN US and find information, help and support from people who understand the unique joys and challenges of being a gay or lesbian parent. Fill out the attached reply card today to join GLPCI, or contact us for more information.

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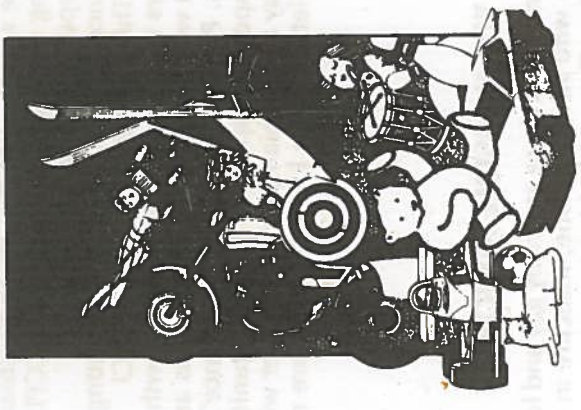
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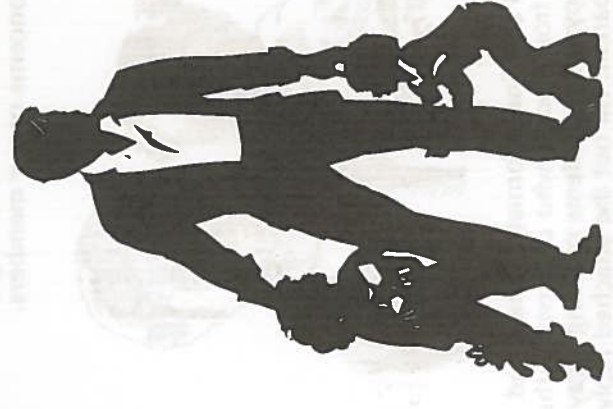
Closets are for kids' toys – not for the lifestyles of gay and lesbian parents.
 The Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition (GLPCI) is a worldwide advocacy and support group for lesbian mothers and gay fathers.

GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We are a group of parents who are gay or lesbian. Our experiences are varied but we are united in our determination to integrate these two aspects of our lives. In the past, our roles have been viewed incompatible, both by society at large and all-to-often, by ourselves as well. We believe that we can love and nurture children and provide them with a safe environment in which they can mature into loving, productive men and women.

We have formed this organization to help ourselves and others in similar situations to grow and continue to develop in ways which draw upon the rich experiences in both aspects of our lives. We do this by forming supportive groups that help in building positive self-images, by networking with other gay and lesbian parents and by educating professionals and the general public to our special strengths and special concerns.



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GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS COALITION INTERNATIONAL

The Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI) is a non-profit, tax exempt advocacy and support group for gay fathers and lesbian mothers. The GLPCI has been in existence since early 1979 and links a network of local gay and/or lesbian parent groups. As a part of our commitment to supporting lesbian and gay parents, we offer numerous programs and materials addressing the wide spectrum of the gay and lesbian parenting experience. One of the GLPCI's most popular programs is an annual conference on lesbian and gay parenting issues. This conference enables GLPCI members to experience personal growth through workshops, panel discussions and lectures. Perhaps one of the conference's most important aspects is the opportunity for other gay and lesbian parents to meet with others, letting them know that they are not alone.

THE INVISIBLE MINORITY

We know that there are many gay and lesbian parents who struggle alone, insecure in their dual roles. Gay and lesbian parents are often referred to as the "invisible minority" because their roles as parents and gays or lesbians are often seen as incompatible. The Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International offers these parents an opportunity to communicate with others both in their area and throughout the world. This networking allows them to realize that they are not alone in their situation, that many others are struggling with the same problems, experiencing the same joys, and that there are many resources that can help in the sometimes confusing and difficult job of being both a parent and gay. Being a gay father or lesbian mother is not simple, but it is a lot less lonely when shared with people who are in similar situations.

WHAT DOES THE GLPCI OFFER?

A link to other gay and lesbian parenting groups throughout the world via our newsletter and annual conference.

Support for local groups. In order to provide support for existing groups and aid in the formation of new groups, the GLPCI provides support packets containing information on how to establish and maintain a variety of services necessary for functioning groups.

A clearing house and speakers service for information on gay and lesbian parenting for interested organizations and the media.

Assistance in the formation of new groups and one-on-one contact if formation of a local support group is not feasible.

Information and support for parents estranged from their children.

Educational outreach for the general public, legislators and the lesbian and gay community on the concerns of our members.



JOIN US and find information, help and support from people who understand the unique joys and problems of being a gay or lesbian parent. Fill out the attached reply card today either to receive more information or to be added to our confidential mailing list. *We will never release information on our mailing list to any organization.*

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tolerance n.: the
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of recognizing and respect-
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Summer 1996 Issue

Newsletter of the
Gay and Lesbian Parents
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Spanking—a Family Value?

When Reverend Ted Norton and his wife Joyce, of Costa Mesa, CA, tried to adopt a one-year-old boy in need of a home, they knew they'd make great parents, as Christians who'd raised four children of their own. They were surprised when county social services denied their petition upon finding out that the Nortons believe in spanking as a form of loving discipline (not in anger or abuse). The county based its reasoning on a state law banning the use of "corporeal discipline" on foster children. The Nortons are now working to have the California law changed.

Many conservative Christians sanction the striking of children as a means of "loving" discipline. In his 1990 bestseller, *Dare to Discipline*, Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family wrote that spanking is "a painful disciplinary measure to make a vivid impression." When spanking doesn't work, he writes, "The spanking may be too gentle. If it doesn't hurt it isn't worth avoiding the next time." Dobson recommends "a firm thump on the head or a rap on the fingers."

In a Q&A section of the book, a parent asks if spanking will teach her child to hit other people or to make him a violent person. In his response, Dobson compares spanking to the pain a child suffers in accidents such as touching something hot or being bitten by a dog. These acts teach a child to "avoid those mistakes again" and "doesn't make him a violent person." He adds that "spankings should be reserved for his moments of greatest antagonism." However, many sociologists believe that spanking indicates that the parent is out of control, not the child. Even dog trainers teach that one should never strike a dog, lest that dog learns to bite in self-defense. Is a child any different?

-- Excerpted from *Freedom Writer*

GLPCI Network

What's Wrong with "Parental Rights"? -- by Barry W. Lynn

A divisive campaign is snowballing around the country. It wrongly assumes that educators and parents are adversaries and books are the enemy. Watch for this campaign in your state; it's a camouflage for censorship!

Proponents of something called the "Parental Rights Amendment" are trying to amend all state constitutions and eventually the federal constitution.

The proposed amendment states: The right of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children shall not be infringed."

What's wrong with this amendment? On first reading, it certainly sound innocuous. As a parent, I want my rights. Why the fuss, then?

The Religious Right insists that public school officials have some nefarious scheme for subverting "parental rights," primarily by choosing curriculum and other material that are odds with their moral values. The bottom line of the Parental Rights Amendment is to give parents active in Religious Right groups a type of constitutional "trump card" to override any decision public schools make that they don't like.

How would this work in practice? The Massachusetts legislature gave

us one example two years ago when it considered a "parental rights" bill that required two weeks' written notice to parents whenever the children were to be involved in any teaching or activity deemed "controversial." These were not just the hot button topics of homosexuality and abortion, but everything from discussions of values to death and marriage. Worse, if parents did not affirmatively "opt in" every time -- actually filling out a form noting it would be all right for their children to be exposed to these topics -- their children were barred from participation.

Can you imagine the chaos this would spawn, as teachers abandoned PTA meetings

Success & Visibility = Backlash

-- by Tim Fisher, GLPCI's Executive Director

Let's take a minute and celebrate the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Colorado's infamous "Amendment 2." In a 6-3 ruling, the justices said that lesbian and gay civil right protections can no longer be overturned by public referenda -- a huge victory that may finally put an end to vicious and divisive campaigns that cost our community millions of dollars defending the few protections we've got. And we're not just celebrating here in the U.S. -- Canada's parliament recently created federal civil right protections for lesbians and gays.

But take just a minute, because we've all got work to do. With our few and hard-fought successes and

What Other Families Can Learn from Same-Gender Households

Don't use gender to allocate household tasks and childcare responsibilities. -- In gay households, seeing each parent for what he or she does best -- rather than being locked into gender roles -- helps children strive to do what they do best.

Give your child a sense of herself. -- Gay parents try to help their children take pride in their family identity and feel comfortable talking about their own uniqueness, whether it be racial, ethnic or religious.

Develop a Support System.

To counteract feelings of difference and isolation as parents, same-gender couples often form support groups to share information and discuss the challenges of family life.

Be aware of racism, sexism and heterosexism.

Gay parents are acutely aware of the damage done by "isms," and look carefully at the books they read their children and make sure that different kinds of family experiences are acknowledged and represented.

Teach your child to expect, accept, and honor differences among people.

by Melinda Blau, author of "Gay Parents: Another Kind of Family," *CHILD Magazine* (June/July 96 issue) -- on newsstands now! ▼

"Joe, the guy" Interview by Beth Teper of COLAGE

In this issue, we hear from "Joe," a 12-year-old boy living in the San Francisco Bay area. Like many COLAGE kids, Joe has two moms, Cindy and Parker. But when Joe was born, his mom Parker was straight and his mom Cindy was a man. In this interview, conducted by Beth Teper, a member of the COLAGE Steering Committee, Joe tells us about the changes in his life and sheds some light on the least visible of our diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

BETH: Before Joe and I got started I would like to ask both of you, but especially Cindy, to clarify the terms "transsexual" and "transgender."

CINDY: A transsexual is someone who identifies as a member of the sex that they were not assigned to at birth. It's someone who generally desires to live full-time in the social role of the gender that they were not born into.

Generally, what people [who find themselves in this situation] do is take hormones, have genital surgery, change their legal identity, and/or change their gender status. Basically the desire is to be perceived in as many ways as possible as a member of the sex they identify with.

Transgender is a little more complicated a term, I think. More recently, it's come to mean an umbrella term for anybody who expresses their gender in some non-normative way. That might include transsexuals, or gay pride queens, or butch dykes. It might include heterosexual transvestites.

BETH: I was wondering if I could ask about sex.

CINDY: The term doesn't say anything about what you do in terms of sexuality or who it is that you're attracted to as partners. It could be a bisexual lesbian, or a transsexual gay man or whatever. It's more about how you deal with your body and how people perceive you as a person than about your sexuality.

BETH: Thanks. Joe, who's in your family?

JOE: Parker's my Mom.

BETH: Is she the one whom you actually came out of?

JOE: Yup. Parker gave birth to me. Cindy is the parent that contributed sperm. Ali, Marion and Kimi, Cam, and Cindy, again, are housemates that I live with here.

We're a big family--never have

enough space. I live in a teeny little nook of a closet, that serves as my room. It has a bed and a bookcase and space to get in and out.

BETH: So all these people except Cindy and Parker are just good friends or housemates?

"A transsexual is someone who identifies as a member of the sex that they were not assigned to at birth.

Transgender is an umbrella term for anybody who expresses their gender in some non-normative way. That might include transsexuals, gay pride queens, butch dykes, or heterosexual transvestites."

JOE: No, they're family.

BETH: Is Ali your sibling?

JOE: I call him a "quibling."

BETH: That's an interesting term. What's that mean?

JOE: Abbreviated, it's "queer sibling." Run into a single word.

BETH: I like that. Can COLAGE use it? With appropriate credit, of course.

JOE: Sure, just credit "Joe, the guy."

BETH: So, I have to ask about the sex thing. Do you know about Cindy or Parker's partners?

JOE: Yeah. Parker is recently, questionably gay and engaged with Mary, an ex-police officer, now a writer and editor. And I don't know what Cindy does.

BETH: She keeps it quiet?

JOE: Yeah.

BETH: Was there a time when it

wasn't like this? What was it like then and how has it changed?

JOE: I was in a classic mother-father-child family for a bit until my parents broke up. I was somewhere around, between 8 & 10, I think. My memory doesn't serve me all that great; I have got a sieve for a head.

BETH: No you don't. Please go on.

JOE: So then when I was ten, Cindy knew Cam and liked the way Cam was living with Heather, and two other women. So Cindy moved in with them. And then Parker fell in love again - with Claudia. They moved into a house together and I was going half time between them. Mondays and Tuesdays I was with Parker; Thursdays & Fridays I was with Cindy. Then the weekends changed back and forth.

BETH: Did they live close to each other?

JOE: Yeah, one lived in Albany and one lived in north Oakland. It wasn't a hellacious commute.

BETH: But [going back and forth] takes its toll doesn't it?

JOE: Yeah. And then later, Cindy decided to move in with Cam and Sara and Ali in the house we're in now. And Parker moved to Alameda.

BETH: So Parker and Cindy were split up and then Parker got together with a woman, right? Was that new for you? Or a surprise?

JOE: Not really.

BETH: Did she sit you down and tell you anything or what happened?

JOE: I forget. Um. How'd that happen? I'd been raised where that wasn't really much of a shock.

BETH: So it was just kinda there?

JOE: Well actually at the time it wasn't but I was fine with it... almost half expected it.

BETH: Sounds like Parker and Cindy made some changes in their lives.

When did Cindy make the changes she

made?

JOE: I think she started taking hormones in '91.

BETH: Did she tell you before she was going to do that?

JOE: No, but I knew something was up between my parents. Cindy told me a few months after. I was sat down in the living room and told about what was up [between my parents].

BETH: Do you remember what exactly you were told?

JOE: Something along the lines of "We don't know how long we're going to be living together/loving each other" and a short little quibble about why.

BETH: Did Cindy say something about herself feeling different than she looked or was it just about their relationship?

JOE: It was just about their relationship. Then about three months later I got sat down in Cindy's room and she didn't beat around the bush at all. She just said "Guess what, Joe, I'm gonna be your Mom" or something to that effect. She said something like "I'm taking estrogen to be a woman."

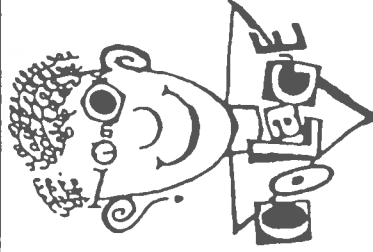
BETH: Did you know what that was?

JOE: Yeah, I knew what estrogen was.

BETH: What is it?

JOE: The predominant sexual hormone among women. There are other ones, but estrogen is the more dominant one.

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere



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My first reaction actually wasn't anything about sex. I thought -- well, I know a few reptilian species do that.

BETH: They do what?

JOE: Have sex changes throughout the courses of their lives.

BETH: WOW!

JOE: Yeah. Their populations are really erratic and there are big swings among the male and female ratios. The ratios are on J-curves and so to compensate for when one sex gets way out of whack, some members of it go to the other sex to balance things out.

BETH: That's AMAZING!

JOE: Yeah well, let's hear it for five billion years of evolution!

BETH: I guess so. Your reaction was pretty impressive. So when Cindy told you about her sex-change -- did it feel like her change happened overnight or gradually?

JOE: I knew something was up. It was really obvious Cindy never fit in. And there was always something... except for when she was having a really good time... but there was always a little something that wasn't quite right. [Her change] just kinda brought it to light.

BETH: So you had to start saying "she," instead of "he"?

JOE: Yeah well, the name -- Cindy -- actually came really quickly. But it's the pronouns that trip you up; everybody got hung up on the pronouns.

BETH: Did you get stuck saying "she," "he," I mean "she"?

JOE: Like I'd say "Hey, that's Cindy's. Don't touch his stuff."

BETH: Have you told other people?

JOE: Yeah at my last two schools, and all my friends. Then when I started going to Alameda schools with all the Navy kids, I just decided not to.

BETH: What do you think they'll do?

JOE: Oh, I'll just never hear the end of it. [Although] one of my favorite responses is "Why should I care about your moms? What they're good for is saying whether we can come over or not, and driving. That's what moms are good for."

BETH: By the way, do you call them both your moms?

JOE: Yeah.

BETH: So when people ask what your mom or dad are like what do you say?

JOE: It varies a lot. When people ask



communities together
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GLPCI is proud to be a member of the Communities Together Campaign.

me about my dad, I'll tell em' about Cindy. But if they've met one of my parents and they ask about my Mom, I tell 'em about that one.

BETH: About the one they've met?

JOE: Yup. But right now I'm in a tricky situation. I have this friend coming over to my house who doesn't know.

BETH: How come? Is it because you don't want people to know you have two moms? or why?

JOE: Well -- I trust him. But I just want to tell him before it kind of stumbles out.

BETH: What do you say, then, to someone whose not yet a friend?

JOE: I say that they're both writer/Ph.D. types; that Cindy is a freelance writer who takes pictures; mainly what Cindy does is how I describe her. She does activism and raises me and she eats, sleeps, and has a life.

BETH: So you don't come out and say "My mom's transgender/transsexual?"

Or "My mom's a lesbian?"

JOE: No. And it's kind of hard to describe Parker. She's not a very describable person. Kinda, she's very physical; she jogs and uses her exercise machine and plays tennis, and is going to start fencing again. She's trying to practice so she doesn't get eliminated in the first round of the Gay Games.

BETH: But -- so, how do you explain your family situation?

JOE: I say "I live in it; it's really complicated" and if they ask further, I'll tell them more.

Thank you, Joe (and Cindy), for sharing your story. Readers, if your family would like to be profiled in this space -- please contact the Editor. ▼

Success = Backlash (cont. from p. 1)

the tremendous visibility our community has received ever since Dan Quayle started talking about Family Values (thanks, Dan!) comes the inevitable backlash. Around the U.S., over half the states have introduced "pre-emptive strike" legislation, seeking to not recognize Hawaiian marriages involving same gender couples when they occur -- still some two years off. In the Congress, the backlash is called the "Defense of Marriage Act." Although it's an election year and much of this activity -- of doubtful constitutionality -- is political posturing, we're being snowed under by those who seek to silence and marginalize our families.

Now is not the time to stay silent. We must all speak up and say "Wait a minute! You're talking about me and my family." We need to call and write the politicians, march in the rallies, write letters to the editor, and support the organizations that are struggling to change the world.

We will inevitably suffer some setbacks, but the nation, and the world, is just now being involved in this unprecedented dialogue -- one that will insure our eventual victory. Start your personal dialogue today with a letter or a phone call -- or if it's too tough, start by writing a check. Get informed; read your local gay rag or log onto the Internet with its many resources for the activist in you. Whatever you can do, the time to start is NOW! ▼

"Issues in Lesbian and Gay Life" & "The Lives of Notable Gay Men and Lesbians"

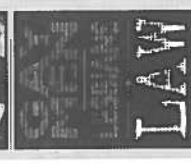
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by Jan Clausen
Pierce debates arise from the question of what determines the traits and characteristics that cause, create, or determine sexual orientation or desire. This provocative and candid book addresses the various theories of same-sex and opposite-sex love and lust, and explore historical and cross-cultural attitudes that provide perspective on the ongoing controversy.
128 pp. 39 b & w photos. hc \$24.95/pb \$12.95



NEWS for Our Families

In the U.S., anti-marriage bills have been adopted in nine states -- AK, AZ, GA, ID, KS, OK, SD, TN and UT. Of dubious constitutionality, activists promise litigation unless repealed. • In the Senate, a Federal "Defense of Marriage Act" has been fast-tracked. Candidate Dole supports, so does President Clinton.

In a Netherlands court less than a month after Parliament voted to legalize marriage for same-sex couples, two second-parent adoption cases were rejected. Too soon, said the court -- wait for the matter to be decided. • The Netherlands would be the first to grant true equal marriage, perhaps as soon as October -- it is believed that citizens of European Community nations would be able to travel to the Netherlands to marry and return home with a license valid in their country. • In April, Finland's cabinet voted in favor of a Scandinavian-style gay-registered partnership law that grants all the rights of marriage except access to church weddings, adoption, alternative insemination and in-vitro fertilization. Activists are still hoping to get full-marriage rights. Finland would be the fourth country to grant domestic partnership -- after Denmark, Norway and Sweden -- unless Iceland beats them to it. • In March, Colombia's Supreme Court ruled against marriage rights for gay couples, while three lesbian couples in New Zealand filed suit demanding marriage licenses.

An "in-your-face" Illinois legislator is tired of the hypocrisy surrounding anti-gay marriage bills. If her peers really want to "preserve the family," they'll make adultery a felony -- punishable by up to three years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. • In Tennessee, an appellate court allowed a lesbian mother to retain custody of her 11-year-old son. First such ruling in TN! • In April, two Missouri lesbian mothers -- an ex-couple -- are now sharing custody of their toddler, thanks to a rare judicial decision. • In New York, a judge has ruled that her second-parent adoption cases will no longer routinely require that a legal guardian be appointed for the child. Family protections, while still expensive, will cost less. • Congress finally passed a D.C. Appropriations Bill -- after six months of wrangling, most anti-gay amendments were thrown out, including "mixed" language about gay adoption. We're safe for three months until the process starts all over again. ▼

"Parental Rights" (continued from Page 1)

and course plugging to pursue "wayward" parents who hadn't even received the permission slip? (How many parents stumble on last month's homework, lunch news, "important notices" -- and occasional sandwiches -- while cleaning out their children's backpacks?) What would actually happen, of course, is that many teachers would steer clear of these subjects so that they wouldn't have to go through the burdensome process. (By the way, how does one teach history or literature without a discussion of values or death?)

I believe that is precisely what the supporters of "parental rights" have in mind. They want to parent their kids and everybody else's. By objecting to material, they hope they will cause fewer teachers to even try to deal with controversy. You can imagine schools where every parents objects to some piece of a textbook, so that all that remains are books with blank pages.

You'll hear the Religious Right activists railing about other claimed usurpations of "parental rights," everything from condom distribution to social service agencies intruding into parental disciplinary decisions. Don't be fooled into thinking this is what this amendment is about. It is about our public schools.

Twenty states, from Georgia to Colorado, can expect legislative battles over the "Parental Rights Amendment" in the coming year. Nobody wants to take away the primary right or responsibility for parenting from parents. On the other hand, we have to have some degree of faith in the quality of work that professional educators do. The truth is, as parents we often fail to keep up on the latest information on everything from geology to (gasp) human sexuality. We don't need our ignorance, or that of our neighbors, to have an undue influence on the course of public education. ▼

Excerpted from *Church and State*, February 1996. Barry W. Lynn is the Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Gay Stepfamilies Needed!!!

I am looking for participants for my study on the gay stepfamily system. I need both the biological parent and the stepparent in families in which the child(ren) resides with you for at least six months during the year. I am hoping to set up some interviews at the GLPCI conference in July, and would be happy to arrive a few days before and/or stay after the conference. I am also traveling to various states to complete the interviews. If you are willing to participate, please call Professor Jean Lynch collect at (513) 423-6816.

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Mail to: *Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International*
P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 U.S.A.

GN96-2

Summer Camp Opportunities for Our Kids... (and sometimes the Whole Family!)

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Bibliography of Books for Our Children

Updated Spring 1995 -- an annotated bibliography of over 95 picture books for children (birth to age 11) of gay and lesbian parents (\$2.50). Also available (\$5) -- "Bibliography on Gays and Lesbians and Their Families." Write: GLPCI, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.

Et Cetera

Does anyone have a photo of *Friends*' actress Jane Sibbett with GLPCI's own Diane P. Kerkhoff from the L.A. conference? If so, contact *Network*. THANKS!

Gay and Lesbian Family Week in Provincetown, MA

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Celebrating our third decade of services to gay and lesbian parents through chapters around the world

October 14, 1993

Dear Parents and Friends:

A month ago in Richmond, Virginia, Sharon Bottoms lost custody of her two-year-old son to her own mother, just because she is a lesbian.

In Seattle, a birth mother wanted her child back because the adoptive parents are two gay men.

Every week, another story involving lesbian and gay parents hits the news wires -- a custody decision in Arkansas, in Oklahoma; a media circus in Los Angeles, and in Pittsburgh. Stories about families like ours.

Ever since the news of the Bottoms' decision, GLPCI's phone has been ringing off the hook. Just like last summer's "Family Values" controversy, almost every newspaper, magazine, and talk show in the country is interested in families with lesbian and gay parents. We've organized parents and children to tell their stories in *Time Magazine* and *The New York Times*, and on the *Geraldo* and *Sally Jesse Raphael* shows -- to list just a few.

More frightening though is the dramatic increase in calls we've gotten from parents afraid of losing their children. One lesbian mother phoned, "My mother just heard about the case in Virginia. She said she's taking me to court. What can I do?" We get these parents in touch with excellent legal resources -- FAST.

Now that the "gays in the military" debate has moved from the U.S. Congress to the courts, we believe that our issues -- fighting for custody and visitation, the right to adopt and bear children, support for our kids in the schools and more -- have moved to the forefront of the lesbian and gay civil rights agenda.

GLPCI has never been busier getting ready to work on your behalf to meet the challenges of the 90s. This past weekend, we were in Columbus, Ohio with our Board of Directors, planning and building the future of the Coalition. Here's a few fall highlights we want to share with you:

- As the Sharon Bottoms custody case is appealed at a higher court, GLPCI will participate in filing an *amicus* brief.
- **VICTORY!** The U.S. Immigration and Nationalization Service has reversed its policy of prohibiting openly lesbian and gay men from bringing adopted children into the country. Last summer, GLPCI helped organize a letterwriting campaign to bring attention to this issue.
- GLPCI helped promote "Other Mothers," the CBS Schoolbreak Special about two lesbian moms and their high school age son, which aired on October 12th. The folks at CBS thanked us for spreading the word with two press releases, lining up families to be interviewed for their publicity machine, and distributing over 100 advance copies of the movie to parents' groups.

- C.O.L.A.G.E., Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (formerly Just for Us), is busy working on a press kit, an information packet for new groups, and a newsletter for kids, ages 6 to 12 -- to mention just a few of their brilliant ideas. Their energy, dedication and activity are inspiring!
- As the Religious Right gears up for anti-gay referenda in Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, and Washington, GLPCI is raising consciousness and providing parents with resources by donating copies of *The Final Closet: The Gay Parents' Guide for Coming Out to Their Children* to small town public libraries in these states.

All of this activity -- Support, Resources, Education, Advocacy -- is for the benefit of you and your family. GLPCI is your organization -- your chance to join with other parents and work for our common goals. Together, we are a powerful voice.

Today, GLPCI reaches and supports more parents and families than ever before. As a result, our budget is larger than ever before and we have to spend more time raising money.

GLPCI survives because of the generosity of its members -- and we need you now more than ever before. Some of you we've known personally for years; others we've never met. But all of you have already contributed money to GLPCI this year -- either directly or through chapter dues.

One of the hardest things to do is to ask a loyal supporter like you to find it in your heart to give again to GLPCI -- and to give generously. But that's exactly what we have to do now.

If you can write a check for \$250, fantastic! But if your check is \$25 or \$10, that's great too! Just please, give whatever you can. Don't count on someone else. Let's all give something!

So please, before you move on to the next letter in today's pile of mail, decide how generous you can be. Fill out the enclosed card and tomorrow morning, drop it in the mailbox. Please respond today -- we need you!

Love makes a Family!,

John Sheets

John Sheets
President

Vickie Harris

Vickie Harris
Executive Vice President

P.S. Every year at this time, we ask our members to make an additional contribution to GLPCI. In the past, some members have responded, "Besides giving money, what else can we do to help?" That's why we've enclosed a flyer outlining some volunteer projects that you might want to consider. How about putting your talents to work for all of us?

P.P.S. Your contribution to GLPCI is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS FOR GLPCI

Recently a mother asked, "What can I do to help GLPCI? I've got a little time to volunteer--put me to work." If you too would like to get involved, we've put together a long list of projects that GLPCI would like to tackle. Here's just a few -- most involve making a few phone calls or writing some letters. To volunteer or for additional ideas, call (202) 583-8029 or write GLPCI, P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 U.S.A.

VISIBILITY

- **Are you willing to be interviewed by the press?** We need a list of families who are interested in talking to the media -- TV, Radio and Print. All kinds of families are needed, but the press is particularly interested in families with articulate children, who live outside the major urban centers.
- **Diversity** -- GLPCI wants to reach out to all families, but we've had little success in attracting members from racial and ethnic minorities and those with limited incomes. Can you help us to find ways of reaching out to these communities, so that GLPCI's membership truly reflects the real world of lesbian and gay-headed families?
- **Alternate Sources of Advertising** -- GLPCI is in contact with the lesbian and gay press, but we need to be listed with all computer bulletin boards, community centers and hotlines.
- **Do you speak a Foreign Language?** -- Help us broadcast the message that "Love makes a Family" to millions of parents and children overseas. Pick a country and research the situation of lesbian and gay parenting in a different culture.
- **GLPCI On-Line** -- It's the 90s. Help GLPCI set up our publications for on-line retrieval via computer.

SUPPORT

- **Become a Regional Coordinator** -- Represent GLPCI in your own local area. A region can be as small or as large as you wish. Check in with local chapters or "potential chapters." If no local groups exist, sponsor a start up meeting. Write a "Letter to the Editor" of the local gay and lesbian newspaper. Network with other "Family" groups -- ex. P-FLAG, MCC congregations. Pass out brochures at Pride Day celebrations. It takes only a few hours a month, some calls and letters, and a willingness to give out your phone number.
- **Local Chapter Support** -- With over 60 dues-paying chapters as part of GLPCI, it's getting harder and harder to keep in touch with all of them. Find out what our local groups are up to -- gather fundraising ideas, ideas for activities, speaker topics, political involvement and more. Then share the wealth of information with other groups eager for new ideas.

ADVOCACY

- **Networking** -- GLPCI needs to develop stronger ties to gay and lesbian-related organizations (such as P-FLAG) and mainstream groups (such as Adoptive Families of America, Children's Defense Fund, etc.). We need parents to pick a family-related organization, become a member, read their publications, make a personal contact, attend their conference, monitor their progress, etc. GLPCI's long range future depends on securing a place in the PRO-FAMILY arena, for funding and support.
- **Educating Decision-Makers** -- Too often, our families are invisible in the day-to-day world. We need parents with ties to the professional communities of Social Workers, Educators, Librarians, and the Judiciary -- authorities who make decisions affecting the welfare of our families. We need to understand the best ways to educate them as to who we are. For starters, we are looking for parents willing to share with us what they know, so that together we can develop some future plans. GLPCI wants to act, not just react.
- **Destroy the Myths!** -- Last year, GLPCI launched an education program to counter the myths used against us. DTM! is a long term project involving publications, video, and a speaker's bureau. We need volunteers to research the myths used against other minorities and show the historical parallels, gather anti-censorship materials, gather statements of support from mainstream organizations, and much more.

RESOURCES

- **Let's make a movie** -- This is the video age. GLPCI needs to get the basics -- sort of a "Gay and Lesbian Parenting 101" -- on film. There are many filmmakers interested in the subject. We need a basic outline of ideas, a list of experts to be on camera, a script treatment, etc. to get someone to bite.
- **Brochures for Special Interests** -- GLPCI already has or is currently working on some basic brochures and resource lists for parents and would-be parents who contact us looking for more information -- for example, Donor Insemination, Adoption, and Co-Parenting. But perhaps you could help gather information on "Interracial Families," "Staying Married," "Coming Out to Our Kids," "You and Your Child's School," "Adoption of Special Needs Kids," "Straight Spouses," "When Our Families Break Up," or "Second Parent Adoptions." Any other ideas?

YES, I'LL SUPPORT GLPCI AND HELP SPREAD THE WORD THAT LOVE MAKES A FAMILY!

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This family is changing the world. We all are.

* * * * *

But GLPCI can't keep on doing this work without your continued help and financial support. GLPCI doesn't have any office overhead and relies almost exclusively on volunteers to do the work. But still -- providing basic information services like these is expensive. Our phone bills, printing, copying, and postage increase every month.

Once a year, at about this time, we ask our members to make an additional contribution to GLPCI over and above their membership dues. Most members join through a chapter and give just \$10 a year. These dues provide only a third of our annual income, so GLPCI won't survive without your generosity.

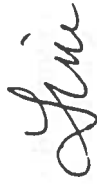
If you can write a check for \$150, fantastic! But if your check is \$35 or \$25, that's great too! Please, just give whatever you can. Don't count on someone else. Let's all give something!

All of GLPCI's work -- Support, Resources, Education, Advocacy -- is for the benefit of you and your family. GLPCI is your organization -- your chance to join with other families and work for our common goals. Together, we are a powerful voice.

Please let me know that you are willing to make GLPCI even more effective.

Send the most generous contribution you can today.

Love makes a Family!,



Tim Fisher
Executive Director

P.S. Your contribution to GLPCI is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

P.P.S. Thank you in advance to all our generous donors. But if you're able to give \$65 or more as your year-end gift to GLPCI, we'll be happy to send you a popular book or video on lesbian and gay parenting as our extra-special "Thank You!" See the enclosed response form for more details.



Gay & Lesbian Parents
Coalition International

P.O. Box 50360
Washington, DC 20091
Voice: (202) 583-8029
Fax: (201) 783-6204
GLPCINat@ix.netcom.com

YEAR-END REPORT FROM GLPCI

November 15, 1995

Dear Parents and Friends:

It's been an exhilarating, exhausting, and very rewarding year for GLPCI.

Most of you hear from us just four times a year -- through our newsletter, *Network*. In the newsletter, we try to focus on news, information and interviews relevant to your life -- and gloss over the day-to-day business of the Coalition. You may not be aware of all the work we're doing that your membership dues make possible.

That's why I want to share with you a few GLPCI stories. Some are positive and heartwarming; others, perhaps painful and tragic. Virtually all have happened in the last month and a half, and are fresh in my mind and in my heart.

I hope that you'll be impressed with GLPCI's efforts to support parents like yourself and ultimately, to make the world a better place for ourselves and our children.

I hope that these stories will encourage you to recommit yourself to this work by making a year-end donation to GLPCI. But more about that later....

* * * * *

Kathy, a student at East Tennessee State University, called in September looking for information for a paper for her Sociology class. That's not an unusual request for GLPCI -- we get a steady stream of such calls and letters from students, from junior high to graduate school, averaging about two or three every day (even in the summer months). In return, we send out a small packet of information -- a position paper on gay and lesbian adoption, a review of the psychological literature on our kids, some basic references, etc.

Just last week, Kathy wrote back, sending a copy of her class paper and enclosing this brief note:

Thanks for all the information which made my paper possible. I got an A+!

Another student in the class picked the same topic, but took a very conservative viewpoint. After we turned in our papers, our professor had us lead the class in a debate on gay parenting.

At the start, practically no one was on my side. The other student was quoting from the Bible. But when my classmates heard the facts, I won them over! A lot of converts were made that day.

Thanks again for all your help. Your information convinced me. It convinced my professor and it convinced the class. Keep up the good work!

* * * * *

On a sadder note, we received a letter from Debra last month -- a lesbian mom just "coming out" in suburban Maryland. She asked to be placed on the GLPCI mailing list, and concluded with the question: "Is it possible to be a lesbian and a mother to my children?"

Even with the explosion of media interest in our families in the last few years, the numerous books written about us, the visibility that we've achieved -- all too many parents still share Debra's concern. The majority of lesbian and gay parents had their children in a heterosexual relationship prior to coming out and remember the self-doubt, the isolation, the guilt and the upheaval.

In Debra's case, we sent words of encouragement -- along with some reprinted articles, a list of books and resources available at her local bookstore, and the contact information for the nearest local GLPCI support group. Good luck, Debra! -- we'll keep in touch.

We hear from lots of moms and dads in the early stages of "coming out" -- some 50 to 100 of these parents join our mailing list each month. Some are looking for other parents like themselves; others need resources for their children. We've worked hard to list GLPCI's name, address and phone number in many different places, and we're glad that so many can find us. But the sad reality is that for every mom or dad who makes contact, there are hundreds and thousands of parents who never find us. **Our work is just beginning.**

* * * * *

Greg from Florida has called several times in the last few months because he is embroiled in a nasty custody fight. Greg, who always worked out of the home, provided most of the hands-on child care in raising his two young daughters. Since leaving his marriage, his ex-wife is seeking sole custody on the grounds that "his new lifestyle" will harm the girls.

Unfortunately, Greg is far from alone -- GLPCI received 11 such calls last week. Custody and visitation matters are the number one reason gay and lesbian Americans go to court. Although GLPCI is not in the business of providing legal services, in cases like Greg's, we can provide a few phone numbers of attorneys that advertise in the gay press, a list of publications to educate oneself on the legal process, and referrals to other organizations that may help. But mostly, we can be there for folks like Greg who need to talk to someone who understands.

* * * * *

Last week, GLPCI members Lynn and Teresa and their one-year-old son, Michael, joined other families on Capitol Hill to lobby members of the House of Represent-

tatives about the D.C. Appropriations Bill. Congressional Conservatives have attached several anti-gay amendments to this Bill, including the first "Family Values" vote by this Congress -- one outlawing second-parent adoption in the District.

This vote doesn't just affect those lesbian and gay parents like Lynn and Teresa seeking second-parent adoption protections for Michael, or just those living in Washington, D.C. It's the one chance Congress has -- since they hold D.C.'s purse strings -- to weigh in on the issue of lesbians and gays as parents. If this amendment becomes law, the signal Congress sends to state legislatures and family court judges is powerful and destructive to all our families.

Since August, GLPCI has been key player in a coalition of groups -- including the Human Rights Campaign, Log Cabin Republicans, People for the American Way, and the American Civil Liberties Union -- determined to keep this law off the books. We've been calling and writing letters to thousands of GLPCI members in key Congressional districts -- providing them with talking points and asking them to call their Representatives and educate them on this issue. Other GLPCI members have been asked to thank their Representatives for their stands.

The final vote of the Joint House-Senate Conference Committee is expected within days and we are guardedly optimistic that the final version will drop the anti-second-parent adoption language. If we are victorious, we have you -- the members of GLPCI -- to thank. Your letters and calls to the Capitol will have made the difference. We will have bought ourselves some time -- until next August and the next D.C. Appropriations Bill. **Our struggle for equality continues.**

* * * * *

There are dozens of additional stories that I could tell you -- ways GLPCI is working hard to make a difference. Talking to the media about our families (we're averaging 5 calls each day). Landmark legal victories for parents and kids in Colorado, Iowa, New Jersey and New York (stay tuned to the next *Network*). Countering the always active and well-funded Radical Religious Right. Speaking at National Coming Out Day events to spread our message. Educating the educators about family diversity and playground name-calling.

And I haven't even touched upon the excellent work that COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) is doing. But I'll leave you with one last story -- my personal favorite....

A few days ago, GLPCI received a card and photo from Andy and Juan in Illinois. The card said simply "Thanks for making our dreams come true." The picture is of their newly adopted son, Luis.

About a year ago, GLPCI sent these prospective parents some information about creating a family (we've received 16 such requests so far this month). And today, Andy and Juan are new dads. Their desire, their persistence, their very lives are educating their families, friends and neighbors about our "Real Family Values."



Gay & Lesbian Parents
Coalition International

P.O. Box 50360
Washington, DC 20091
(202) 583-8029
Fax: (201) 783-6204
FamValues@aol.com

Celebrating our third decade of services to gay and lesbian parents through chapters around the world

November 9, 1994

Dear Parents and Friends:

Last night was Election night in the United States. Many new ultra-conservative voices now hold seats in the U.S. Congress. There are dozens more in statehouses around the country.

What does this mean for you and your family?

It's not good news. Candidates of Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition won 24 out of 30 races for the House of Representatives. Their influence in the Republican Party will only increase.

So will the lies, the rhetoric and the finger-pointing as gays and lesbians are again blamed for a decline in America's "Family Values."

And, you can count on renewed efforts to ban all discussion of homosexuality in your children's schools.

Soon-to-be Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich has already outlined ten pieces of legislation he wants passed in the first 100 days. Among them -- "The Family Reinforcement Act," including child support enforcement, stronger child pornography laws, and tax incentives to adopt children.

It is very likely that when Congress considers this legislation, **our elected representatives will say that lesbians and gay men are unfit to be adoptive parents.** Given the successful anti-gay votes of the last Congress, this falsehood could easily be written into law.

Why should this scare you?

It is not just about your right to adopt. This is a direct attack on who you are -- a loving, nurturing parent and caregiver.

Imagine **the impact of this legislation on custody and visitation decisions** -- the number one reason lesbians and gay men go to court.

Imagine the impact on your children as the political climate gets more and more homophobic. Will they feel comfortable "coming out" to their friends at school?

All right, so what can you do?

(over, please)

For starters, you can continue your support of GLPCI. That's why we're writing to you today.

GLPCI must be a strong and resourceful organization to respond to the inevitable attacks facing families like yours in the months ahead. We need to actively and aggressively fight the Radical Right's agenda, instead of just reacting to the latest crisis they bring upon us.

Once a year, at about this time, we ask our members to make an additional contribution to GLPCI over and above their membership dues. Most members join through a chapter and give just \$5 a year. These dues provide only a third of our annual income, so GLPCI won't survive without your generosity.

If you can write a check for \$150, fantastic! But if your check is \$25 or \$10, that's great too! Please, just give whatever you can. Don't count on someone else. Let's all give something!

All of GLPCI's work -- Support, Resources, Education, Advocacy -- is for the benefit of you and your family. GLPCI is your organization -- your chance to join with other families and work for our common goals. Together, we are a powerful voice.

So please, before you move on to the next letter in today's pile of mail, decide how generous you can be. Respond today with a year-end contribution to GLPCI. Your support has never been more critical. The time is now!

Love makes a Family!

*John Nicoli Patricia K. Barr Andre Jacinto
Myraue Usslow Wayne Stemmer Louis Duboff
Jim Jackson Diane F Kerckhoff Sekhynch*

The Board of Directors of GLPCI and

Glenn Fisher
Executive Director

P.S. Your contribution to GLPCI is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Your gift will support these exciting new projects and more:

- A video -- filmed by our San Francisco chapter -- to educate teachers and school administrators about our families
- COLAGE Kids Club -- a "fun pages" newsletter for our younger kids, ages 6 to 12
- A touring photo exhibit created by a group of parents in Massachusetts, called "Living in Gay and Lesbian Families," appropriate for schools, churches and community centers
- A training manual to assist parents in advocating for our families in their children's schools
- Expanded outreach to our diverse community of families and potential parents

YES, I'LL HELP GLPCI SPREAD THE WORD THAT LOVE MAKES A FAMILY!

**Gay & Lesbian Parents
Coalition International**

P.O. Box 50360
Washington, DC 20091 U.S.A.
(202) 583-8029

Enclosed is my CONTRIBUTION of:

\$35 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

- Enclosed is an additional \$15 — Please send me a copy of *The Final Closet: The Gay Parents' Guide for Coming Out to Their Children*, by Rip Corley, C.S.W., A.C.P.F.
 Enclosed is an additional \$20 — Please send me a copy of *The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook: Creating and Raising Our Families*, by April Martin, Ph.D.

Method of Payment: Check VISA MasterCard

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Please exclude my name from GLPCI-published lists of donors. Payable in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank; or use VISA/Master Card. Make checks payable to GLPCI. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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A94-1

What GLPCI is doing for YOU (just a sample)

- **Information Clearinghouse** -- We gather and disseminate information about our families -- over 1,000 requests each year -- for members, the media, researchers, educators, and the general public.

- **Publications** -- Our newsletter, *Network*, is read by over 5,200 families in 74 countries.

- **COLAGE** -- *Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere* is our program for, by and about our daughters and sons.

- **Research** -- We promote, facilitate, and publicize research about our families -- seven studies in the last six months alone.

- **Media** -- We assist the media (magazines, newspapers, TV talk shows) in locating families and shaping stories. Recent stories: *NBC Nightly News*, *Parade Magazine*, *Donahue*, *Telenundo*, *Rolanda*, *The Shirley Show*, *Ricki Lake*, and over three dozen more since Labor Day.

- **Annual Conference** -- Our 16th Annual Conference will be held in Los Angeles, CA over the Fourth of July weekend.

- **Information about Creating Families** -- We provide wanna-be parents - about 8 to 10 each month -- with "how to" information about alternative insemination, adoption and foster care.

- **Attorney Referrals** -- We provide parents facing custody and visitation battles with leads to finding gay-positive attorneys -- over 25 parents assisted last year.

- **Protect Our Parenting Options** -- We monitor and lobby against legislative attempts and institutional policies which restrict our abilities to create families. Last month, we helped brief the head of adoption policy in Texas.

- **School Projects** -- We provide an average of five students each week with information on lesbian and gay parenting for school papers, presentations and debates.

- **Amicus Briefs** -- For some parents appealing unfavorable custody decisions, we weigh in with "friend-of-the-court" briefs -- four last year.

All this costs \$\$\$\$. Every dollar you contribute to GLPCI helps us support your family and others just like yours.



Administrative Office
P.O. Box 43206
Montclair, NJ 07043

Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International

Our Mission

Provide advocacy, education and support for Gay and Lesbian persons in child-nurturing roles and their families -- *in all their diversity* -- worldwide

Our Family Values

Love and nurturing; integrity and responsibility; acceptance, respect and inclusion

Our Goals

ADVOCACY:

- Secure civil and legal rights for our families and relationships

- Advance our rights within the legislative and judicial processes

- Promote acceptance of our families and relationships within public and private institutions and organizations

EDUCATION:

- Maintain an information clearinghouse for resources about our families and parenting options

- Communicate through the media the reality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people as nurturing caregivers with healthy children

SUPPORT:

- Form and develop local organizations for parents and children

- Sponsor family get-togethers to share, learn and celebrate that...

Love makes a Family!

GAY AND LESBIAN PARENTS IN THE NEWS

Amanda Bearse, star of TV's *Married With Children*, is an adoptive lesbian mom.

Julia Pell — Rhode Island activist and daughter of U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell, who is leading the fight for her state's gay and lesbian civil rights bill.

Steve Gendel — CNBC's chief science and medical correspondent.

Pat Norman — longtime San Francisco activist and a leading *Stonewall 25* organizer.

Dr. Mel White — former colleague, filmmaker and ghostwriter for Billy Graham, Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, now dean of Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church in Dallas, Texas.

Ace London — longtime TV/Radio personality (they called him "the next Billy Graham") and now author of *The Closets are Empty...The Dining Room's Full*.

And a grandparent — Sandra Gillis, the new president of the National Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG). Her lesbian daughter recently gave birth to Sandra's first grandchild.

VACATION HOME EXCHANGE

Lesbian family with two boys, aged 15 and 3 months, seeks vacation home exchange with family in New Mexico, Hawaii, New York City, or overseas. We live in sunny Santa Cruz, California, 75 miles south of San Francisco, in a three bedroom, fully restored Victorian. Easy access to beaches and mountains. Our vacations are summers and Dec. 15th-Jan. 15th. Open to all offers. Write describing your home and interest to: Home Exchange, P.O. Box 8503, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

TERRIFIC TIDBITS

- *Sexual Orientation: Reading between the Labels* — a video focusing on issues facing gay and lesbian youth. A excellent resource that parents might encourage their children's schools to use. For a free preview, call (414) 465-2599. Rental: \$50 plus \$2.75 per tape for shipping and handling. NEWIST/CESA #7, IS1110, University of Wisconsin, Green Bay, WI 54311.
- "Transracial Adoption: Facing the Issues," an article by an African American adoptee raised by white parents, appeared in *Sojourner: The Women's Forum* (April 1993). For reprints, send \$2 to *Sojourner*, 42 Seaverns Avenue, Boston, MA 02130.
- A long distance calling service that saves you up to 25%, and contributes to GLPCI. Call 1-800-ITS-OURS and switch to Community Spirit.
- Information packet for lesbians and gay men considering ADOPTION — send \$15 to GLPCI member chapter, Center Kids, c/o the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011. Also another packet (also \$15) available from: Fenway Community Health Center, Family and Parenting Services, 7 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02119.
- Lesbian and Gay Grandparenting — an anthology of stories of lesbian and gay grandparents raising their grandchildren. For submissions or more information, call Sherrian Hagggar, American Friends Service Committee, Portland, Oregon, at (503) 230-9429.
- Lesbian Health Project wants accounts of lesbian and bi women's lives and experiences with health and health care as it relates to parenting, donor insemination, child custody and many other topics. Send to Suzann Gage, LHP, 8235 Santa Monica Blvd. #308, West Hollywood, CA 90046.

CREATING CHANGE

NGLTF's Sixth Annual Creating Change Conference, skills building for activists and organizers, will be held in Durham, North Carolina on November 10-14, 1993. GLPCI will be there and involved in several family workshops. Call Jim Fagelson for more information or if you plan to attend — (301) 762-4828.

BE A PART OF GLPCI'S LEADERSHIP

At Orlando's Annual Conference, the voting delegates approved a series of by-laws changes. The changes included a structural reorganization of the GLPCI Board of Directors. Part of this new scheme is a new way of doing business — relying more on conference calls and working groups and less on quarterly board meetings requiring travel and expense.

GLPCI's membership is currently 50% women and 50% men; yet the Board does not reflect this gender parity. The by-law changes are part of an attempt to open participation in GLPCI's leadership to the increased contribution of women and minorities and those with limited incomes. GLPCI is committed to having the composition of our leadership reflect the composition of our membership and the real world of lesbian and gay-headed families.

Here's a good way for you to get involved — as a REGIONAL COORDINATOR. It takes very little time and no money. Regional Coordinators help spread the word about GLPCI in their area. You pick the area — your state, a part of it, a city where a friend lives, or somewhere you travel on business. You volunteer your address and/or phone, target lesbian and gay publications, and — through advertisements (GLPCI pays) or Letters to the Editor (FREE) — attempt to locate families and start support groups. If you have only a few hours a month and would like to be a part of what we're doing, please contact GLPCI's Vice President of Group Development, John Nicoli, at (617) 273-1740.

ARE YOU PART OF A PARENTS' GROUP?

GLPCI, with over 60 member chapters in four countries and over 1400 individual members, also corresponds with another 100 groups of lesbian and gay parents and their children. In addition, we have leads (usually a person's name and phone number) on another 80-plus groups. There are hundreds more — support groups for lesbian mothers, gay fathers, still marrieds, prospective parents, adoptive families, and our children — small and large, formal and informal. Whoever and wherever you are, GLPCI wants to know about you. Obviously, we would like you to officially join the Coalition, but more importantly, we'll feed you a steady stream of articles, information and press releases. We're here to serve you!

And someone out there — help GLPCI locate a group of lesbian and gay adoptive parents in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania called FAMILIES LIKE OURS. Send us the group's mailing address! THANKS!

Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI)
U.S.A. — P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 • (202) 583-8029
Canada — Box 187, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L5

Welcome to issue #7 of *agenda*, the business newsbulletin of GLPCI, which debuted last summer. In the past, we mailed *agenda* to GLPCI member chapters, other parenting groups, community organizations and selected individuals. We filled it with GLPCI business, late-breaking news, notices of seminars, research, articles and resources of interest to lesbian and gay parents. We attempted to answer the question — What is GLPCI up to?

Now — for the first time — we're expanding the circulation of *agenda*. We're sending it, FREE of charge, to all of the people on our mailing list. So read on...and learn what GLPCI is doing for you!

THE SHARON BOTTOMS CUSTODY CASE

No sooner did the latest issue of *Network* go to the printer, than the "News" on page 8 became outdated. Here's part of a recent GLPCI Press Release, explaining our reaction to the latest media brouhaha:

Lesbian and Gay Parents and Their Families Condemn Legalized Discrimination in Virginia Custody Case

On September 7th, a Virginia judge declared Sharon Bottoms an "unfit" mother, because she was open and honest about her love for another woman, April Wade. Sharon's mother will retain custody of her two-year-old son, Tyler. This decision is a tragedy for Sharon, April and Tyler; for all Virginians, and indeed all Americans — parents and children, gay and straight alike.

The case of Sharon Bottoms has received national attention in the media because it is believed to be the first decision by an appellate court where someone other than a parent successfully sues for custody of a child based on a parent's homosexuality.

But custody battles — involving ex-spouses and even grandparents — are nothing new in our community. The threat of losing custody of one's children in court has been and still is a danger for millions of gay and lesbian Americans. The American Bar Association estimates that there are over four million lesbian and gay parents in the United States, raising six to eight million children. "Disputes over child custody and visitation," reports John Sheets, President of the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI), "are the number one reason lesbian and gay Americans go to court."

While we were hopeful that a favorable decision for Sharon and her family would correct past injustices against gay and lesbian parents in Virginia, this decision is not entirely unexpected. Historically, Virginia has been one of the slowest states to adapt to changing social patterns. In the 1960s, marriage outside one's race was grounds for imprisonment in the state.

Virginia still interferes in the lives of its citizens with one of the most repressive anti-sodomy laws in the nation. And Virginia is one of two states with the most unfavorable legal situations for lesbian and gay parents (*Note: the other state is Missouri*). Lesbian and gay parents in Virginia have always been hesitant to be open, because they know such unfavorable laws exist.

The decision in the Sharon Bottoms case is based on HOMOPHOBIA — the irrational fear and hatred of lesbians and gays. Because of homophobia, judges ignore expert testimony on the overwhelming "fitness" of lesbian and gay parents and "normalcy" of our children. Instead, "they listen to the lies and perpetuate the MYTHS," says Vickie Harris, GLPCI's Executive Vice President, "myths that destroy families in the name of 'Family Values.'"

In the first day after the Bottoms decision, GLPCI answered over 30 requests for interviews from gay and straight press — print, radio and television. And the phones continue to ring. We are seeing another wave of interest in our families, not unlike last summer's "Family Values" controversy. If you are willing to be interviewed by the press, call GLPCI at (202) 583-8029 and leave us your name, phone number and a brief message.

GLPCI and our member chapter, the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition of Metropolitan Washington, organized a press conference in Northern Virginia and a second in Richmond, reacting to the news, and placed parents on *The Home Show*. Stay tuned also for an upcoming *Geraldo* show on our families, which was quickly filmed in reaction to the Virginia case.

MORE MEDIA MADNESS

Did you catch the September 20th issue of TIME Magazine? Thanks to all the GLPCI families who helped out on what was originally slated to be a much larger Cover Story. We're also expecting a major piece in *The New York Times* discussing the issues facing our families (scheduled for late September). Again thanks to all the interviewees — the *Times* reporter was very impressed by our "incredible network of families" — and that's a quote!

In recent months, GLPCI family stories have been featured in magazines from Japan to Switzerland. Wherever you are, if you see a news article or feature piece on our families, please clip it and send to GLPCI. THANKS!

CHILDREN OF LESBIANS AND GAYS EVERYWHERE — C.O.L.A.G.E.

At our Annual Conference in Orlando this July, GLPCI's program for our children, run by the kids themselves, changed its name (from Just for Us) to COLAGE — Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. The new moniker is more descriptive, yet still confidential if needed. Co-Directors Emily Gmerek and Stefan Lynch issued a press release to over 500 gay and lesbian organizations announcing the name change and spreading the word about the work they do. Their newsletter — at last report — will still be called *Just For Us* (\$5 annual donation suggested).

The COLAGE umbrella organization is growing rapidly. If you know of a group of our children who get together periodically for social and support activities, let us know how to contact them.

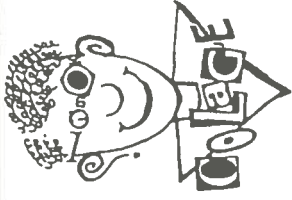
OTHER MOTHERS

On Tuesday, October 12th, CBS Schoolbreak Specials will start its season with a made-for-TV movie called "Other Mothers." Featuring major TV faces, with Emmy Award-winning talent behind the scenes, this hour-long special is the story of a teenage boy coping with the prejudiced views of a new school, teachers and friends when they discover that his two loving parents are two lesbian mothers. Very real, very positive, yet very painful to watch (in parts), it's sure to provoke much discussion between parents and children — families and schools, etc. Preview copies are available through GLPCI and our member chapters. Set your VCR's for 4 p.m. Eastern or 3 p.m. Pacific time.

Parents, you can help get this important film before the widest possible audience. Contact your local papers, mainstream and gay press and encourage them to review (or preview) the film — CBS press contacts are: Jane Oppenheimer — LA, (213) 852-2370; and Sheri Wohl — NY, (212) 975-4574. Families can volunteer to be profiled as a local tie-in to this story. Encourage your children's schools to view it and tape it for future use. The special is part of the "Read More About It" project in conjunction with the U.S. Library of Congress — and that's a big deal.

GLPCI played a small part in getting this movie made. After CBS bought the script, they got cold feet. The producer called GLPCI and asked for our assistance in getting mainstream endorsements and in gathering the appropriate psychological literature to convince CBS to "green light" the project. GLPCI also helped line up "other mothers," to provide background interviews for the CBS publicity machine, and is helping publicize the film in our parenting community and the gay press.

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere



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Our Hosts:
Minnesota Families

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Minnesota Families,
Box 11970, St. Paul,
MN 55111

Look for the next issue of *Network* on June 1st.
DEADLINE: May 1, 1996

Questions?; Moving?; Ideas, Suggestions, Clippings from your local press? Write to: *GLPCI Network*, P.O. Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043; or call/fax (201) 783-6204.

GLPCI NETWORK
c/o GLPCI Publications Office
P.O. Box 43206
Montclair, NJ 07043
U.S.A.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Lee Dubin Memorial Scholarship Fund

Last year, *GLPCI* & *COLAGE* awarded \$1,000 in college scholarships.

Applicants must be full-time students with at least one lesbian or gay parent.

Deadline: May 15, 1996

For application, write GLPCI, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.

Bibliography of Books for Our Children

Updated Spring 1995 -- an annotated bibliography of over 95 picture books for children (birth to age 11) of gay and lesbian parents (\$2.50). Also available (\$5) -- "Bibliography on Gays and Lesbians and Their Families." Write: GLPCI, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.



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Winter/Spring 1996 Issue

Newsletter of the
Gay and Lesbian Parents
Coalition International

Fight the Right March San Francisco, CA April 14, 1996

The Board of Directors of GLPCI voted to endorse the National Organization of Women's upcoming "Fight the Right March." We hope to bring together women, men and children from across the country to send a clear message to policy makers: "the majority of people denounce the divisive hate-mongering of the right-wing and will -- with our time, money, and votes -- actively support affirmative action, economic justice, abortion rights and reproductive freedom, civil rights for people of color, lesbian, gay and bisexual rights and efforts to end violence against women." At press time, COLAGE speakers are being considered for the rally stage.

The GLPCI Board also passed along this statement about the March's title:

"We, the GLPCI Board of Directors, recognize that groups organizing against democratic rights pose a serious threat to the lives and liberties of women and minority peoples in this country. It is critical that we all work together to provide information to give an accurate picture of our communities and to alert the general public to the dangers that we face. We look forward to the time when we will find the words to express our vision of a world where conflicts between people can be resolved without the annihilation of one party or the other." ▼

GLPCI Network

Special Double Issue

Guest Editorial by John D'Emilio, Director, The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

Family Matters --

What is a family? According to opinion polls, a majority of Americans understand family as a group of people who love one another and take care of each other in good times and bad.

What is a family? In the hands of the radical Christian right, it has become a symbol and a weapon. A symbol of an imagined past when everything was just fine. A weapon that divides people into categories of good or bad, moral or immoral, productive citizen or irresponsible parasite. The allegedly "pro-family" rhetoric of the radical right is deeply homophobic and antifeminist, and exploits historically powerful racist stereotypes.

What is a family? For lesbians and gay men, family has become the frontier issue in our struggle for freedom, justice, and respect. Everywhere we look, family issues are surfacing--in the courts, in state

(continued on page 2)



Kerrington & Alexandre Osborne, San Francisco from *Making Love Visible: In Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Families*, Photos by Geoff Manasse, Interviews by Jean Swallow - See Review on Page 3

Good Advice for All Parents -- from Stefan Lynch, Director, COLAGE

A few words of sage advice from someone who grew up with a gay dad and lesbian mom, and has talked to and read about hundreds of kids with lesbian and gay parents:

- 1) **It's never too early to come out to your child.** Kids understand love. What they don't understand is deception or hiding.
- 2) **And it's never too late to come out to your child.** I know folks in their forties whose parents are just now coming out to them. A lot of mysteries are being solved, and missing puzzle pieces falling into place for these families, and it's a good thing.
- 3) **Kids go through stages.** You don't need me to tell you that. But when your teenager throws a fit when you want to bring your lover to a family function, remember...show them you love them and that your love is not contingent on their blind acceptance of your gayness. They'll accept you much more quickly with that basis of support.

And conversely, just cause you kid is doing fine now, doesn't see what the big deal is, etc. -- that doesn't mean you should do nothing. Introduce them to other kids with gay parents. They may hate each other, but years later they might be good and important friends (happened to me.) Make positive books available. Be open to talking, but don't push it. Don't make your love contingent on their ongoing acceptance.

4) **Your kids may be gay.** They may be straight. Either way, it's not a judgement on your parenting. Nor are they doomed to a life of loneliness and desperation and homophobia (if they are gay). Be as supportive of your kid's orientation as you wished your parents were of yours.

5) **Finally, particularly you Dads, talk about AIDS.** Even if you don't have HIV, your kids are thinking about it. Tell them how you are protecting/taking care of yourself. If you are positive, tell them. Please. ▼

What are Your Dreams for Lesbian and Gay Parents and their Children?

You can make them come true by becoming a candidate for the GLPCI Board of Directors. GLPCI is looking for talented, hard-working and dedicated individuals to fill vacancies on its Board. Terms of office are for one or two years. Officers perform a variety of volunteer functions -- most importantly, raising money and setting policy for GLPCI. For more information, call John Nicoli, current GLPCI President, at (617) 273-1740. ▼

"P" is for PARTY

Speaking of raising money... the GLPCI Board is conducting a major development campaign for Spring 1996. May is "GLPCI House Party Month." Invite your friends (tell them to bring their checkbooks), serve wine and cheese, show a video -- and ask them to support you, your family, and the work GLPCI is doing for all of us. For a complete how-to manual, call/fax (201) 783-6204 or e-mail: GLPCINat@ix.netcom.com. It's fun and it's a commitment to our future. Join us! ▼

GLPCI Image In Media Award

Our *Image In Media* Award is presented annually at GLPCI's Family Conference to honor members of the media who have demonstrated or supported the positive influence gay and lesbian parents have on their children. Past recipients include authors April Martin and Amity Pierce Buxton, Phil Donahue, Oprah Winfrey and the Tracey Ullman Show. This year's suggested nominees include:

- Essence Magazine; The Birdcage (United Artists motion picture); Love Makes A Family Talk Radio Show, Portland Oregon; Making Love Visible: In Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Families (book of photos and text); and Sisters (NBC Television).
- We'd like to hear from you-- what are your ideas/feedback/suggestions? Call/fax us at (201) 783-6204. ▼

Family Matters (continued from page 1)

legislatures, in workplaces, in the schools, in communities of faith, in the activities of our community centers and other organizations. Sometimes, picking up a copy of a gay newspaper, nothing but family issues of one sort or another seem to fill its pages.

It wasn't always so. When I was first coming out in the late sixties, as a college student influenced by the hippie counterculture and the first wave of radical feminist theory, "family" was something I could do without. It seemed that my only choices were to have a family, which meant my family of origin, or to be gay, which meant exile and escape from the constrictions of a heterosexual institution.

So why does family seem so important to us in the 1990s? Is the concern for family simply a defensive, reactive move on our part, a knee-jerk response to the "traditional family values" rhetoric of the Radical Christian Right? Or does the rise of family issues tell us something about how we have changed and what we want?

I think it's the latter. There are good reasons growing out of the history of our movement and communities that have pushed family issues to the front burner.

One has to do with the growing diversity of the public face of our movement and our community organizations. Lesbians, for instance, have often taken the lead in campaigns involving custody, adoption, and our right to be parents. Lesbians and gays of color have spoken and written passionately of the importance of strong, extended family ties for the survival of their home communities in the face of racism, and of their unwillingness to have to choose between family ties or their sexual identity. As gays and lesbians in smaller communities come out of the closet and organize for change, family is something just around the corner, not something to escape from.

Family issues challenge homophobia in new and important ways. One of the most destructive and persistent stereotypes used to perpetuate hatred against us and keep us isolated and separate is the claim that we are a danger to children.

The gay man who molests children, or the lesbian teacher who corrupts her students, have been common cultural myths. As more and more parents come out of the closet and assert their right to keep their children, as more and more of us choose to have children even after coming out, we force the issue of queers and children in proactive ways.

Parents are becoming front-line activists in institutions that reach into the lives of most Americans. Take the public schools, for instance. As the children of openly gay or lesbian parents make their way through the public schools, these parents have to confront the insidious effects of homophobia in compelling ways. Will the schools, through their curriculum, be teaching these children to hate their parents? Will these children be the targets of ridicule, ostracism, and harassment? What must parents do to protect the integrity of their family relationships and to keep their children from harm? The actions they take--whether at parent-teacher conferences, at PTA meetings, or in one-on-one conversations with the parents of their children's friends, is the stuff of permanent grassroots social change.

Family issues matter. Whether it be the public rituals we create to celebrate our committed relationships or our decisions to have children in our lives, the articulation of a lesbian and gay "family politics" has the power to move our freedom struggle forward.

* * * * *

Dr. D'Emilio is a leading historian on sexuality and the gay and lesbian movement in the United States. He is the author of Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities (1983); Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America (1988); and Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University (1992).

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2320 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 332-6483 ▼

Making Love Visible: In Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Families

Photos by Geoff Manasse, Interviews by Jean Swallow --from *The Crossing Press*

It started in 1991 early on a Saturday morning, when Seattle photographer Geoff Manasse snuck up the stairs in a friend's house to take a special picture. The resulting photo shows a little boy cuddling in bed with his two dads as they read *The Three Little Pigs*.

For Manasse, it was a cutting-edge image of family life and got him thinking about others he might be able to take. Two years later, he met the late author Jean Swallow. He wanted to make love visible; she would join him to give that love its voice. Within two weeks, they had planned the cross-country trip that would make the volume become a reality. More than 150 people are pictured in the book, in Manasse's unforgettable, intimate black-and-white portraits. All are originals, happily and defiantly describing themselves as a family.

We meet Champagne, a Portland, Oregon drag queen as she confronts Christian fundamentalists. We glimpse a family of six adults, raising a two-year-old boy while helping one of the family to die of AIDS -- at home where he belongs. We revisit the story of Sharon Kowalski and Karen Thompson, who fought for eight years for the right to care for her injured lover.

"Jean turned every interview into a soulful exchange," says Manasse of his collaborator. "She wanted the book to be a healing document." Ironically, before the project was over, Swallow, who suffered from depression, died of a deliberate aspirin overdose. Her eulogy is published at the book's end.

Gay and lesbian readers will be proud to find a little bit of home in *Making Love Visible*. Supporters will find insight; detractors will be educated. Everyone's heart will be warmed by the hospitality of these families and the loving attention of the team that created this record. ▼

Who's in a Family?

Written by Robert Skutch and Illustrated by Laura Nienhaus for Tricycle Press.

At last, a "Family Album" that includes everyone.

Here are all different kinds of families: multiracial, multigenerational, gay, lesbian, straight, single parents, step-families, families with only children and no children -- even animal families. And there's a place on the last page for you to paste in a picture of your very own family!

The author is a P-FLAG parent, who wrote the book for his lesbian daughter and grandson. The brightly colored, full-page pictures show families having fun -- swimming, sledding, making dinner, playing with pets and toys. Highly recommended for ages 3 to 7. Ideal for your child's school library.

We're selling this wonderful book as a GLPCI Fundraiser -- For your copy, send your name and address with a check for \$17 to: "GLPCI"--Who's In A Family?, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043 U.S.A. ▼



Victor Gaitan & Roberto Garcia's Family

NEW on the Bookshelf

Fiction:

Mothers, by Jax Peter Lowell (St. Martin's Press).

A gripping tale about a young boy raised in New York City by two lesbians during the late 60s and early 70s. After a homophobic incident, one mom wants to fight -- the other to hide.

Safe As Houses, by Alex Jeffers (Faber & Faber).

Two gay men raise their son and a nephew, while facing AIDS. Touching, surprising and compelling.

Non-Fiction:

From Wedded Wife to Lesbian Life: Stories of Transformation, by Deborah Abbott and Ellen Farmer (The Crossing Press).

42 unique and diverse personal narratives, interviews and poems reveal eloquent stories of discovery and change.

The Lesbian Parenting Book: A Guide to Creating Families and Raising Children, by D. Merilee Clunis and G. Dorsey Green (Seal Press).

Drawing on the real life experiences of lesbian-headed families and the latest information from family specialists, the authors present detailed information on each stage of parenthood and child development.

Lesbian Parenting: Living with Pride and Prejudice, Edited by Katherine Arnup (Ragweed Press).

A perfect primer for lesbian parents, and a helpful resource for their families and friends. ▼

Gay Stepfamilies Needed!!!

I am looking for participants for my study on the gay stepfamily system. I need both the biological parent and the stepparent in families in which the child(ren) resides with you for at least six months during the year. I am hoping to set up some interviews at the GLPCI conferece in July, but am also travelling to various states to complete the interviews. If you are willing to participate, please call Professor Jean Lynch -- collect -- at (513) 423-6816. Thank You!

Did Pat Robertson Break the Ninth Commandment 1.4 Million Times?

Church & State Magazine reports that dues-paying Christian Coalition members are nearly 1.4 million fewer in number than claimed by the organization. The Coalition claims that its membership increased from 1.2 million in 1994 to 1.7 million in 1995. However, postal records reveal that paid membership actually fell from 353,703 in September 1994 to 310,296 in September 1995.

Not only is the Coalition lying -- which should be a major story in itself for a "Christian" organization -- but its support is weakening, which should also be a major political story.

"Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has set a well-established pattern of deception in many of its activities," said Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, publisher of the monthly magazine. "Wildly inflating its membership figures is just part of that deplorable practice." ▼

Birds of A Feather

Now showing at a theater near you -- *The Birdcage*.

Directed by Mike Nichols, this exuberant Americanized remake of the late 70s French farce, *La Cage aux Folles*, stars Robin Williams as a Miami beach gay nightclub owner proudly married for decades to a hyper-emotional drag performer, played by Nathan Lane. The men pose as a conventional male-female couple to placate right-wing senator Gene Hackman, whose daughter hopes to marry Williams' son.

"I grew up in San Francisco, and knew many same-sex families," says Williams. "They raise their children the same way you do -- they love them. There are many kinds of family, not just the Norman Rockwell kind." ▼

Family Friendly Libraries???

-- with contributions from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, National Coalition Against Censorship, and the American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom

A group calling itself "Family Friendly Libraries" (FFL) is organizing a nationwide effort to repudiate the "Library Bill of Rights," a strong anti-censorship policy adopted by the American Library Association. FFL hopes to convince schools and libraries to adopt its own policy, which states that the purpose of a library is to emphasize the "superiority" of the traditional family, a "mother and father, married to each other, committed to a lifetime monogamous relationship." Following FFL guidelines, libraries would restrict access to any materials that do not promote these "family values."

Anti-homosexual bigotry provides much of the fuel for Family Friendly Libraries. The National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) reports that these "extremists have learned the utility of tapping into -- and deepening -- the existing reservoir of fear and resentment at the perceived success of the 'homosexual agenda.' Exploiting homophobia, they have learned, quickly polarizes communities and makes reasoned debate nearly impossible." One force behind FFL is Fairfax, Virginia housewife Karen Jo Gounaud, who has been leading a local fight to stop the free distribution of *The Washington Blade* in public libraries in her county. Gounaud, who has even contributed a column to *The Blade* expressing her moderate-sounding views, wants to offer her experience, tactics and insights to would-be censors around the U.S.

When censors like Gounaud and FFL are successful, NCAC says, "students learn that reading is dangerous, that adults do not trust young people, and that suppression is the way to respond to controversy." They also learn hatred and fear. Censors of homosexuality are, in effect, teachers of homophobia. When fair and factual information is suppressed, myths about sexual orientation thrive -- promoting substance abuse, suicide, guilt, isolation, increased risk of HIV infection, physical abuse, and a host of other tragic consequences.

While would-be censors argue that books about homosexuality are inappropriate for minors, it is school-aged children that commit most of the homophobic hate crimes reported annually. The silence in our schools and libraries cannot be separated from the violence in our streets. ▼

CHARTER FOR A "FAMILY FRIENDLY" LIBRARY SYSTEM

Traditional Family Emphasis -- The library system clearly acknowledges the importance and superiority of the traditional family -- mother and father married to each other, committed to a lifetime monogamous relationship and to caring responsibly together for their children.

Parental Library Rights -- The library system clearly acknowledges parents as having primary authority over the lives and activities, including reading activities, of their minor children.

Respect for Standards and Laws -- The library system clearly acknowledges "Community Standards" and statutory law, both local and state, as being relevant to the selection, display, and access policies concerning materials for the public library system.

Respect for Minors -- The library system clearly acknowledges that minor patrons have sensitivities and vulnerabilities different from that of adults and deserving of protection.

Parent and Citizen Participation -- The library system clearly acknowledges that regular communication with parents and other concerned citizens is a necessary and important part of maintaining a library that successfully serves the needs of families, and does not undermine their strength. ▼



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NEWS for Our Families -- Custody and Visitation The #1 Reason Lesbian & Gay Americans Go to Court

In a decision which outraged parents of all sexual orientations, court watchers and the media nationwide, Circuit Judge Joseph Tarbuck of Pensacola, Florida determined that an 11-year-old girl would be better off in the custody of her father, John Ward -- a convicted felon who served time for murdering his first wife in 1974 in a dispute over custody issues -- than her mother, a lesbian in a committed relationship. The mother, Mary Ward, has asked the 1st District Court of Appeals to reverse Tarbuck's ruling.

Since the August ruling, an adult daughter from John Ward's first marriage has come forward with accusations of sexual abuse by her father throughout her childhood.

Lawyers for the mother say the case marks Florida's first chance for a ruling on whether sexual orientation can be a deciding factor in child custody cases. Supreme courts in eight other states have said a homosexual parent should not automatically be denied custody. Five others have ruled the opposite. The U.S. Supreme Court has never dealt with the question.

Sharon Bottoms and April Wade are again reeling after the latest decision of a Henrico County, Virginia juvenile court judge, and may give up the fight in the U.S.'s highest profile custody case ever.

In his February ruling, Judge William G. Boice didn't emphasize the couple's lesbian relationship when explaining why he was giving custody of 4-1/2-year-old Tyler Doughton to his maternal grandmother, Kay Bottoms. Instead, Judge William G. Boice pointed to a movie deal on the custody case that is to earn the couple \$75,000 and 5 percent of any profit.

"I am less concerned with her lesbianism than Tyler being made a poster boy for a cause he could not and did not enlist," Boice said as he delivered his ruling. "I am appalled at the movie contract. [Sharon Bottoms] continues to put her interests above that of her child. For all her shortcomings, Kay does not."

About the ABC-TV movie deal

(filming this spring with Valerie Bertinelli as Sharon and Vanessa Redgrave as Kay), attorneys for Sharon Bottoms said, "Folks badgered Sharon and April for a year and a half ... until they reluctantly agreed -- knowing a movie would be made anyway -- to cooperate with it, so that the story might be a more accurate one."

Boice's decision went against the recommendation of a lawyer appointed to represent Tyler, who conducted extensive interviews and home visits.

This attorney delivered a stinging rebuke of Kay Bottoms' parenting skills. She said she was unwilling to discipline Tyler, and Tyler in turn has become dominating of adults and other children. She also noted that Tyler sleeps in the same bed with his grandmother, although he has his own room. Tyler's attorney was deeply concerned by the developmental delays she observed in Tyler. At 4-1/2, he doesn't know the alphabet, can't or

(continued on page 13)

Love is in the Air-- GLPCI's Annual Family Conference

July 4th weekend will find several hundred GLPCI families and friends in beautiful Minneapolis, Minnesota for our 17th Annual Family Conference. Kevin Jennings, Executive Director of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Teachers Network, will be a featured speaker.

The site -- the Regal Hotel in downtown Minneapolis located on the world famous Nicollet Mall. It's ideal for our families and those with special needs. For hotel reservations, call 1-800-522-8856.

Plan some extra time to enjoy the summer fun in the City of Lakes -- outdoor entertainment, the Minnesota Zoo, Children's Museum, Science Center, the Mall of America and Knott's Camp Snoopy!

For more information, contact our host chapter -- Minnesota Families -- at Box 11970, St. Paul, MN 55111 or call (612) 924-3049.

See you there! ▼

How Should We Talk About "Religious Political Extremists"?

Some of us call them the *Extreme Right Wing* or the *Far Right*. I like to call them the *Radical Religious Right*, or the *RRR* -- pun intended.

But what should we call these people? What name will help us frame the debate on our terms?

According to focus groups conducted by Lake Research for the Human Rights Campaign, the term "Religious Right" has many positive associations, and may carry the message-- "the right to choose your own religion."

"Radical Right" has a strong negative association, but is most frequently associated with militias, skinheads and neo-Nazis, particularly since the Oklahoma City bombing.

The term "Religious Political Extremists," however, is strongly negative with every group of voters, including the most religious. ▼

freedom to marry

Everything Possible by Tim Fisher, GLPCI's Executive Director

On Valentine's Day, my three-year-old son, Fritz, came home from Nursery School with a slew of Valentine's in his lunch box. At the kitchen table, we opened them and read them together. At the bottom of the pile was a beautiful Pochantas Valentine from Fritz's good friend, Erin. On the back, Erin, who's already writing simple sentences, had scrawled -- "Will you marry me?"

I thought this was adorable -- his first proposal. Fritz smiled, thought for a minute, and said, "When I grow up, I want to marry Erin -- or Zack."

Zack is an 11-year-old boy who comes over after school once or twice a week and babysits the kids while I'm upstairs working. He happened to be there that day, and heard what Fritz said. His response -- "Gee Fritz, that's nice!"

This little interchange put me in a sunny mood all day. I called Zack's house and told one of his moms the story. She laughed and said "And of course, you'll be writing this one up for your next newsletter."

I did pause for a moment though, before running to my keyboard. One of the myths about the children of gay and lesbian parents is that they're confused about their sexual identity. Does this vignette play right into that fear? Could this story be used against us?

No, I reminded myself -- Fritz is right! He's a lucky kid, because at only three, he knows the truth. Marriage is about love. He can grow up to marry Erin or Zack, or someone else. He can marry the person he loves -- no matter what their gender. And he may choose not to get married.

Fritz isn't confused -- he's well informed. He knows that there are all kinds of loving families. Living with two fathers, Fritz would be confused if he didn't realize that this was one of life's possibilities.

Sometimes there is one parent, sometimes two, and sometimes even more -- Fritz's good friend, Jordan, even has two moms and a dad all happily living under the same roof. And he knows couples, who don't have children -- Aunt Debs and Uncle Brian leap to mind -- and knows they're a family too.

By the time Fritz is ready to be married, his marriage will most likely be legally recognized -- whether he marries a woman or a man. His other father and I have to wait a short time longer for our marriage to be legally recognized -- we hope.

Of course, wise little Fritz has my blessing. When he grows up, he can marry Erin or Zack. They'd both make terrific in-laws. And in the meantime, we'll keep singing our favorite bedtime lullaby, *Everything Possible*, made famous by The Fabulous Flirtations:

*You can be anybody that you want to be
You can love whomever you will
You can travel any country where your
heart leads*

And know I will love you still

You can live by yourself

You can gather friends around

You can choose one special one

*And the only measure of your words and
your deeds*

*Will be the love you leave behind when
you're gone*

Some girls grow up strong and bold

Some boys are quiet and kind

Some race on ahead, some follow behind

Some grow in their own space and time

Some women love women

And some men love men

Some raise children and some never do

*You can dream all the day never reaching
the end*

Of everything possible for you ▼

Unspeakable Unions? – The Filmy Case Against Gay Marriage Excerpts from Commentary by Stephen Chapman, The Chicago Tribune

A specter is haunting conservatives: gay marriage....

Much of the opposition stems from religious objections. "We just believe it's plain immoral," said Tim Wildmon, vice president of the American Family Association. "It goes against the Holy Scriptures...."

The primary objection from Christian Action Network president Martin Mawyer is that if gays gain the right to wed, "marriage as an institution will be rendered meaningless." Society encourages marriage, he says, solely because "it is likely to produce a greater good, namely children, who are necessary for any society's existence."

But not everyone who gets married has children, and not everyone who has children gets married. We allow unions between people who don't want children and people who can't have children.

Marriage, conservatives argue, provides a vital framework for raising children. But gay couples also raise children--either children one of them has produced or children they have adopted. There is no law to stop a lesbian mother from bringing up her own son in a household that includes her female partner.

Robert Knight of the Family Research Council says homosexual conduct has to be discouraged to preserve traditional marriages, which are precious because "the stability they bring to a community benefits all." But allowing gay marriage would advance the same interest by discouraging promiscuity and encouraging commitment--the opposite of what current policy does. If it's good for society when straight couples settle down in permanent, legally sanctioned relationships, why is it bad when gay couples do likewise?

Because it would set a terrible precedent, according to Amherst College professor Hadley Arkes. Next thing you know, he warns, we'll have to allow marriage between men and boys, between fathers and daughters, even between multiple partners. Knight goes further, fearing that some men will want to marry dogs.

Here we have passed into outright hallucination....

These arguments serve mainly to obscure the issue, not illuminate it. Conservatives say they abhor gay marriage because they value marriage. The truth is they abhor gay marriage because they abhor gays. ▼

Civil Marriage Benefits (continued)

- Obtain wrongful death benefits for a surviving partner and children
- Apply for immigration and residency for partners from other countries
- Have joint parenting, adoption, foster care, custody and visitation
- Obtain domestic violence protection orders

Most of these benefits cannot be privately arranged or contracted through other means, even for those who can afford a lawyer. Furthermore, private employers, banks, and other businesses often extend important benefits and privileges, such as special rates or memberships, to married couples only.

Denying equal marriage rights not only deprives same-gender couples of the social and emotional significance that marriage holds for many, it also deprives them of legal and economic benefits that can be essential to their livelihood. ▼

The Marriage Resolution

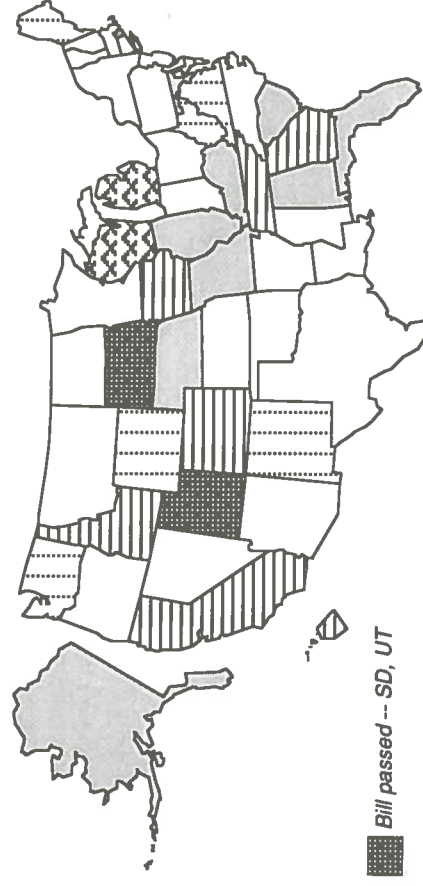
Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual personal choice,

RESOLVED, the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage.

Resources for the Marriage Activist:

- From Lambda Legal Defense, 212-995-8585, or e-mail EW.LLDEF@aol.com -- talking points, sample testimony, press kits, marriage brochures and briefings in English and Spanish, legal summaries, etc.
- From the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 202-332-6483, or e-mail bbarrett@nglftf.org -- "To Have and to Hold": A Marriage-Organizing Manual
- From the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center, 213-860-7357, or e-mail PRCenter@aol.com -- an "Editorial Packet" for media activism

March 96 Legislation to Ban Equal Marriage in 27 States



Bill passed -- SD, UT

Bill passed one chamber -- CA, CO, GA, HI, ID, IA, TN

Bill pending first floor vote -- AL, AK, FL, IL, KY, MD, MO, NE, RI, SC

Bill dead -- ME, NM, VA, WA, WV

Bill expected -- MI, WI

Equal Marriage Attacks in 27 States

In the next year or two, as a result of an anticipated court decision, the state of Hawaii may issue marriage licenses to same-gender couples, which other states would have to recognize under current law.

But the religious political extremists have mounted efforts in many states -- 27 at present -- to enact laws to prevent any such recognition. They are trying to shut down the discussion before our community can engage the public; our job is to keep it open and keep it advancing.

Already we've had some victories and some defeats. Randall Terry of Operation Rescue (the anti-abortion extremist) has announced he is going to Hawaii with "Gay Agenda" video maker Bill Horn and other right wing representatives to protest gay marriages. During caucus week in Iowa, all but one of the Republican presidential hopefuls attended (or sent supportive statements to) an anti-gay marriage rally.

Candidates Phil Gramm and Alan Keyes didn't get the irony in their opposition to equal marriage -- both have interracial marriages that would have been illegal in some U.S. states as recently as 1969.

On the plus side, numerous media reports, editorials and talk show programs have already addressed the unfairness of denying the freedom to marry to lesbians and gays. *The Economist* endorsed equal marriage rights in a cover story, the *Des Moines Register* opposes a local anti-marriage bill, former President Jimmy Carter has editorialized our case from a religious perspective, and *Oprah* and *Nightline* have positively covered the struggle. Public support for equal marriage has risen from about 25% in 1992 to almost 40% today.

To win and keep the freedom to marry, we must be prepared to focus on a long struggle. Please get involved with any of the groups in the National Freedom to Marry Coalition (GLPCI is a founding member) and its state-by-state partners.

Sign the Marriage Resolution, and ask others to do so. Write letters and articles for your local press. Join us! ▼

FIRST PERSON -- Dating and the Bisexual, Single Mom

him better and am enjoying his company, but how will I work the fact that I am bi into the conversation? Will he pull back when he realizes I'm interested? A simple thing like "I like you, let's go out on a date" becomes a confused tangle of missed signals, misinterpretations and faulty assumptions.

There's an assumption I

keep running across that as soon as I find a long-term partner, I will see my bisexuality as a phase and conclude that I have found my "true" sexual orientation (which one it is will depend on the gender of my partner, naturally). A relative recently told me, "You'll have to make up your mind some time!" I resent several things about this assertion. One, is that a monogamous partnership is my ultimate goal, and another is that I can't simply be who I am: a person who likes both men and women, and always will like both men and women, regardless of what kind of relationship I am in. This doesn't mean I'll always sleep with both men and women if I do decide on a monogamous relationship, but it means the potential for attraction will still be there. Why is this concept so hard for non-bisexuals to deal with, when surely it is the same for, say, a lesbian who is in a committed relationship? Has she really ceased feeling any attraction to other women just because she has a partner and they hyphenated their names?

I brought my last part-

ner, a lesbian, to our family Christmas party. I figured my relatives would assume she was just a friend -- only my sister knew I was bisexual -- but later that week my sister got drunk and outed me to them as a lesbian, which I'm not. My family has not spoken about it with me, but my father and siblings continue to be an active part of my life. My dad does a lot of babysitting for the kids. After seeing one of my performance pieces, one brother said I probably just wasn't able to find

BISEXUAL RESOURCE GUIDE

Robyn Ochs, editor

More than 1,400 groups in over 20 countries; lists of books and films with bi content; merchandise (buttons, t-shirts, books, etc.); safer sex info; upcoming conferences; and more!

Available for only US\$8, postage paid. To order YOUR copy, send a check along with your address, to:

Bisexual Resource Center
P.O. Box 639
Cambridge, MA 02140, USA

was with a guy. All the straight men I've ever dated have assumed I'm straight until I mention I'm bi. I prefer being honest and up-front with people I am dating about my bisexual orientation because if my date doesn't like it, that's an excellent indicator that we're not going to be developing the relationship.

It's a hassle always to

be coming out, no matter who I'm dating. Here's a good example of the inner dialogue that bounces around in my head when I'm interested in asking

"I'm not saying motherhood rules out the chances of dating, but I don't know if any single mothers of young children who will tell you that it's easy doing both."

someone new on a date. I have had a crush on a male acquaintance and recently have asked him out in a casual way. He's had valid reasons for not being able to go -- had a business trip scheduled, had tickets to a soccer match -- so I didn't take his "No, thanks" as a personal rejection. In fact, I'm fairly certain he doesn't even realize I am attracted to him. He may assume I am a lesbian because he knows of the last woman I dated. When I ask him out, he probably is thinking I mean it in the "just friends" category, not as a romantic date. This is a problem. On the other hand, he knows that I'm a mother and so far hasn't joked about turkey basters or anything, so maybe he's caught on that I've had men in my life, too. But since he's never asked and I haven't had a smooth opening to bring it up, I don't actually know what he assumes about how I conceived my children. We have a sweet friendship, and in this context I've been getting to know

When I'm going out on

a date with a woman who identifies as lesbian, it's always assumed by her and her friends that I, too, am a lesbian, until I mention that my last relationship

The chances should be twice as good that I will have a date on a Saturday night because of the fact that I am open to dating women or men. Further, I am open to dating a person who is straight, bi or transgendered. Mathematically, that may create a larger pool of potential candidates, but in spite of my willingness to date across all categories, lately I haven't been out on any dates at all. I have infatuations now and then, but as a single mother to twin 6-year-olds, there's less time to pursue these crushes. My first priority is taking care of my kids. I'm not saying motherhood rules out the chances of dating, but I don't know any single mothers of young children who will tell you that it's easy doing both.

There's no question in

my experience whether it is easier to come out to potential dates as bisexual, or to come out as a single mom. Early on -- pretty much as soon as I meet someone for whom I feel some attraction -- I let drop somewhere in the conversation that I have twins.

After all, we're a package deal -- if someone doesn't have an interest in kids, they won't last long in my life. Coming out as bisexual is more complicated. My appearance wouldn't give me away; I fit neatly into any category so it's harder to be stereotyped as straight or lesbian. I have gone out dressed as a man in complete drag, with beard, and been handed the key to the Men's Room, and at other times I have dressed in a traditional feminine mode. I have a classic women's figure, especially one that has borne twins, but I've surprised people by my deep voice, tough stance. I am not straight, and also not androgynous; I can be manly or womanly, or both at the same time.

was smitten, but assumed she was heterosexual (yes, bisexuals are prone to making the same faulty assumptions about other people). Anyway, I flirted lightly and was shocked when she flirted back. I became involved with both of them at the same time. Because they already lived together, when we went out in public or spent time with their friends, it was assumed that I was their friend, nothing more. The world doesn't acknowledge three people as having a romantic relationship. No one who saw us out on a romantic date would ever think of us that way because "three's a crowd," right? Any public displays of affection appeared to be a joke to anyone watching, including when we had a group kiss on the street. We looked like a happy bunch of affectionate friends. It was a strange invisibility. We were being outrageous, but no one saw it. We lasted a few months as a romantic entity, and a few years as sexual friends. I have written love notes to that couple. I know this sounds complicated to those who haven't been through it, but I like to say, "Labels are for food, not people."

It would probably be

easier for my kids if I ended up with a man and looked, to the world, like a heterosexual woman. Because my kids

"In the frazzled reality of raising two kids

on my own, I was needy in

the romance department

and I was drawn to her immediate connection to my mother isn't?"

are so young, I haven't sat down with them to explain something as complicated as sexual orientation, but recently my daughter has been learning terms like "in love with" and "crush" from other kids at school. The other day, when we were alone and relaxed, I told her that the last woman I had dated, Suzie, and I had been in love. We were together for an intense nine months, during which she spent a lot of time with my kids, who became very fond of her. At this announce-

ment, my child giggled. I waited to see if she would have questions. Then she said, "Yeah," and that was it.

I wonder how my kids

think about that relationship. I hate to stereotype, but Suzie, a lesbian, did start talking about moving in after only one date. In her pre-lesbian life, she had been married and had two children, who are nearly grown, and she was very attracted to becoming a coparent to my kids. In the frazzled reality of raising two kids on my own, I was needy in the romance department and I was drawn to her immediate connection to my kids -- what mother isn't? My kids loved her and after only one month, she was strongly pushing her proposal to move in. I put the breaks on and looked at the situation. There were lots of areas in the relationship where we weren't compatible and didn't communicate well, and I certainly wasn't ready to make a serious commitment like living together. When you have kids, you can't invite someone into your life lightly. Kids grow attached, and then breaking up -- if that becomes necessary -- is so much more complicated and painful for them.

My ideal partner would

be as open-minded as myself, creative, cooperative and whole, even if "in process" -- not an incomplete "second half" looking for its mate to be complete. On a date with a man, I like pulling the chair out for him, opening the door, paying the tab. On a date with a woman, I like fluid roles, where we can flip back and forth from butch to femme. I don't know what the perfect date would be like, but I'm always up for an adventure. ▼

The author is a multimedia artist who doesn't know what she wants to be when she grows up -- besides honest. Thank you, Jane, for sharing your story. Readers, if your family would like to be profiled in this space -- please contact the Editor.

This article was first published by *In the Family: A Magazine for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and their Relations*, and is reprinted here with permission. To subscribe to *In the Family*, send \$22 to ITF, Box 5387, Takoma Park, MD 20913, or call (301) 270-4771 for more information. Subscriptions outside the U.S. are \$26.

Camp Common Ground

A Granola Eat-in', Cotton Wearin', Mud Lovin', Kid Adorin', Fun Time!

Kids and grownups of all ages will have a unique place to play and work together this summer in Vermont. Campers can be single, married or unmarried or same sex couples, children, roommates, friends and grandparents.

Located at Camp Hochelega on Lake Champlain in South Hero, Vermont (north of Burlington), the camp will run for three one-week sessions from August 11th to 31st this summer. Now in its third year, plans call for expansion to a year-round program.

Camp Common Ground offers traditional recreational activities: canoeing, sailing, tennis, soccer, baseball, music and more. Some unusual offerings include Tai Chi, yoga, African and Latin dance, in-depth discussion groups, outdoor adventure, Conga drumming, playwriting, poetry, puppet-making, juggling and gymastics. The environment is nurturing and non-competitive.

The camp, a non-profit venture, is run cooperatively. All campers, regardless of age, are invited to sign up for a work slot -- ranging from helping in the vegetarian kitchen, leading a nature walk, organizing a baseball game or telling a story. Campers can buy or barter for membership, which will entitle them to a voice in how the camp is managed and the programs offered in future years.

For more information, see the advertisement below. ▼



unCommon Fun
for grownups & kids

A Cooperative Camp
on Lake Champlain, Vermont

Massage, Yoga, Tai Chi,
Arts & Crafts, Music,
Dance, Theater,
Sports, Canoeing, Sailing,
Healthy Food ...and More

for info call: 1-800-430-0007

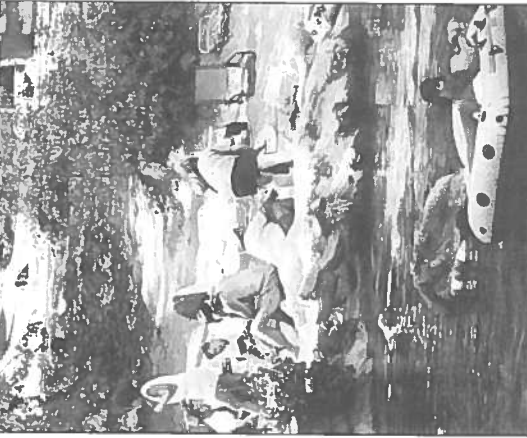
three
1 week
sessions
**August
11 to 31**

Summer Fun!

Making plans for your summer vacation? Check out these camps which welcome our families. GLPCI does not endorse these particular ventures, but presents this information as a service to its membership. If you know of any other camps catering to our community of parents and children, please contact GLPCI.



Uncommon Fun for Grown-ups and Kids -- photo courtesy of Camp Common Ground



Camp It Up!'s Popular Swimmin' Hole- 11 photo courtesy of Camp It Up!

Camp It Up! -- A Summer Celebration

Campers of all ages will enjoy the beauty and protected environment of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp, just a short drive from Yosemite, California, for three days to two weeks -- from August 19th to September 1st.

Now in its 7th year, Camp It Up! provides every opportunity for each member of the family, from infants to grandparents, to relax and have lots of fun. The diverse camp community includes lesbian/gay, single parent, multi-racial and traditional families and friends.

Counselor-led groups for children ages 1 to 11 are offered each day, as well as a variety of crafts, music, sports and drama activities led by program specialists. A teen program is offered each week for 12 to 14 year-olds, as well as a Counselor-in-Training program for older teens.

Some of Camp It Up!'s new and unusual activities include: a family fishing clinic, a teen "vision quest," a scrabble tournament, treasure hunts, star-gazing, breakfast and night hikes, and sweat-lodge saunas.

Camp It Up! is a cooperative program in order to provide an extensive children's program and still keep the camp affordable. For more information, write Camp It Up!, 4000 Waterhouse Road, Oakland, CA 94602 or call (510) 530-0107 for a free brochure. ▼

Mountain Meadow Summer Camp "I Miss Getting 100 Hugs a Day"

First Person Account by Rachel Milenbach

For the third year in a row, I was privileged to live, work and play at a very special summer camp. Mountain Meadow Summer Camp is a two week feminist overnight camp for children from many types of families, including: children of single parents; of lesbian, gay, transgendered and heterosexual families; and of biracial and bicultural families. This year's camp took place on a beautiful site in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania (about 30 miles from Philadelphia).

This year's staff was just amazing. In order to be hired, our new staff had to meet one basic criterion -- to love kids. Since Mountain Meadow is about loving and respecting young people (and ourselves), we figured other staff skills such as the ability to cook and run activities were secondary.

At Mountain Meadow, we did a lot of the usual camp activities and made up some unique ones too. We held daily "kids meetings" where campers met to discuss whatever was on their minds, and "choice" activities where they had the opportunity to offer to the group any activity of their choosing. We wrote, produced and filmed a video about youth and tobacco. We had a camp-wide pillow fight, played cooperative games, and shared responsibility for cooking all of our meals.

Our most memorable times were probably the ones we planned on the spur of the moment. One night the staff surprised the kids at bed time with a wild disco dance/ice cream/water fight party. Another night we cooked a delicious Thanksgiving dinner just because we thought it would be fun!

When I return, adjusting to the real world again is always interesting. Although my life is full, I keep having the feeling that something is missing. While sharing photographs of Mountain Meadow with a friend, the answer came to me. I miss getting 100 hugs a day, cuddling with my tentmates, laughing hysterically just because it feels good, being with kids all day. I miss the special community we created.

Mountain Meadow is a feminist overnight summer camp for girls and boys, ages 8 to 14. In 1996, one and two week sessions are planned for August 18th to 31st. Camp is organized during the year by a volunteer collective based in Philadelphia. Tuition is based on a sliding scale to reach young people of all economic classes. For more information, write: Mountain Meadow Summer Camp, 35 West Mt. Airy Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19119, or call (215) 242-3037. Rachel's article (edited for length) first appeared in *Labyrinth: The Philadelphia Women's Newspaper* (Oct. 1995). ▼



The kids' community with a feminist conscience- photo courtesy of Mountain Meadow

Camping Out -- by Michelle Kathleen Hamilton

In 1993, Peg Lahn and I were asked as lesbians and peer educators to recommend a recreation program that would be open and positive for a 12-year-old boy who was physically threatened when his summer camp counselor found out he had been exploring his sexuality with another male camper. We could offer no viable options. When we consulted other Canadian organizations supporting youth dealing with issues of sexual orientation, we found that they simply couldn't provide recreational programs, so Camping Out was conceived.

Camping Out is an unique interactive adventure-based program for youth who are not heterosexual, and friends or children of gays and lesbians who are looking for an alternative to traditional camping experiences. The Camping Out program promotes confidence in sexual identity, community connections, and informed life decisions among youth confronting issues of sexual orientation.

The Camping Out experience begins with a 12-day group adventure into North-ern Ontario. While we camp, canoe, hike and rock climb our way along an ancient canoe route, the programming moves through workshops and relevant discussions on conflict resolution, creative problem solving, trust, relationships, sexual identity, health and wellness, wilderness living, eco-management and first aid.

Camping Out is group directed and runs sessions throughout the summer based on demand, with trips designed for group interest and need. The Camping Out experience continues throughout the year with follow-up events and weekends including ropes courses and winter camping.

The program, affiliated with the Toronto chapter of P-FLAG, is specifically directed -- but not limited -- to 14 to 19 year-olds. We are committed to a sliding scale fee structure in order to insure accessibility and inclusion. Group-initiated community service work during the follow-up season is integral to program ownership and is designed to develop community connections and participation.

For more information, write Camping Out Centre for Learning, 401 Richmond Street, West, Suite B174, Toronto, Ontario M5V 3A8 CANADA; or call (416) 340-7476. ▼

"Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent."

-- Humanitarian and lesbian mom Eleanor Roosevelt

Internet Resources for Parents and Kids

Gay/Lesbian Parenting Chat on America On-Line -- Current Schedule: WED 12-1 a.m. EST; SUN 9-10 p.m. EST
Go To Keyword: GLCF Events, and click on Support Group Icon
Info on COLAGE from KidsOfGays@aol.com
GLPCI Home Page: <http://www.qrd.org/QRD/www/orgs/glpci/HOME.HTM>
Gay Dads Home Page: <http://userwww.service.emory.edu/~librpj/gaydads.html>

To join the GAYDADS, KIDSOFGAYS or QUEER-PARENTS lists:

1. E-mail majordomo@vector.casti.com
2. No subject line, on text line type...
3. subscribe LISTNAME YOUR NAME <your e-mail address> ex. subscribe KIDSOFGAYS John Doe <GLPCI@aol.com>

To join the MOMS list:

1. E-mail majordomo@qiclab.scn.rain.com
2. No subject line, on text line type...
3. subscribe MOMS YOUR NAME <your e-mail address>

To join the Straight Spouse list:

1. E-mail majordomo@texsys.com
2. No subject line, on text line type...
3. subscribe spouse-support

Internet Support for GLPCI Parent Groups

GLPCI is developing a new list on the Internet -- one where members of local parent support groups can share ideas and inspiration. Share a story of a successful activity for the kids... Want to complain about lack of participation? Talk to a group that understands... Hosting a mini-conference? Ask what others have done... Share fundraising ideas and more. The list will debut this summer. For more details, give our resident Internet expert, Jim Fagelson (see below), a call.

Questions?, contact Jim Fagelson at: GLPCINat@ix.netcom.com

"An important message for all Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered parents and their children" ...brought to you by

Announcing... a new e-mail list for daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents! Kids, teens, adults -- Tell your own stories. Ask questions. Use your experience to help others. Make new friends.

Why? To talk about AIDS, teasing, our gay and straight parents, our feelings, school, and much more. This list is a place to talk about all the things we can't talk about anywhere else.

Who? The list is open to anyone who is a daughter or son of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered parents, including people with gay foster parents or other guardians. It's for people whose parents are just coming out, and those whose parents were out before they were born.

How? To subscribe to the list, see the instructions at left. The list is moderated by Mike Greer, the adult son of a lesbian mom. No parents will participate in the list unless they have gay parents themselves. Kids may use their parent's email address, but we ask that parents refrain from reading or contributing to the list.

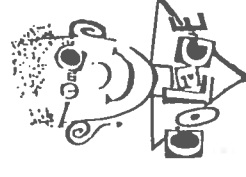
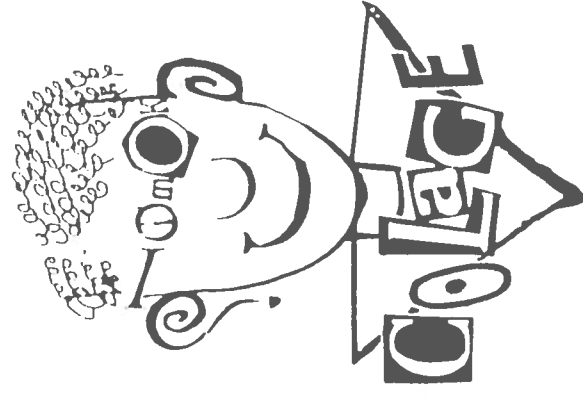
Questions? You can send them to kidsofgays-owner@vector.casti.com.

Special thanks to Moderator Mike Greer, Executive List-Mistress: Dorsie Hathaway (dorsieh@vector.casti.com) and our Server, David Casti and Casti.com

Introducing...Denise Connett

After a truly rigorous and very difficult hiring process with so many outstanding candidates, we are pleased to announce that Denise Connett will join COLAGE in the position of Assistant Director. Denise, the daughter of a gay father, is GLPCI's first paid professional employee. She comes to our San Francisco office from Boston where she's been an integral part of the team that has made Bean Town our strongest COLAGE chapter. With kids and adult groups, media savvy, a touring play about teens with L/G/B/T parents, letter writing campaigns and more, COLAGE-Boston has lead the way in supporting and advocating for our families. Denise has also served on the COLAGE Steering Committee as this year's Conference Coordinator.

"COLAGE is really starting to grow," says Denise, "and I'm excited to have the opportunity to do proactive work on behalf of our families." Welcome Denise!



Kids Club



Fun Pages
For your kids, ages 6-12. Coming soon, an 11-year-old interviews his hero, Greg Louganis.
To subscribe, write: COLAGE, 2300 Market Street, Box 166, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 861-KIDS.

August 3-11, 1996



Gay and Lesbian Family Week
in Provincetown, Massachusetts

Sponsored by GLPCI
For more info, call 202-583-8029

Gay and Lesbian Family Week in Provincetown, Mass. August 3 - 11, 1996

GLPCI has declared the first week in August to be "Gay and Lesbian Family Week." The event will begin on Saturday, August 3rd and run until Sunday, August 11th, 1996.

"Lesbian and Gay parents from all over the country are always on the lookout for gay-friendly -- and kid-friendly -- spots to vacation," says Tim Fisher, GLPCI's Executive Director. "Provincetown fits this description to a tee."

"Our 'Family Week' is about meeting people, building sandcastles at the beach, sharing a babysitter, and going whale watching, bike riding or out to eat with newfound friends," continues Fisher. "Part of GLPCI's Mission is to sponsor Family Get-togethers to share, learn and celebrate that *Love makes a Family!*"

There is no fee charged by GLPCI and no long list of planned events and activities. GLPCI will host a barbecue and provide an information sheet at the Provincetown Chamber of Commerce Building in August listing a few suggested activities and times when families can enjoy them together.

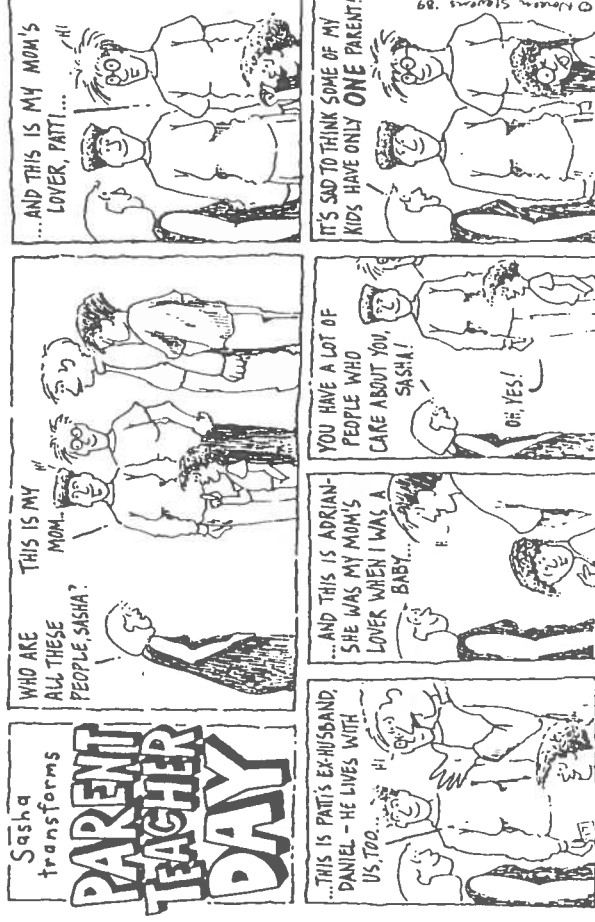
Families should secure their own accommodations. One source to call is In-Town Reservations at 1-800-67P-TOWN. But do it soon! —

August is the peak season and available lodgings will disappear fast.

GLPCI plans for Family Week to become an annual event in Provincetown. "We'd like to see other resorts plan activities like these for the rapidly-expanding market of gay and lesbian-headed families," urges Fisher. "How about a Ski Week in the Rockies or a Tropical Cruise? Our families crave opportunities to socialize with other families like ours — to help counter the discrimination and bigotry we sometimes face at home and in school."

Anyone with ideas for additional Family Get-togethers is encouraged to contact GLPCI. See you at Herring Cove Beach! ▼

THE CHOSEN FAMILY



Reprinted with the kind permission of Noreen Stevens, ©1989

NEWS for Our Families (continued from page 5)

won't count past three, and has trouble identifying colors.

Judge Boice's decision also declined to punish Kay Bottoms for frequently denying court-ordered visitation between her daughter and grandson. Kay Bottoms withheld visitation about 25 percent of the time, Tyler's attorney estimated.

Sharon's attorneys said immediately after the hearing that they would appeal the ruling to the circuit court. But Sharon Bottoms wasn't so sure. According to her partner April Wade, she's trying "to decide if she wants to go through this."

January brought good news to lesbian moms Donna Madsen and Shirley Edwards of Lexington, North Carolina. Edwards' mother, who accused them of sexually abusing Edwards' daughter back in 1994 in a bid for custody, finally dropped the charges. • The Utah Supreme Court granted primary custody of a 7-year-old girl to her father instead of her lesbian mother. But the high court specifically stated that the case did not hinge on the sexual orientation of the parents. • In December, the Wyoming Supreme Court placed limits on a lesbian mother's visitation with her children. But the main reason, said the court, was not her sexual orientation, but "the vicious clash of lifestyles" between the mother and her female companion and the former husband and his fundamentalist Christian wife. ACLU attorneys who cooperated on the case term the decision a loss, but say its key impact will be positive. ▼

Update on

Second-Parent Adoption

Second-parent adoption, where the same-sex partner of a parent becomes a second legal parent to the child, remains in the news.

The troublesome D.C. Appropriations Bill has not yet been enacted by the U.S. Senate. But the current version, which finally cleared the U.S. House, allows these protections for our children to continue.

Here's a complete list of locations where these adoptions have been granted (*= Statewide precedent):

Alaska
California
Colorado
District of Columbia*
Illinois*
Indiana
Iowa
Massachusetts*
Michigan
Minnesota
Nevada
New Jersey*
New York*
Ohio
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Texas
Vermont*
Washington
Outside USA:
Ontario, Canada
Manchester, England

First Cases Pending: Idaho, Maryland; the Netherlands

If you know of other jurisdictions where second-parent adoptions have been filed, please call GLPCI. ▼

BOTH OF MY MOMS' NAMES ARE JUDY



"An excellent tool for educating teachers about a common, yet completely preventable, form of playground harassment."

Erik Strommen, Ph.D., Dir. of Research, Children's Television Workshop

This 10-minute video was produced as part of an in-service training for elementary-school educators and administrators. It presents a diverse group of children (ages 7-11) who have lesbian and gay parents. In candid interviews, they talk about who's in their families, how it feels to be teased about their parents, how classroom silence about homosexuality affects them, and what they would like to see change.

a project of Lesbian and Gay Parents Association ©1994

For video and workshop materials, send \$25 (individuals) or \$50 (institutions), to: GLPCI, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.

NEW on the Shelf -- Picture Books for Our Children

My Two Uncles, Written and Illustrated by Judith Vigna (Albert Whitman).

Elly's Uncle Ned and his "friend," Uncle Phil, make a wonderful gift for Gran and Grampy's anniversary. Trouble is, Uncle Phil's not invited to the party, and for once, Ned refuses to go. Very real and touching, with the beginning of a happy ending. Full color, ages 6-9

My Dad Has HIV, Written by Earl Alexander, Sheila Rudin and Pam Sejkora;

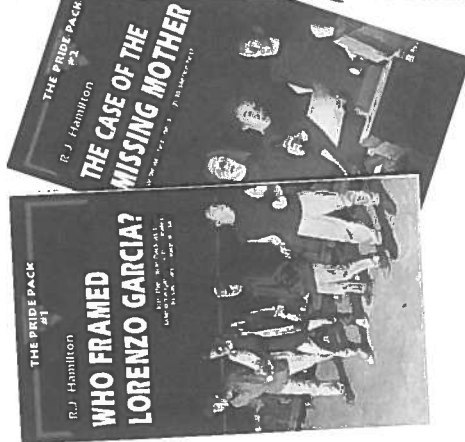
Illustrated by Ronnie Walter Shipman (Fairview Press).

Eight-year-old Lindsey comes to understand and confront a complicated and challenging disease. Her honest fears -- "What will people think? Will my father die? -- and her love for her father combine in this hopeful story that simply and scientifically explains the facts about HIV/AIDS for children. Full color, ages 4-8.

For Teens

Who Framed Lorenzo Garcia? and *The Case of the Missing Mother*, from *The Pride Pack* series, Nos. 1 & 2, by R.J. Hamilton (Alyson Publications).

A group of teens -- some gay, some with gay parents -- rely on each other in a series of mystery adventures. Each has unique and valuable skills. The idea for this series came from discussions that publisher Sasha Alyson had with teens at the 1993 GLPCI convention. ▼



Lesbian Mother & Superhero = Redundant

Check out D.C. Comics' Maggie Sawyer, winner of a 1996 GLAAD Media Award. Watch as Maggie deals with her new lover, teenage daughter, hostile ex-husband -- all while fighting the bad guys and saving the world! Sound familiar? ▼

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Put your "Gay Dollars" to work for you! Call for a referral to a knowledgeable, professional Realtor anywhere... nationwide!

Crossroads Real Estate Referrals

1-800-4 GAY RELO

(1-800-442-9735)

MORE NEWS from Around the World

In February, a New South Wales, Australia Supreme Court Judge ruled that a lesbian pay her former lover a \$113,000 lump sum for support of two children the couple conceived via alternative insemination. "It is unconscionable for the defendant now to seek to make no contribution whatsoever to the upbringing of these children," ruled the Judge, noting that the woman had led her partner to believe they would raise the children together. • In Ontario, Canada, the Family Law Act has been rewritten so that its alimony and child-support provisions apply to same-sex couples. Support obligations will arise when a couple has lived together for at least three years or the relationship has developed "some permanence" and resulted in children. An Ontario Court General Division Justice said the act was unconstitutional in excluding gay couples from its definition of "spouse." • Lesbians in the Netherlands could win the right to adopt a lover's biological children (second-parent adoptions) if a current legal battle by Test Case Duo-Motherhood is successful. The women promise to fight all the way to the European Court of Justice if necessary. At present, relatives can remove children from a lesbian household if their biological mother dies.

The Vermont legislature completed a revision of the state's adoption code in January, voting 22-7 against an amendment which would have banned unmarried couples, gays and lesbians from adopting. Lesbian and gay parents in several neighboring states successfully countered pressure from certain religious leaders working to enact the ban. • In Ohio this January -- same vote, same victory! • In Sparta, New Jersey, a straight spouse has sued her minister for "outing" her. A church choirmaster, who divorced his wife for another man in 1992, stopped bringing his partner to church because it upset his teenage son. But when the couple showed up together at a 1994 Christmas service, the Reverend John Nieman gave his approval in a sermon. A year later, he's in court defending his actions.

In December, U.S. Rep. Enid Waldholtz, R-Utah, suggested that her husband, Joe Waldholtz, should be denied custody and visitation of their infant daughter because of his "questionable lifestyle choices" and evidence of homosexual pornography. The ultra-conservative Waldholtz, once a favorite of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, is under Federal investigation for irregularities totaling \$1.7 million which benefited her 1994 political campaign. She says that her husband, who at one time fled from prosecutors, is solely responsible for the misdealings and that she knew nothing about them. "The Representative is trying to use gay-baiting to deflect attention from her political and financial trouble by questioning her husband's sexuality," said a statement from the Gay and Lesbian Utah Democrats. "We hope that the divorce court looks beyond her attempt to confuse the simple issue of deciding what is best for the child." ▼

Student Internships Available:

Student volunteers interested in working with GLPCI and COLAGE staff are encouraged to call Tim Fisher, GLPCI (201-783-6204) or Stefan Lynch, COLAGE (415-861-KIDS). Possible college credit, various locations (including yours). ▼

Research Projects:

A Look Into Co-Mothering

A Researcher wants to explore the everyday experiences of non-biological lesbian co-mothers whose children have been conceived by alternative insemination -- how the children were conceived; parenting stories that pertain to feelings of isolation, invisibility and discrimination; their relations with social institutions like schools, medical facilities or work place; and their families of origin. Contact:

Garth Greathart
University of Victoria
School of Social Work
Victoria, BC C8W 3P2 CANADA
E-mail: garthg@UVic.CA

Wanted: Moms & More Moms

Lesbian moms, co-moms, step-moms -- all wanted for a confidential nationwide descriptive survey regarding lesbian motherhood as part of a doctoral dissertation. Contact:

Julie Steeno, LCSW, ABD
Director, Family Diversity Center
1501 Venera Avenue, Suite 212
Coral Gables, FL 33146
(305) 662-5000; Fax: (305) 669-9726
E-mail: FAMILYSTDY@aol.com ▼



tolerance n.: the capacity for or the practice of recognizing and respecting the beliefs or practices of others.

The symbols on this beautiful multi-colored, enamelled pin (shown here at its actual size) represent gay & lesbian rights, religious freedom, gender equality, cultural diversity and disease and disability. Wear this pin to promote better understanding and caring.

All proceeds benefit GLPCI. Send \$8 per pin plus 50¢ shipping to GLPCI, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.

HELP GLPCI SPREAD THE WORD THAT "LOVE MAKES A FAMILY!"

- Basic Family/Household Membership-\$25 Organizations-\$100
- Additional contribution of: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other \$
- Please add my child to COLAGE's mailing list (volunt. donation \$15/yr.)
- Chapter Dues Payment (\$10 per family; minimum \$50; attach member list)

Method of Payment: Check VISA MasterCard
Card Number _____ Expiration Date: _____
Signature _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____
Country _____ Group Affiliation _____ Telephone _____

Please exclude my name from GLPCI-published lists of donors. Payable in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank; or use VISA/MasterCard. Make checks payable to GLPCI. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please note: No interested individual will be denied membership in GLPCI for lack of funds.

Mail to: Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International
P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 U.S.A.

GN96-1

Washington, DC 20009; (202) 332-6483.

- Eighth Annual National Black Lesbian and Gay Conference and Institutes, "Black Lesbians and Gays: Our Families make a Difference," February 16-20, 1995, Los Angeles, CA — contact BGLLF, 1219 South La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90019; Phone: (213) 964-7820, Fax: (213) 964-7830.
- Share the Vision Weekend — the 5th Annual Gay Day at Disneyworld, Orlando, Florida, June 2-4, 1995. Contact Genesis Foundation: (407) 857-5444.

WORLD ACTION ALERT

Japan's leading gay group, OCCUR, asks foreigners to join its campaign demanding that psychiatry stop classifying homosexuality as "a form of sexual deviance," and begin a dialogue about sexual orientation. Write Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology, Kokusai Kouryu Iinkai (International Exchange Committee) and Shikkan gainen to Yougo ni Kansuru Iinkai (Concepts of Diseases and Terminology Committee), Hongo Sky Building, 3-38-11 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 164, Japan; Fax: 011-81-3-3814-2992.

INTERESTING ITEMS

- The Lesbian and Gay Adoption Resource List (278 pages!), distributed by Center Kids for GLPCI. Send a \$12 donation to Center Kids, c/o the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011; (212) 620-7310.
- *The Other Side of the Closet*, by Amity Pierce Buxton — first published in 1991, now revised and updated. The new edition includes the story of a wife who is still married to a bisexual man (15% of couples decide to stay together after one comes out).
- *Opening the Straight Spouse's Closet*, a pamphlet from PFLAG — send \$2 to PFLAG Publications, 1012 14th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005.
- *In Praise of Single Parents: Mothers and Fathers Embracing the Challenge*, by Shoshana Alexander. Inclusive of our families — from Houghton Mifflin Publishing.
- Lesbian Mother Anthology — looking for articles on adoption, raising boys, non-biological moms' rights, lesbian divorce and more, particularly from women of color and native women. Contact Professor Katherine Arnup, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6 CANADA; E-mail: karnup@ccs.carleton.ca
- Illustrator Wanted for *Felicia's Favorite Story*, a children's book by Leslea Newman about a little girl from South America who is adopted by an interracial lesbian couple. Looking for a person of color with illustrating experience to start working on the project immediately. For more information, contact Sasha Alyson at Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton Street, Boston, MA 02118; (617) 542-5679.
- Wanda and Brenda Henson of Camp Sister Spirit, embattled lesbian feminists in the rural South (and both lesbian moms), continue to need our help and support — CSS, Box 12, Overt, MS 39464; (601) 344-1411.
- Medea Books — an extensive catalog of book for women covering health and herstory. MB, 849 Almar Avenue, Suite C-285, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (800) 41-MEDEA.
- *New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams* — created by girls and women for every girl who wants her voice heard and her dreams taken seriously. Also *New Moon Parenting* — for Adults who care about girls. New Moon Publishing, P.O. Box 3587, Duluth, MN 55803-3587.
- Teach-A-Bodies — anatomically-detailed soft sculptured dolls, designed for sex education purposes. TAB, P.O. Box 101444, Fort Worth, TX 76185; Phone/Fax: (817) 923-9774.
- Living In Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Families: a photographic-text exhibit — you can bring this important project into your community. For more information, contact Pam Brown, Peggy Gillespie and Gigi Kaeser, 82 Williams

Street, Northampton, MA 01060; Phone: (413) 256-0502, Fax: (413) 253-3977.

- The U.N. Postcard Campaign plans to deliver 1,000,000 postcards to the General Assembly this fall, demanding equal rights for all gay, lesbian and bisexual people. To obtain cards, write to: The U.N. Postcard Campaign, 245 Eighth Avenue, Suite 217, New York, NY 10011, USA. Phone and fax: (212) 966-5876.
- The Lesbian Mothers' National Defense Fund has changed its name to Lavender Families Resource Network. The name change, marking the groups' 20th anniversary, reflects the range of services provided — not just lesbian moms, but gay fathers, lesbian grandmothers, bisexual mothers, transsexual parents, heterosexual parents labelled gay, co-parents, children, researchers and teachers as well. LFRN, P.O. Box 21567, Seattle, WA 98111; Phone/TDD: (206) 325-2643.
- *The Parents' Resource Almanac* by Beth DeFrancis contains over 7,000 listings for services, newsletters, books, hotlines, support groups and more. GLPCI is listed — is your local group? (800) 872-5627.
- *Full-Time Dads*, a newsletter for stay-at-home fathers, has a multitude of resources for fathers (predominantly non-gay). Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to FTD, P.O. Box 577, Cumberland, ME 04021.
- Promoting Family Time — *Professional Parent's Advocate*, a publication for those transitioning from the career track to the parent track. PPA, P.O. Box 298042, Lakewood, CO 80228; (803) 980-1080.
- Seattle-area filmmaker looking for lesbian/gay families interested in telling their stories. Contact Dylan Rosen at (206) 441-5593 or 2905 First Avenue, #2, Seattle, WA 98121.

WILLKOMMEN, BIENVENUE, WELCOME

Thanks to your help, GLPCI continues to grow! We are proud to welcome some new additions who swell our numbers to (a new record) 81 chapters in (another record) seven countries.

Our first African chapter comes to us all the way from the Republic of South Africa — welcome to the **Johannesburg Gay and Lesbian Parents Group**.

From the opposite part of the globe — Helsinki, Finland — we say hello to the **Union of Gay and Lesbian Families (HOFA)**.

In the United States, GLPCI is now represented by local support groups in 30 out of 50 states. Aloha to **We are Family**, a support group from Honolulu, Hawaii! Continuing eastward, we welcome these new groups: **Lesbian/Gay Parents Association of San Francisco, California**; **Wichita Lesbian Mothers Group in Kansas**; **Nashville Parents Group from Tennessee**; **Philadelphia Family Pride of Pennsylvania**; and the **Lesbian and Gay Family and Parenting Services Program of Fenway Community Health Center in Boston, Massachusetts**.

Hello again to the **Gay Fathers Coalition of Buffalo** who rejoin us after a short absence. And finally, we welcome the **Adoption Resource Exchange for Single Parents**, a nationwide hotline located in Springfield, Virginia.

We're so glad to have these shining examples of "Real Family Values" be a part of our Coalition. We are Everywhere!

P.S. We need an address for the Metrowest Lesbian and Gay Parents group in Ashland, MA. Can you help us find them?

HOMOPHOBIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Our new chapter, LGPA of San Francisco, is producing a short video to be used as the introduction in a one-hour workshop for elementary school teachers and administrators about the impact of homophobia on our kids. GLPCI is assisting with funding and distribution — Your contributions (\$35 suggested) are greatly appreciated.

Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI)
U.S.A. — P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 • (202) 583-8029
Canada — Box 187, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L5

Here's Issue #10 of *agenda*, the business newsbulletin of GLPCI. Read on...and learn what GLPCI is doing for you!

SORRY, WE'RE TARDY!

Here it is, well into Fall and you're just receiving our Summer newsletter. Oops! Between the post-Stonewall blues, summer vacations, and back to school activities, we're a little late. We'll catch up soon. Bear with us!

SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR OUR KIDS

GLPCI has set up a post-secondary scholarship fund for our kids. In July 1995, \$500 will be awarded for only the second time. Applicants must have at least one lesbian or gay parent and be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited post-secondary institution. For application form: write to GLPCI (see address on reverse) or call (202) 583-8029. Deadline for Applications is May 15, 1995.

LESBIGAY PARENTS IN THE NEWS

Deborah Batts, the first openly lesbian or gay federal judge (mother of two)

Jane Anderson, Emmy-winning screenwriter for *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom* — also this summer's *It Could Happen To You* (wanna-be)

Dale McCormick, State Senator from Maine

Raymond Dumas, founder of Brother to Brother and program coordinator for Gay and Bisexual Activities, People of Color Against AIDS Network

Rosemary Dempsey, Action Vice President for the National Association for Women (mom of two)

Janine Hakim, Stonewall veteran and founder of New York City's Dykes and Tykes (founded in 1971!)

Dan Miller, Harrisburg, PA activist/defendant in an important anti-gay discrimination suit (co-parent of two)

Martina Navratilova, holder of 18 Grand Slam tennis titles, author and activist (wanna-be)

Melissa Ethredge, rock star (wanna-be)

Paula Poundstone, stand-up comic and foster parent of two (a "Lesbian-oughta-be," according to *Deneuve* magazine)

Juanita Harvey, Gay Games gold-medal winning heavyweight wrestler (mother of two and a grandmother) — "It takes a lot of ovaries to step out on the mat."

Bruce A. Lehman, appointed by President Clinton as the Assistant Commerce Secretary and Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks (father of one)

Lisa Bechtel, M.D., Las Vegas' pediatric AIDS specialist (A mother of two, Lisa died in May of AIDS contracted from a needle stick injury.)

Tom Robinson, openly gay punk rocker of the late 70s and author of "Glad to Be Gay," the first gay protest song to edge toward the pop mainstream (dad of one)

Tess Ayers, co-author of *The Essential Guide to Lesbian and Gay Weddings* (wanna-be)

Jimmy Lee Simpson, (O.J.'s dad) a San Francisco drag-queen who died of AIDS — if you believe the *Globe* tabloid

GIMME A C....GIMME A K!

Susan Hendricks, former Center Kids co-chair, is a member of the Lesbian and Gay Family Task Force for the New York State Attorney General. Wayne Steinman, current CK co-chair and GLPCI Veep, has been appointed to the New York State Education Department Commissioner's Parent Partnership Advisory Council.

ON THE LAVENDER SCREEN

Second Best — starring William Hurt as a 42-year-old small-town Welsh postmaster who has never had a date, has always lived with his parents, and wants to adopt a child. At a small art-house near you.

CONGRATULATIONS...

...to April Martin, Ph.D., author of *The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook*, for receiving GLPCI's 1994 Image in Media Award — as well as a bronze medal in figure skating at the Gay Games

...to Hope Berry and Ali Dubin of COLAGE and GLPCI Past-President Jim Pate, recipients of the 1994 Jack Bell Award for Distinguished Service

...to Steve Vorbeck of Raytown, Missouri as GLPCI's 1994 Regional Coordinator of the Year

...to Minnesota Families of Minneapolis-St. Paul, GLPCI's 1994 Chapter of the Year

...to Russell Fecteau of Columbia, Maryland and Lizajane Gray of Eugene, Oregon, the first two recipients of scholarships from the GLPCI-COLAGE Scholarship Fund

...to GLPCI, chosen by *Lesbian World* newspaper as a recipient of the first annual Lesbian World Unity Awards for our accomplishments in advancing the causes of lesbian and gay rights, humanitarian unity, and world peace.

NOT A STEALTH CANDIDATE

Carl Miller, GLPCI's Executive Regional Coordinator for Canada, and openly gay father of two teenage daughters, is "taking the struggle to the 'burbs." He's running for School Board Trustee in Ward 8 of York, Ontario. Go, Carl — (416) 762-2247.

COLAGE KIDS CLUB

A new newsletter for our children, aged 6 to 12, debuts in January. Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE), our program for the daughters and sons of lesbians and gay men, received a \$750 grant from the Horizons Foundation to launch this fun and informative project for younger children. Sign your child up today — and donations are always welcome! COLAGE, 2300 Market Street, Box 165, San Francisco, CA 94114.

MEDIA ALERT

Did you see?... *Parade* magazine's interview with two DC-area children of lesbian and gay parents. In the first week after publication, COLAGE received over 100 written inquiries. Part Two of a three-part series on gay family issues for *NBC Nightly News*, featured GLPCI families from Kansas and New Jersey. And yes, that was the fabulous Heller family (Anna, Linda, and Molly) on the USA Network's *Erase the Hate!* special.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

- GLPCI's 16th Annual Conference will be held on the beautiful campus of U.C.L.A. in sunny Los Angeles, California on June 30th to July 3rd, 1995. By utilizing the college conference facilities, the cost will be significantly more affordable for more families. Contact GLPCI 95, 7985 Santa Monica Blvd., Box 109-346, West Hollywood, CA 90046 for a brochure and Early Bird Registration.

- Creating Change Conference — The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force will host its annual skills-building conference in Dallas, Texas this year on November 9th through 13th. One of the keynote speakers is gay dad Dr. Mel White — former ghostwriter for the Religious Right, now an openly gay Metropolitan Community Church minister. Contact NGLTF, 1734 14th Street, NW,

Here's Issue #9 of *agenda*, the business newsbulletin of GLPCI. Read on...and learn what GLPCI is doing for you!

SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR OUR KIDS

GLPCI has set up a post-secondary scholarship fund for our kids. In June 1994, at our 15th Annual Conference in New York City, a \$500 scholarship will be awarded for the first time. Applicants must have at least one lesbian or gay parent and be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited post-secondary institution. For application form: write to GLPCI at P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 or call (202) 583-8029 for more information. *Deadline for Applications is May 15, 1994.*

STONEWALL 25 — MARCH FROM THE U.N.

On Sunday, June 26th, hundreds of thousands of marchers will rally in New York City for Stonewall 25 — the International March on the United Nations to Affirm the Human Rights of Lesbian & Gay People. GLPCI and COLAGE will be leading parents and children along a three mile march route from the United Nations to the rally at Central Park. (A second route, to accommodate the crowds, marches 6 miles from Greenwich Village to the Park.) At the rally grounds, look for the GLPCI gathering-area near a playground for the kids. It's a chance to meet and hang out in family-friendly space. More details will be available in the March literature once you arrive in New York City and on the GLPCI Stonewall 25 Hotline — call (202) 583-8029 after June 15th.

A CHANGE AT THE TOP

In early January, the Executive Committee accepted the resignations of John Sheets and Vickie Harris with deep regret and heartfelt appreciation for their years of service. The Executive Committee acted quickly to fill those positions, voting Immediate Past President Jim Pate of Houston, Texas as Interim President and Suzanne Upshaw (also of Houston) as Executive Vice President.

Jim has served GLPCI as its President in 1991-92 and previously as Vice President of Group Development. He was the first winner of our "Regional Coordinator of the Year Award" in 1988. Suzanne has served GLPCI as a Regional Coordinator for the past three years. Last fall, she represented GLPCI at the P-FLAG Annual Conference, where she organized two workshops on our families' issues. The GLPCI Executive Committee is very pleased to have their talents on our leadership team.

WANTED: MOMS, DADS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Lesbian mom-to-be Loree Cook-Daniels is writing a book for our parents' generation — a sensitive, supportive guide for those exploring the relatively new world of grandparenting our children. Interviews both "negative" and "positive" — with grandparents, parents and grandkids — are confidential and only one generation need be interviewed (although multi-generational tales are welcomed). Loree will be conducting some interviews while attending our 15th Annual Conference in New York — contact her at 7505 Sixteenth Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912; Phone: (301) 445-5650.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

We've heard about panels and workshops about gays and lesbians and our children at these upcoming conferences:

Lavender Rights Forum (March) Salt Lake City, Utah; Professional Issues in Working with Gays, Lesbians, and Their Families (April) Fargo, North Dakota; American Orthopsychiatric Association (April 27-30th) Washington, DC; Council for Exceptional Children (Spring) Denver, Colorado; Maryland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (Spring) Baltimore, Maryland; Adoptive Families of America (June) Minneapolis, Minnesota; American Psychological Association (Summer) Los Angeles, California.

Many are being presented by GLPCI parents; others we've learned about as the presenters contact GLPCI for resources. Let GLPCI know of any presentations at professional conferences that you may attend.

SUMMERTIME...WHEN THE LIVIN' IS EASY

Mountain Meadow Summer Camp, located in upstate New York, is a "kids' community with a feminist conscience... including kids of lesbian and gay parents, bi-racial kids, kids of single-parent families, etc." The campers attend for one week or two and last year's fees were based on a sliding scale from \$50

to \$800. It's a safe place for kids to be themselves, but the emphasis is on FUN. Last year's campers staged their own take-off of *The Sound of Music*. Reflecting their family backgrounds, Maria married the Captain again, but the Baroness fell in love with the Mother Superior! Contact Mountain Meadow, c/o Merle Berman, 63 West Washington Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19114 or call Rebecca Subar, (215) 843-0332.

Camp Lavender Hill, northeast of San Francisco near the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas, is organized by Spectrum, the Marin County, California center for lesbian/gay concerns. In addition to providing kids (ages 7 and 14) of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents with an alternative summer camp experience, Camp Lavender Hill also has gay and lesbian teens and young adults serving as counselors.

Family CampOUT, on August 25-28th in Lincoln City, Oregon, is a new program of Portland's YWCA. A traditional camping experience for families headed by lesbians and gay men, Family CampOUT was launched to combat the damaging psychological and emotional effects of the current political climate in Oregon. For more information, contact YWCA, 1111 SW 10th, Portland, OR 97205; Phone: (503) 223-6281.

Toto Tours, a Chicago-based travel agency catering to the gay and lesbian market, is offering its second annual "Family Values" Vacation. This July, owner/operator (and gay dad) Dan Ware is taking gay and lesbian parents and their kids for a five day canoeing and camping adventure in the Boundary Waters along the Minnesota-Ontario border. See the enclosed brochure for more details.

PARENTS IN THE NEWS

Pat Norman, Executive Director of the AIDS Intervention Training Center of San Francisco, Co-Chair of Stonewall 25, the California State Legislature's Woman of the Year, and one of five winners of \$25,000 grants from the Anderson Prize Foundation for lesbian and gay activism.

Jim Ballantine, producer of Nickelodeon's animated-hit, *The Ren & Stimpy Show*

Judy Dlugacz, founder of Olivia Records and Olivia Cruises
Diane Abbitt and Roberta Bennett, attorneys and early Clinton supporters/fundraisers, believed to be the first lesbian couple to dance together in the White House (Are we sure Eleanor Roosevelt never tripped the light fantastic with her main squeeze?)

Blaize Malone, mother of five and a Co-Director of Missouri's Citizens Organized to Oppose Hate and Bigotry (COHAB), leading the fight against the religious right in the Show Me State

Rev. R. Steven Taylor, interim pastor of MCC- DC
Jean O'Leary, former Co-director of NGTF and the first openly gay or lesbian person appointed to the executive committee of the National Democratic Committee

Hawaii's Karen Anna, the "matriarch of the Maui's women's community" and editor of *Island Lesbian Connection*
Jim Peterson, co-parent and author of *Sauces*, winner of the prestigious James Beard Cookbook of the Year for 1991

Josephine Baker, the toast of 20s Paris, according to Jean-Claude Baker, the 12th and final member of her much-publicized Rainbow Tribe of adopted children, in his new book, *Josephine: The Hungry Heart*. Despite her numerous affairs with women, Baker disowned a gay son when he came out.

Openly lesbian Lois Bromfield, scriptwriter for *Roseanne*, and her openly gay husband, Steve Moore, the HIV-positive comedian who appeared on the Comedy Channel's *Out There* — they have no children of their own, but were for a time the legal guardians of actor Pauly Shore.

And three dads who died of AIDS-related complications:

Dr. Bruce Voeller, founder and former Executive Director of the National Gay Task Force (now NGLTF) and a leading scientist in the fight against AIDS

Wellmore Alfred Cooke, one of the founders of the D.C. Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day

Doug Hinckle, photographer for *The Washington Blade*

OBITUARIES

In recent months, GLPCI has lost several dear members of our family to AIDS-related illnesses:

Jay Connolly, partner of Paul Costantino of the Gay Fathers

of Greater Boston, designer of the "Building and Sharing Our Futures Together" theme for the 1989 GLPCI Conference

Gene Santomaso, of Gay Fathers I of New York City, a founder and former president of GLPCI

Jack Bell, of the Gay Fathers of Toronto, former GLPCI Secretary and recipient of our first Distinguished Service Award

Paco Martinez Cancel, a longtime AIDS advocate and facilitator at the 1993 Just For Us (now COLAGE) conference

SECOND PARENT ADOPTION NEWS

Our Baltimore chapter has changed its name to "Families With Pride." They are interested in any and all news about second parent adoptions and are working to bring to court Baltimore's first test case.

This just in — A New York State appellate court is reviewing a second-parent adoption which was denied by a lower court (no further details available). In New Jersey, the family which was granted the Garden State's first second-parent adoption last summer announced that they just received their daughter's revised birth certificate. Many families who have successfully applied for second parent adoptions have difficulty getting the birth certificate changed to reflect the court documents. Admittedly, our info on this point is very spotty, but this is the first report of a revised birth certificate we've ever heard of. What can other families report? Call or fax GLPCI at (201) 783-6204.

INTRIGUING ITEMS

- *Rainbow Families*: a newsletter network for lesbian and gay singles and couples rearing children. Send \$3.50 to Rainbow Families, 78 High Street, Butler, NJ 07405. Also available on the Internet.
- Have You Heard? — "In the Best Interest of the Children," a song by Cris Williamson, dedicated to two young children taken from their mother because she was a lesbian.
- Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE) has completed a panel for the AIDS quilt.
- "Love Makes a Family: Gay Parents in the 90s" and "Other Families" explore life inside a family headed by lesbian or gay parents. LMAF is 16 minutes and introduces three families who discuss issues in raising children (\$195). OF is 49 minutes and focuses on seven adults who were raised by lesbian mothers (\$245). Rental prices are \$50 each + \$9 s/h. Contact: Fanlight, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.
- Carl Miller, of Gay Fathers of Toronto and last year's Regional Coordinator of the Year, will shortly announce his candidacy as an openly gay parent running for School Board Trustee in suburban York, Ontario.
- A long distance calling service that saves you up to 25%, and contributes to GLPCI. Call 1-800-ITS-OURS and switch to Community Spirit.
- Children of Stonewall: A COLAGE Experience. The first-of-its-kind anywhere — a multi-media art installation by daughters and sons of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered parents, and co-produced by Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE). The production will feature the premier of a one-act play, "Out of My Parents' Closet," by Suzanne Pullen. For more information, call Stefan Lynch at (415) 206-1930.
- Phyllis Burke, author of *Family Values: Two Moms and Their Son* (Random House), has been honored with the American Library Association Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Non-fiction Book Award for 1994. CONGRATS! Look for her book to be released in paperback in June.
- MONEY = POWER = PRIDE. Pink Inc. will print checks for you with a giant pink triangle — Pink Inc., Box 5794, Dept. 247, Bethesda, MD 20814-5794. A donation will be made to GLPCI with every order.
- The wonderful video, titled "Love Makes a Family," produced by GLPCI's Orlando, Florida chapter and shown at last year's conference is available for \$15. Send payment made payable to GLPCI-Central Florida Chapter, Box 561504, Orlando, FL 32856. Educational groups, call (407) 420-2191 to inquire about discounts.
- Our NYC chapter, Center Kids, has published a 278-page Adoption Resource List. Send payment, made payable to "Center Kids," to: Center Kids, c/o The Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011
- GLPCI continues to receive three to five requests from students (high school to college) each week for information on lesbian and gay parenting. One student from East Tennessee State College returned our materials after her report was complete, along with a check and a nice "Thank You"! She reports that "there was an increase in knowledge and a decrease in prejudice amongst my classmates and myself. Myths were destroyed." Her report received the first A+ ever granted in the class.
- Lesbian Mother's Group forming at the Brighton Allston Mental Health Clinic, Brighton, Mass. Call Sheila Clark, (617) 787-1901.
- Jan Carr, author of more than 20 books for children and young adults,

including the novelizations of Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, and *The Jungle Book*, has just published a steamy lesbian novel, *Harem Wish* (Dutton Books). "I really don't want someone pointing a finger at my books and saying they aren't suitable for children because of who I am," says Jan.

- If you would like a copy of the 1993 Orlando GLPCI Conference Attendee List, it's available (sorry, but it's only for attendees). Please send a business-sized envelope with 52¢ postage to GLPCI Publications Office, Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043.

SPERM BANK FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

Rainbow Flag Health Services of Oakland, California, the first sperm bank aimed exclusively at lesbians and stocked by sperm donated by gay men, opened in December. The program requires that the lesbian mothers meet the gay man who donated the sperm for their child. The bank is the brainchild of Leland Traiman, the donor of a one-year-old daughter being raised by a lesbian couple who live a few blocks from him, and the founder of Prospective Queer Parents, a parenting discussion group in the Bay area.

SAFETY FIRST

Recently, a GLPCI family had an upsetting experience when in a gay-friendly environment. One of their adolescent children received inappropriate attention and "affection" from an adult male. The parents have asked us to pass along these tips: No matter where you are, keep tabs on your kids. Know who they're with, where they'll be, how long they will be gone, etc. Be sure to let your children know that they can say "NO" to any adult, that they can talk to you about anything, and that you will support them. Don't assume any particular place is a safe one for your children. — Thanks for the advice!

WILLKOMMEN, BIENVENUE, WELCOME

Just after printing our Directory of Resources list (enclosed), GLPCI's 70th chapter (a new record) joined the Coalition — Hello! to Lesbian Mothers and Our Children of Glendale, California.

We've also found a French flavor — *Bon Jour* to Association de Parents et Futurs Parents Gays of Paris, France. France is the fifth country in our Coalition. In the past month, we also heard from parents starting groups in South Africa, Taiwan, Argentina, Hong Kong, Israel, Germany, and Finland.

A great big GLPCI hello to another eight new groups in the United States — from west to east, they are the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Parents Network of Tucson, Arizona; DADS of New Mexico in Santa Fe; the Gay and Lesbian Parents of Greater Kansas City, Missouri; the Lesbian and Gay Parents Coalition of Decatur, Georgia; the Gay Fathers Coalition of Baltimore, Maryland; the Gay Fathers of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the Gay Fathers Connection of Essex Junction, Vermont; and the Lesbian Mothers of Metro-Boston, Mass.

After a long absence, we're pleased to welcome back the Gay Fathers Association of Seattle, Washington. And our apologies to our friends, the Gay Fathers of Westchester, New York, who were inadvertently left off the list last time.

Finally, we're pleased to announce the formation of the Future Gay Fathers of America, a nationwide network for prospective dads to hook up with fathers who've successfully created families by adoption, co-parenting, surrogacy and foster parenting. A hearty welcome to one and all — you are shining examples of "Real Family Values!"

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

John Morgan of the Jackson Parents Group (1677 Wilhurst Street, Jackson, MS 39211) has asked to be added to our newsletter exchange. The group doesn't have a newsletter at present, but is looking for fun activities and advertising ideas.

We like to point out greatness when we see it. Among our many excellent chapter newsletters, here are three we would like to spotlight. Take a peak at the Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents newsletter for its informative spotlight on member families; the Gay Fathers Association of Seattle for many wonderful features including a first-rate advice column; and the Gay Fathers of Los Angeles for its continuing column written by a family therapist. If you're not a member of the newsletter exchange and we've sparked an interest, just drop these groups a line. Any other groups wishing to join the newsletter exchange? — just contact GLPCI.

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SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR CHILDREN OF LESBIAN AND GAY PARENTS

GLPCI has set up a post-secondary scholarship fund for our kids. In June 1994, at our 15th Annual Conference in New York City, a \$500 scholarship will be awarded for the first time. Applicants must have at least one lesbian or gay parent and be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited post-secondary institution. For application form: write to GLPCI at P.O. Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 or call (202) 583-8029 for more information. Deadline for Applications is May 15, 1994.

OTHER MOTHERS

The CBS Schoolbreak Special, *Other Mothers*, which aired in October, continues in the news. The movie has been nominated for the prestigious Peabody Award, as well as a GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) Media Award. GLPCI representatives will be present at the March GLAAD banquet in New York City.

Since the airing of *Other Mothers*, GLPCI has written follow-up letters to CBS executives, thanking them for supporting this worthwhile project in the face of opposition from the radical right, as well as the mainstream organizations that wrote letters to CBS in support of the pre-production script. Our follow-up was prompted by the urgings of a GLPCI mother in the entertainment business — Moral: If you have any ideas for what GLPCI should be doing for all of us, do not hesitate to call. We value your input!

LESBIAN AND GAY PARENTS IN THE NEWS

William Derbyshire — Rutgers Professor and a plaintiff in an ACLU-suit against the University for same-sex partner health benefits

Donna Red Wing — appointed to a newly-created position as coordinator of the national operation of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

Marc Loveless — recently elected to the Chicago, Illinois Local School Council (one of the first two openly gay elected officials in Illinois history)

Bishop Otis Charles — former Episcopal Bishop of Utah and Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts (believed to be the first bishop of a mainstream American church to declare that he is gay)

Roberta Achtenberg — Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and *The Advocate's* Woman of the Year for 1993

And a child of two lesbian moms — 20-year-old Jennifer DiMarco, openly lesbian and a prolific author, who topped *The Seattle Times'* best seller list this summer with her sci-fi novel *Escape to the Wind* (edging out *Jurassic Park* in the process).

IMAGE IN MEDIA

Nominations for GLPCI's *Image in Media* Award, to be presented at the New York conference in June are now being accepted. A preliminary list of nominees, discussed by the GLPCI Executive Committee, include (in alphabetical order):

Roberta Achtenberg — highest openly lesbian or gay appointed official to the U.S. Government

Sasha Alyson — publisher of Alyson Wonderland's line of books for our children

Sharon Bottoms and April Wade — lesbian mothers denied custody in Virginia

April Martin — author of *The Lesbian and Gay Parenting Handbook*

National Center for Lesbian Rights — the premier legal organization fighting for the rights of lesbian (and gay) parents

Romanovsky and Phillips — for their song, "Love is All It Takes To Make A Family"

Joseph Stern — producer of the CBS Schoolbreak Special, *Other Mothers*

Karen Williams — the internationally-known "Diva of Comedy"

Please let us know your feedback. To nominate other individuals or comment on any of the above parents, call GLPCI Executive Vice President Vickie Harris — by February 15th — at (317) 353-663

OOPS! — LATE DELIVERY

GLPCI's *Network* newsletter is mailed via bulk rates for non-profit organizations — with a savings of over \$2,000 in postage costs per issue over first class rates. The U.S. Postal Service states that bulk mail will be delivered in 3-4 weeks. Yet, the last issue of *Network*, mailed in September, was not received by some members until late December. Our apologies — we've filed a report with the USPS and hope you'll receive this and future issues of *Network* on a more timely basis.

TERRIFIC TIDBITS

- Resources for Parents and Teachers — an independent progressive bookstore, Red & Black Books Collective, provides free bibliographies in over 60 areas, including books for children of lesbian and gay parents, multi-cultural children's literature, peace books, etc. Contact the collective at 432-15th Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112; or call (206) 322-READ.
- The annual conference of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, titled "Black Lesbians and Gays: From Silence to Celebration...BEYOND THE 28 DAYS," will be held at the Meadowlands Hilton in Secaucus, New Jersey on February 17-21, 1994. Any members interested in representing GLPCI at the conference are urged to call Tim Fisher at (201) 783-6204.
- Call for Submission — What About Us? Children Tell of their Lesbian/Gay Parent's Breakup: seeking first person stories or thoughts from children of all ages for valuable anthology. Questions or submissions to Jenn Christiansen, P.O. Box 1841, Champlain, NY 12919 by June 30, 1994.
- A long distance calling service that saves you up to 25%, and contributes to GLPCI. Call 1-800-ITS-OURS and switch to Community Spirit.
- *Joined by Love*, a catalog of books for lesbian and gay families (\$1), is published by Tapestry Books, publishers of the *Adoption Book Catalog*, a nationally recognized authority on all aspects of adoption. Call 1-800-765-2367 to order.
- "Keeping Connected" is an organization dealing with issues, problems, and feelings surrounding the dissolution of lesbian and gay families with children. For more information, contact Susan Trerotola, c/o Naremc Services, Inc., 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 1714, New York, NY 10165; (212) 697-0290.
- SIECUS, the Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S., is preparing a new publication on parental education of children about sex. SIECUS sought GLPCI's assistance to include the unique perspective of lesbian and gay parents in this volume. Stay tuned!
- MONEY = POWER = PRIDE. Pink Inc. will print checks for you with a giant pink triangle — Pink Inc., P.O. Box 5794, Dept. 247, Bethesda, MD 20814-5794. A donation will be made to GLPCI with every order.
- The September 1993 issue of *Redbook* magazine included "The Secret Life of Bisexual Husbands," an illuminating, non-judgemental look at bisexual men. Author Esther Davidowitz quotes research indicating that 2/3 of bisexual men — from an estimated total of six million — are married. Obviously, many are fathers.

GLPCI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nominations are now being accepted for the 1994-95 GLPCI Board of Directors. The following elected positions are open (according to the revision of the GLPCI by-laws approved in July 1993):

President, two Executive Vice Presidents (one female and one male), and five Vice Presidents (Administration, Outreach, Support, Communications, and Event Planning).

Because of the changes in GLPCI's organizational structure which take effect with the June 1994 election, the GLPCI Executive Committee has prepared a handout describing the responsibilities of GLPCI's leaders. For your copy, please contact Tim Fisher at (201) 783-6204 or P.O. Box 43206, Montclair, NJ 07043 for more information.

GLPCI is committed to increasing the participation of women, people of color, and lower income parents in the leadership of the Coalition. Please feel free to contact any member of GLPCI's Executive Committee to discuss your concerns, ideas, and/or your interest in the future of GLPCI.

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Love makes a Family!