

Daily

Opinion

The Daily Campus

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Karla Perez.....EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Tomas Hinckley.....OPINION EDITOR

Patrick Minnerly..ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR

Gianna CassinoWEEKLY COLUMNIST

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed by individual writers in the opinion section do not reflect the views and opinions of The Daily Campus or other staff members. Only articles labeled “Editorial” are the official opinions of The Daily Campus.



COMIC BY COSETTE ELLIS, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Putting The BABY In

LGBTQ+ ■ TWO PERSPECTIVES ON WHY QUEER PARENTS ARE BETTER THAN STRAIGHT PARENTS

by Marc DeBrito
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
glm24002@uconn.edu

I am a gay student here at the University of Connecticut and one of my greatest wishes is to become a parent someday in the future. Of course, I have been met with a lot of questions, if not outright challenges, about whether a gay couple is stable enough or suitable enough for childrearing. From arguments as seemingly sympathetic as the children’s need for a “mother’s touch,” to as blatantly homophobic as “all gay people are pedophiles,” I’ve heard it all. That is why I wanted to make the argument that queer parents are not only just as good as cisgender heterosexual parents; they are better parents on average.

One of the biggest concerns surrounding the birth of any child is parental preparedness, but queer parents necessarily have that in spades. Consider that for any same-sex couple, the path towards having a child is a monthslong process to initiate surrogacy or in vitro fertilization. Adoption also can take months if not years, with constant governmental check-ins and screenings to deem your home suitable. Not to mention, all these check-ins are done with bias against you due to your deviation from heteronormative society. Meanwhile, for a heterosexual couple, all it can take is one drunk night at a frat party.

We can see from a 2015 study that 11% of births in the United States occur before the parent is ready to have a child, and an additional 7% occur when the child is not wanted at all. Note that this is birth, not pregnancies. That is nearly a fifth of all births occurring in undesirable situations, and a vast majority of those are from straight couples. Imagine the difference between a child who is born into a home that is ready and desiring their presence, rather than one that is unprepared or resentful of that child.

The issue of the single parent household is also important. There is no doubt there are many wonderful and caring single parents out there, but often our society does not do enough to support them in raising children while also making money. I have people in my life who were raised by single parents for most of their lives. Single parents do all they can to support their children, but often the amount of time they spend working creates a feeling of distance between them.

Many different studies over the years have shown that single parent households result in lower income statuses on average, less high school graduation and higher

education attendance, as well as increased risk for mental health issues. There is an unfortunate lack of scientific study on the sexual orientation of single parents. However, we can infer that a large portion of these single parent households emerge from straight couples. That is not to say that there are not queer single parents, but the long processes and screenings required for most queer parents to have a child would result in, on average, a stronger and more devoted effort into maintaining the marriage or partnership for the sake of the child.

Finally, my experience under a straight household makes me believe that queer households would lead to better outcomes for children, especially those who have interests that go outside of traditional societal expectations. To get the obvious out of the way, queer homes would be more likely to accept queer children, which can lead to lower levels of suicide and self-harm out of fear of rejection for their own innate self. But the acceptance from queer parents extends beyond sexuality. Queer households will be more supportive of children who simply want to dress outside of their gender identity or have niche interests that are associated with “weakness” or the opposite gender. Queer parents have also likely faced discrimination and adversity for their differences, so they understand not being accepted for who they are.

Unfortunately, there is a drawback to queer households, and that is criticism and ridicule from the wider public. Children of queer parents can face stereotypes that they themselves will end up queer or are fundamentally “wrong.” Note these are external factors, not internal. To make this issue of queer parenting go away, it is not on queer parents, but rather on society to fix the issue. I hope that if I become a parent, society will provide a safe environment for my child to grow. There are many children in the world today who lack loving parents, and there are many potential queer parents out there willing and capable of providing that love. ents can face stereotypes that they themselves will end up queer or are fundamentally “wrong.” Note these are external factors, not internal. To make this issue of queer parenting go away, it is not on queer parents, but rather on society to fix the issue. I hope that if I become a parent, society will provide a safe environment for my child to grow. There are many children in the world today who lack loving parents, and there are many potential queer parents out there willing and capable of providing that love.



by Isabella Kulawik
ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR
SHE/HER/HERS
imk24001@uconn.edu

I was around 6 years old when my parents took me to St. Pete Pride in Florida. Some of the details are hazy, but I remember dancing around in my rainbow tutu as drag queens strutted on stage alongside the magnetic energy of the crowd. It was full of joy and acceptance, and it’s the kind of moment that I hope everyone has the chance to experience.

Having two moms, those feelings were commonplace in our home. Growing up, I never had to fear rejection because of who I am or who I would become. It’s a kind of reassurance that isn’t always present for people with straight parents. To be entirely honest, I can’t generalize that gay parents are better than straight ones. But I can discuss my experiences and how they may differ from traditional heterosexual families for the better.

For one thing, gender norms were never present; in our matriarchal family, decisions were something always made together. There was never a dominant male figure in the house, and it was incredibly strange to me as a child when my extended family would visit and assert authority in decision-making and conversation. It irked me to no end, and I didn’t understand why. It’s something that is incredibly prevalent and feels very alien to me because that was something I hadn’t grown up with.

In the same way they challenged gender roles, my parents questioned the rules they grew up with. Both immigrated to the United States as teenagers, and they dealt with the hardships that came with moving to a new country. My grandparents worked hard to build a life from nothing, which resulted in parenting styles reminiscent of

those in their old country. Parenting philosophies have certainly changed since then, but a large part of why my moms parented the way they did is because they began to approach things with an open mind. After questioning their sexuality, it wasn’t long before they began to question other ideas as well. As a result, open communication was a major part of my upbringing; no topic was off-limits. Through years of long walks and difficult conversations, we built a trust that my parents couldn’t have had with their own.

Another facet of having gay parents is that there are no accidents. To have a child either through adoption, sperm donor or surrogacy requires a significant amount of time and consideration. I was a sperm donor and IVF baby, and it was difficult for my mom to get pregnant. Fertility issues can be heartbreaking for anyone experiencing them, and it can truly feel like a miracle when women are finally able to become pregnant. I think there is something powerful in knowing that a child is deeply and deliberately wanted.

As I said before, there are plenty of amazing straight parents out there, just as I am sure there are bad gay ones. However, I especially think that as different types of families become more prevalent, straight couples can learn a thing or two from the LGBTQ+ ones. These values include openness, being more socially conscious and a willingness to question traditions. Those were ultimately what made my childhood as amazing as it was. At the end of the day, I love my moms, and I am extremely grateful for the way they raised me and molded me into the person I am today. As incredibly corny as that sounds, it’s completely true and probably why, deep down, I’ll always say: “Gay parents are better than straight parents.”

Photos from a “Don’t Say Gay” protest in Sarasota, Florida, on Feb. 27, 2022. Kulawik’s parents peeked out from the opening in a long pride flag carried across the Ringling Bridge.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR