Adolescence and Sexuality: Children of Same-Sex Parents

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Questions
How does being raised by a same sex couple affect the sexuality of the child? Our question is greatly involved with the teen perspective on sexuality and how it changes based on the sexuality displayed by the family at home. How must they view society? Do they feel excluded; having to hide their own views from others, or even their own guardians?

Methods
- Research mainly consists of reviewing literature and evaluating the ideas. The online resource of EBSCOhost was used to find academic peer reviewed articles.
- Fraioli, (2012) used participant observation. He was a counselor of a child with two mothers. He had been around the family for a majority of their life and therefore could note the effects same sex parents had on the child.
- Pratesi (2012) surveyed those who were raised by same sex parents by using a questionnaire design.
- Regnerus (2012) used Knowledge Networks survey as a source for research. The surveyor then asked if the child lived in the house while his/her mother or father was in a romantic relationship with a man or women.
- Lick, Patterson, and Schmidt (2013) performed a quantitative study using surveys. 91 participants filled out online surveys reviewing openness and stigma.

Findings
- Somerville (2007) suggests that there are numerous "rights" being taken away from children who are born with new reproductive technologies (NRT). NRT’s are only focusing on the benefits of the parents and the donors whereas the effects on the child are being disregarded. Gay and Lesbian populations are making use of this new technology, however some believe that the child should remain in contact with its biological parents or have multiple parents so that the child may have a normal upbringing.
- Regnerus (2012) talks about the challenges that same sex families go through due to public perception. The article argues that people are uneducated on the environment of varied households, so they can’t understand them. It looks into same sex families and how their children face more challenges in the outside world then children that are raised in heterosexual households.
- Research shows that children of same-sex parents may be stigmatized and experience fewer life chances because of their family. Depending on how supportive the environment and community is, there is a lesser chance of being left out and placed into an outcast minority group. There is no proof that being a part of an LGB family impacts the sexual preference and psychological development of a child. The child is more open to experimenting with sexuality in general even if they are heterosexual, which the majority of children from same-sex families are. Surveys show that because of the increased acceptance within the family, regarding sexuality, the bond between parent and child is stronger. Children produced from heterosexual relationships that later separate because of a parent “coming out” have a harder time adapting to the new environment. Families formed with a child from a young age, accepts and adapts better than those that learn of their parents’ sexuality at an older age. In conclusion, coming from a homosexual household does affect openness to sexuality but does not differ in other ways from being raised in a heterosexual household.

Findings
- They tried to find whether children of gay or lesbian families were open about their parents sexuality. Fraioli (2012) explored how if a child has same-sex parents it makes them more willing to experiment with their sexuality at an older age. There are also disadvantages with a child being teased and left out from life chances.
- Sociological Perspectives
  - The interactionism theory would use relationships and interactions to formulate ideas focusing on the relationship between parent and child. How having same sex parents makes the child’s bond stronger because they could be more open with them about their sexuality.
  - A functionalist perspective involves an individual’s role and what is necessary to carry out major activities. For example having same sex parent’s effects the child’s sex role in society, they may not fit in in places like school.
  - The conflict theory uses power and inequality to formulate questions and hypothesis. A conflict theorist would say having same sex parents affects the child’s life chances making him experience social exclusion or discrimination.

Table 3: Estimated population averages for child high school gradation (weighted observations, child age 17-22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Opposite-sex married parents</th>
<th>Opposite-sex common law parents</th>
<th>Gay parents</th>
<th>Lesbian parents</th>
<th>Single father</th>
<th>Single mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

Citations
- Brook, L. (October). What media outlets should know about the latest same-sex parenting study [Web log message]. Retrieved from http://equalitymatters.org/blog/201310080003