

37. Adults with LGB Parents: How Growing Up with LGB Parents Affects Adulthood

Goldberg, A. E. (2007). (How) does it make a difference? Perspectives of adults with lesbian, gay, and bisexual parents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 77, 550-562.

In this study, 46 adult children of LGB parents were interviewed regarding their perceptions of how growing up with LGB parents affected them as adults. Participants felt more tolerant and open-minded and had more flexible ideas about sexuality and gender as a result of having LGB parents. They also often felt protective of their parents as well as the larger gay community, and some went to great lengths to defend their parents to family, peers, and society. Some were aware of their self-presentation as children of LGB parents and strove to represent themselves as psychologically healthy, heterosexual and successful individuals. Some adult women reported struggling with trust issues as adults, as related to experiences of parents unexpectedly coming out and of bullying and teasing.

Semi-structured phone interviews were conducted with 36 women and 10 men that had at least one LGB parent. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 50 years. Nine (6 women, 3 men) had a gay father, and only one of these had lived with their gay father growing up. Twenty-five (21 women, 4 men) lived with their lesbian mother, 2 women were raised by their bisexual mother, and 10 (7 women, 3 men) were raised by and lived with two lesbian mothers. Except 3 multiracial individuals, all were Euro-American. The majority lived throughout the U.S., but 2 lived in the UK and one in Canada. Participants were recruited through e-newsletters and websites of several organizations for children of LGB parents. The majority identified as heterosexual.