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Adoption among Same-Sex Couples: Argumentative Essay

When people announce they are going to have children, the normal reaction that they get is “Congratulation!” However, when they announce they are going to adopt a child, they get a very different reaction. Depending on the situation, the reaction can vary. If you are choosing to resort to adopting a child after suffering through multiple fertility treatments and are still failing to conceive, then you will be met with understanding and empathy. If you choose to make life better for a child out there, then you will be met with admiration. Both facts only reign true if you are a heterosexual couple, and you are going to bring a child into a traditional, socially accepted family unit of a father and a mother. However, if you are a same-sex couple, looking to adopt, or even foster a child, the reaction you will meet is very different. No matter how forward-thinking we become, to this day we continue to discriminate against same-sex couples. We may have given same-sex couples the legal right to marry one another, but we are far away from accepting them as a family unit in our society and refrain from discriminating against them on social or legal grounds.

According to Brodzinsky and Pertman, adoption is the first choice of many gay couples, unlike heterosexual couples who deem it their last resort. In fact, at present, the same sex-couples are four times more likely to adopt a child to start a family of their own as opposed to heterosexual couples. Out of the four percent of children being adopted today, 3 percent are raised by same-sex couples. Furthermore, according to a report, more than 2 million LGBTQ individuals, including same-sex couples, are interested in adopting a child.

While people are reforming and coming around on the concept of same-sex marriages, the fact that these couples looking to adopt children or foster them in an effort to start a family of their own is being discouraged by many (Oakley et al.). The various ways they choose to discriminate such parents, or potential parents is by calling their adoptive children “pets”, or “props” they use to mimic the heterosexual lifestyle. They go as far as to say that gay adoption is morally wrong and even consider placing young, impressionable children with gay or lesbian couples as a form of abuse. Some people also go as far as to call out these fractions and state that they are only adopting children so that can make them gay and increase their numbers. While these are the extreme reactions, there is another group that suggests lesbian couples have their own children using donor sperm as opposed to adopting a child from the care system.

With thousands of kids looking for loving families and thousands of same-sex couples trying to adopt, no one has the right to deny them the right to do so. There are between 2 million and 3.7 million children with at least one LGBTQ parent in the U.S., and approximately 200,000 of these children are being raised by same-sex couples. Several recent studies have found these kids are as happy and healthy as children raised by heterosexual parents (Moreau). With these many kids awaiting adoption, it is inhumane to deny people that can give them a loving and nurturing home the right. Lawmakers, by enforcing laws that discriminate against same-sex couples are adversely affecting a child, more so than the homosexual couples wanting to adopt them.

In Tennessee alone, there are about 9000 children waiting for a loving and nurturing home. Most of these children age out of the system and end up being homeless and on the streets since they do not have the nurturing system required to rehabilitate them into society. Denying people the right to foster kids based on their religion and lifestyle alone is plain wrong. Especially when there are so many kids out there is a disgrace to a system that works to ensure that these kids live a happy life. Unfortunately, Tennessee is also one of those states where discrimination against same-sex couples was legal, as was the right to deny the adoption of a child.

Lawmakers have permitted 10 states and their state-licensed welfare agencies the legal right to refuse the placement of children with same-sex couples if it is in conflict with its moral or religious beliefs. This law was applied in North Dakota back in 2003, while it was enforced in Virginia in 2012. These states include Mississippi, Michigan, Alabama, South Dakota, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas.

While the 10 states permit this “state-sanctioned discrimination,” LGBTQ and ABA advocates are of the view that parenting is getting more difficult for same-sex couples in the presence of laws and policies concerning such couples. Such laws and policies are not in the best interest of the child — especially those in the child welfare and foster care system.

There are more than 440,000 children in foster care nationwide, with more than 120,000 of them awaiting adoption (AFCARS). Children up for adoption are usually neglected or abused, thus they are put into the care system. These kids are special and different. They have been through a whole lot more than most adults in a similar situation and may suffer through psychological issues and developmental delays as a result. Gay parents know what it is like to be different, thus they approach the matter with more empathy than most people.

Another issue raised on the subject is the fact that boys need dads and girls need mums as young children. Since a traditional family unit has both, these needs are met. However, according to societal standards, boys need fathers for the support only they can provide, and the same can be said for girls. However, these roles are assigned by society with regard to an individual's gender roles. Just how these assumptions are frequently shattered in single-parent households, the same-sex couples are just as adept at filling them as well. Mums can do dad things, and dad can do mum things just as well as they can perform their assigned roles in society (Brodzinsky and Pertman).

While they cannot provide a male perspective, or a female perspective, on things like shaving for the first time, talking and bonding with other men, dressing up and wearing makeup, they can call on parental figures in their children’s lives, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts and their friends to help them out. This practice is not exclusive to same-sex couples, but single-parent households and even a proper family unit use these parental figures to help them out (Brodzinsky and Pertman).

These children, as mentioned, come from rather tough beginnings in life. Thus, whether these issues are still prevalent on not, they have already shaped his perspective on life, and his perception of self. They also shape a sense of their future, and the opportunities they may have in life, particularly during adolescence.

Thus, in light of the legal obstacles being faced by the same-sex parents, the American Bar Association (ABA) have advised that attorneys and lawmakers across the country try to work towards measures that put an end to the discrimination being faced by gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual parents. They are recommended to treat LGBT parents equally to safeguard their fundamental right to parent and the fundamental rights of their children to enjoy a familial relationship (ABA).

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