"Stop! You're Making Me Sick!"

Disciplining Lesbian Motherhood in Psychological Rhetoric

The great danger of analogy is that a similarity is taken as evidence of an identity.

Kenneth Burke, Permanence and Change

In "every society," Michel Foucault argues in "The Discourse on Language," the "production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised, and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures."[1] Cultures develop rules to govern discourse production, rules to govern which individuals or groups may speak about particular topics, and rules that govern the relative suitability or taboo nature of those topics.[2] While culturally-bound external rules limit discourse production and speaker agency, internal regulations also exist, "concerned with the principles of classification, ordering, and distribution."[3] This regulatory system influences the development of academic "disciplines," whereby a "discipline" is both a categorical scheme for organizing knowledge and a rule system that regulates the types of information or the areas of inquiry allowed legitimate space within any particular location in the categorical scheme. Thus, as Foucault notes, "disciplines are defined by groups of objects, methods, their corpus of propositions considered to be true, the interplay of rules and definitions, of techniques and tools."[4] Moreover, specific disciplines "constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules."[5] Particular disciplines enact "fellowships of discourse," thereby coordinating the development of rules that affect what will remain secret within the discipline and what shall be disclosed.[6] Of course, such rules are always produced in specific historical and social contexts, and dominant cultural values are likely to be reproduced within ivory-tower walls. For instance, homonegativity and patriarchal values may operate as specific mechanisms for authorizing or deauthorizing speech about particular topics.

This particular authorizing function, in conjunction with the disciplinary rules, is significant for understanding the conditions under which certain topics become more or less legitimate as grounds for scholarly inquiry. As Foucault notes, the "modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation of discourses vary with each culture and are modified

within each."[7] Institutionalized rules govern what any particular or specific "author" can say about a topic. "The author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction."[8] Foucault concludes that the author is "an ideological product," because it is the universe of discursive structures or the multiple webs of meaning that make possible the appearance of the author in the first place. These discursive structures regulate not only the production of texts or rhetoric, but regulate the relative authenticity or ethos of the author's voice within particular disciplines. It is therefore more important, according to Foucault, to inquire about the "modes of existence" of a particular rhetoric, and to ask "Where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself? What are the places in it where there is room for possible subjects? Who can assume these various subject functions?"[9] The critic's task is both to "mark out and distinguish the principles of ordering, exclusion, and rarity in discourse," as well as to pay attention to the rules for "effective formation of discourse."[10] Robert Hariman has observed that the "professional ethic exacts specific "institutional pressures" upon the academic writer, such that the "rules of decorum," including the rules of "disinterestedness" and of "political neutrality," constrain not only the objects of scholarly inquiry, but the scholar's voice in speaking to such issues.[11] University culture thus declares itself to be apolitical and not "affiliated with any one political interest, community, or doctrine," even though "the disciplinary system is the means for recruiting, training, authorizing, and rewarding the political agents of the dominant class. Knowledge is by definition apolitical, yet the body of knowledge was created as an agency of social control."[12] It is in this sense that the academy generally, and the disciplinary system specifically, functions as an ideological state apparatus. Critical examination of academic discourse becomes all the more crucial, then, because it is a primary site at which conditions of social domination are reproduced and reified through particular disciplinary and authorizing practices. Specifically, understanding how academic rhetoric reproduces and legitimates lesbian motherhood as an oxymoronic identity is crucial because academics are granted "expert" or

"authority" status in the larger culture of which they are a part.

This essay analyzes contemporary psychological approaches to the study of lesbian motherhood. I trace how characterizations of lesbianism as a mental disorder, neurosis, and/or pathology have been negotiated within psychological studies of lesbian mothers in the last three decades. I perform a rhetorical criticism of several social scientific studies of lesbian mothers and their children. I argue that a rhetorical ambivalence toward lesbian motherhood in this particular strain of academic discourse is marked by a desire to "help" lesbian mothers retain custodial and visitation rights, but that such intentions are essentially undermined through the rearticulation and circulation of anti-lesbian understandings of gender.

The notion that the related disciplines of psychoanalysis, psychiatry, and psychology function as mechanisms of ideological control has been the subject of much academic and political commentary. Indeed, psychiatry, psychology, and psychoanalysis have themselves been the site of ambivalence and dissent where homosexuality is concerned. Though lesbianism as such is no longer officially considered a mental illness, the lesbian-as-psychopath still enjoys authorial and ideological dominance. This dominance emerges in the methodological frameworks and assumptions of studies of lesbian mothers and their children. Before one can assess how contemporary psychological research plays a role in the contestation of lesbian maternal identity, however, one must understand the historical circumstances under which homosexuality and lesbianism were conceptualized in the above-mentioned disciplines.

I have selected six representative studies that attempt to determine the probable "effects" of being raised by lesbian mothers. I contextualize the analysis within a brief history of lesbianism as a mental illness or psychopathology. I critique how the pathological character of lesbian identity within the professional discourses of psychiatry, psychology, and psychoanalysis function in the studies themselves. I argue that while the studies self-consciously try to subvert the medicalization of identity by attempting to "prove" that children of lesbians are not likely to "become" homosexual themselves, the studies inadvertently lend credence to, if not reify, the oxymoronic caste of lesbian motherhood.

Historical Context of the Studies

The Stonewall Riots of June 1969 ushered in a new period of civil rights activism for lesbians and gay men. The American Psychiatric Association's December 1973 decision to declassify homosexuality as an illness represented a second potential turning point, whereby emancipation from hegemonic characterizations of lesbianism-as-psychopathology might facilitate social acceptance and freedom from discrimination. The declassification, however, did not guarantee liberation from pathological characterizations, as in the case of numerous judicial, academic, and popular advocates who still think and speak of lesbianism as a specific set of repugnant neuroses. As I will show, such depictions and assumptions form the basis of psychological studies well into the 1990s.

Critical analysis of the studies is crucial and potentially beneficial in two senses. This type of study is common in the literature. More importantly, many of the studies are motivated by an explicit desire to improve the likelihood of positive legal outcomes for lesbian mothers. Scholars have conducted this research to provide "scientific" evidence that lesbian mothers pose no "danger" to their children. In 1994, for example, a coalition of scholars represented by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the American Psychological Association (among others) urged the Supreme Court of Virginia to accept the conclusions of numerous studies that found children of lesbian mothers to be "normal" (read: properly masculine or feminine, with a presumed heterosexual orientation). Advocates urged the justices to find that "an individual's sexual orientation does not correlate with the person's fitness as a parent," and to "consider such scientific research in view of the widespread prejudice and stereotyping that exists with respect to gay men, lesbians, and bisexual people in the United States."[13]

My desire to analyze the research comparing lesbian-mother households to heterosexual-mother households (or "normal populations," as they're identified in the academic literature) stems from a pragmatic concern. If study after study finds no ill effect of lesbian mothers on children, and the studies are motivated in part to respond to lesbian mothers' legal problems, why do lesbian mothers still experience discrimination in the judicial sphere? The failed efficacy of the researchers' stated desires to use their research to combat discrimination could be explained

in at least two ways. The simplest explanation is that one study, two studies, or even a multitude of studies cannot reasonably be expected to surmount a century of negative attitudes toward and discrimination against lesbians. In other words, the psychological studies are discounted or outweighed by the sedimentation or reification of the oxymoron, whereby decades of socialization into believing that the oxymoron is intractable undermines the studies' putative power. In such a conceptual scheme, no amount of research could ever "disprove" the "fact" that lesbians pose a danger to children and should thus be barred from mothering. In this sense, social change is incremental, and the more the academic community can do to combat stereotyping and discrimination through "scientific" research, all the better. The lack of efficacy could also be explained by the notion that academic and legal discourses do not actually overlap or interpenetrate one another. This explanation lacks persuasive power, however, given the considerable overlap between the journalistic and legal spheres. It is clear in several cases that judges attend to psychological research in the process of deliberation; it is also clear that psychological researchers are well aware of legal discursive characterizations of lesbian mothers. To claim that lesbian mothers still experience discrimination because of a lack of transference or interaction between spheres of public argument, then, is to deny the existence of plentiful evidence to the contrary.

I argue that the problem actually goes much more deeply than any of the above explanations realize. I refer loosely to what I call the "yardstick" problem, whereby the studies attempt to legitimate lesbian mothers by comparing them to heterosexual mothers (or by comparing children of lesbians to children of heterosexual women). The practical and ideological limitations of academic discourse in the legal sphere is, at root, a function of the fact that all of the comparative studies (and even some of the non-comparative ones) are predicated upon heteronormative and sexist assumptions and research questions. The studies are doomed to rhetorical failure in the legal and popular spheres of public deliberation because the studies unwittingly replicate anti-lesbian attitudes.

Homosexuality-as-Illness

A century ago, sexologists and other interested academicians constructed a complex

taxonomy to explain variations in human sexuality. The taxonomy itself could not be shorn from the historical and social circumstances that gave rise to it, however, as the moral authority of the church gave way in the latter half of the nineteenth century to vested authority in scientific expertise. Psychiatry's ascendance as a source of cultural authority has been the subject of much scholarly commentary; my purpose here is to sketch the broad contours of the intradisciplinary debates regarding homosexuality and lesbianism as specific mental illnesses/neuroses. Ronald Bayer's historical account functions as the exemplar; I summarize his argument here and supply other contextual information to explain how contemporary psychological studies of lesbian mothers fail to escape replication of the idea that lesbianism is an insidious illness.

In 1981, Ronald Bayer published Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis, in an impressive effort to account for the historical, social, and institutional conditions that made it possible for the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its official diagnostic manual in December 1973. He traces the transformation of homosexuality from a religious typification of abomination to a scientifically-classifiable disease.[14] Western religion itself fostered and encouraged psychiatry's role in policing homosexual behavior, whereby the "most heated response in the removal of homosexuality from the diagnostic system came from orthodox religious groups and orthodox psychoanalysts. The reason is that they share the same philosophical system, one rooted in Judeo-Christian morality."[15] Indeed, Bayer notes that sexologists, psychoanalysts, and others developed a scientific paradigm of homosexuality within the bounds of "moral opprobrium."[16] The medicalization of lesbian identity thus took root and flourished while the sciences of psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology, and sexology gained both moral and scientific authority in public culture. Within the psychoanalytic tradition, for instance, advocates such as Irving Bieber and Charles Socarides became powerful advocates of the perspective that homosexuality (and its implied female equivalent, lesbianism) as a matter of necessity must be defined as a "profound psychopathology."[17]

Speaking generally, conventional psychoanalytic theory is predicated upon a teleology that assumes heterosexuality as the inevitable outcome of "normal" human sexual development.

This teleology produces a concurrent theoretical fixation on the causative agents for homosexuality. In 1972, for instance, the International Journal of Psychiatry published a forum exploring the illness model. The forum's first article, authored by Richard Green, questioned the depiction of homosexuality as an "illness, a disorder, a defect, or unnatural behavior."[18] In so doing, Green raised fundamental queries regarding Freudian psychoanalysis, social learning theory, and other models of homosexuality as a deviation from heterosexual normativity. He rejected the major psychoanalytic claim representing heterosexuality as the natural state of human sexuality, whereby heterosexuality and procreativity were one and the same.

Other professionals in the forum tended to concur with Green's approach. Alan Bell called for a more complex theoretical model of human sexuality free of the rigid binary distinctions between heterosexuality and homosexuality. Judd Marmor and Martin Hoffman noted how psychoanalysis measured conformity to social norms: while Marmor argued that the illness paradigm was a "moral judgment" with "no basis in fact," Hoffman observed that psychiatry had "quite unreflectingly carried over" the "moral views of the culture from which it arose."[19]

Charles Socarides, however, did not concur with Green's critique. He characterized homosexuality as a necessarily pathological arrested development While heterosexuality was "determined from birth by anatomy and then reinforced by cultural and environmental indoctrination," homosexuality was "based on the fear of the mother and the aggressive attack on the father, and [was] filled with destruction and self-deceipt [sic]."[20] Socarides' position, as Bayer notes, was not a solitary one in the disciplinary debates regarding the proper classification of homosexuality. Other men, including Sandor Rado and Irving Bieber, occupied the illness paradigm camp by characterizing homosexuality, respectively, as a particular "phobia" and as a failure to follow nature's dictate.[21] Mid-twentieth century constructions of homosexuality occurred during the growth of psychiatry as a scientific/moral enterprise. Drawing upon popular notions of homosexuality-as-deviance, inversion, or abnormality, psychiatric clinicians and researchers formalized such views and authorized them with a scientific voice. In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association published its initial official compendium of mental disorders.

Its pages contained the haunting classification of homosexuality as a "sociopathic personality disturbance."[22]

One might ask how gay people at mid-century responded to the medicalization of identity. Bayer found that many gay men and lesbians throughout the 1950s and early 1960s "publicly welcomed the psychiatric effort to wrest control of the social definition of their lives from moral and religious authorities. Better sick than criminal, better the focus of therapeutic concern than the target of the brutal law."[23] The rhetorical and historical lesson of this complicity, obviously, is to choose one's allies carefully. The decisions of such groups as the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis to entrust psychiatry may have seemed prudent under the circumstances, given psychiatry's authorial voice as a scientific, and therefore objective and bias-free enterprise. Bayer's research found that early homophile organizations placed unquestioning faith in scientific authority, hoping that psychiatry's "scientific neutrality" might be advantageous to the cause of integrating and assimilating gay citizens into American culture.[24]

The hegemony of psychoanalytic, psychiatric, and psychological construction of the illness paradigm cannot be understated. The battle to declassify homosexuality was fought bitterly over a period of several years. Professionals such as Green, Marmor, and Thomas Szasz questioned the orthodoxy, while the nascent gay liberation movement took pains to contest their own classification as psychopaths.[25] The contestation of the illness paradigm, however, required an attack upon psychiatry's status as a legitimate authority. Vocal advocates like Franklin Kameny argued that the "corpus of clinical studies of homosexuality was flawed on methodological grounds. Lacking statistically verifiable evidence that homosexuality constituted a pathological condition, psychiatric researchers had <u>defined</u> homosexuality as a disease."[26]

The first organized assault on the APA by gay liberation activists took place in 1970 during the APA annual meeting. Over the next three years, sympathetic clinicians joined forces with gay activists to secure a voice within professional debates regarding homosexuality. Finally, at the 1973 convention, a panel of researchers, clinicians, and gay activists convened to explore the potential removal of homosexuality from the DSM. Opposition within the professional organization was fierce, as many clinicians had materially-vested interests in keeping

homosexuality in the DSM and their "patients" on the account books. The singular gay activist on the panel, Ronald Gold, listened patiently as other panelists and audience members continued to endorse the hegemonic view. In Bayer's account, Gold's "impassioned appeal" to the APA demanded abandonment of the "clinical stance." "Stop it," he declared. "'You're making me sick'"![27] Within the broad contours of this institutional history, a significant research trajectory emerged, one that attempted to use psychological research to "help" lesbian mothers.

Comparative Studies, Social Control, and Bad Mothers

A significant body of discourse exists in the field of psychology that argues for greater tolerance of lesbian mothers by showing that the children of lesbian mothers or gay fathers have no greater likelihood of "becoming gay" than children with non-queer parents. Attempting to legitimate lesbian motherhood in this manner is flawed, for the approach grants hegemonic legitimacy to heterosexual parenthood. In other words, the research takes for granted the assumption that "becoming gay" is necessarily or inherently bad. Psychologist Laura Benkov's research on lesbian mothers found that "[v]irtually no one had written about lesbian and gay parents prior to 1979. The only studies I found were done in response to an increasing number of custody battles emerging during the 1970s. For the most part, these studies compared children of divorced lesbians and children of heterosexual mothers, sometimes also divorced, sometimes not. They asked whether children of homosexuals were more likely to have emotional problems, be confused about gender identity and sex roles, or to grow up to be gay. Researchers found no differences with respect to these issues . . . . Homophobic questions shaped the inquiries, and heterosexual parents constituted the norm against which lesbian and gay parents were measured."[28]

My own analysis confirms Benkov's findings. The framing of the studies raises several crucial questions: How are psychological discourses of lesbian motherhood disciplined? What are the epistemological limits of the studies? How does an ideological tension between sameness and difference become a particular rhetorical problem within this body of research? How do academic advocates negotiate the oxymoron through agenda for greater tolerance?

In this section, I perform a critical analysis of six academic studies that focus on the psychological health of American lesbian mothers and/or their children, as compared to heterosexual mothers and their children. Plentiful research has been conducted in this area, and I focus on those studies cited most frequently in published reviews of the related literature. The fundamental rhetorical problem facing the researchers is that they are working within a disciplinary framework in which only certain forms of research can be conducted. While the studies painstakingly make clear their concern for legal problems and other forms of discrimination affecting lesbian families, they nevertheless betray those concerns by casting lesbian motherhood as an implicitly inferior alternative to heterosexual motherhood. The comparative approach reproduces the notion that queer experience is best understood from a heterosexual perspective, and the approach is essentially conservative for it fails to question the dominant paradigm. In speaking to the development of a lesbian-centered ethics, for instance, philosopher Sarah Lucia Hoagland writes that even if one tries to reform or rebel against a particular system, one is necessarily "operating within the system's parameters and [is] thus giving the system meaning by helping to hold its axis (what goes unquestioned) in place." Moreover, "to engage, to participate, in a situation or in a system is to affirm its central values."[29] These studies operate to such ends.

The six studies included here are empirical in nature, based on data from sample populations through various research methods: open-ended interviews, structured interviews, questionnaires, and other survey instruments. The articles were structured in the way most empirical research is reported: an introduction including a review of relevant literature, a statement of rationale, and an explanation of purpose or hypothesis. The articles explained participant selection methodology, specific research procedures and methods employed, and a report of research findings in statistical and narrative form. The articles typically concluded with a discussion of results, including acknowledgments of limitations and suggested directions for future research. The studies were published between 1981 and 1996, with initial research conducted from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s. All studies were motivated by a concern for lesbian mothers' legal problems. As David Flaks and his colleagues noted, "should research

demonstrate the viability of lesbian and gay families, this would necessitate a reformulation of extant theories, such as psychoanalytic and social learning, which prescribe that healthy development requires two opposite-sex, heterosexual parents for the developmental tasks of identification and rejection on the one hand and modeling on the other."[30] While the authors all profess concern for discrimination against lesbian families, they employ different research methods and ask different research questions.

Noting that "alternative family forms have emerged as a significant social phenomenon during the past decade," Beverly Hoeffer's study is justified on two pragmatic grounds. She claims that empirical study of "lesbian-mother families is necessary to provide the public and professionals with an understanding of lesbian mothers and their children based on empirical reality." Moreover, the study is necessary given the various legal and social problems facing lesbian-headed families.[31] Her study addresses one primary research query: How does a mother's sexual orientation influence her children's "acquisition of sex-role traits and behavior, one component of sexual identity?" Hoeffer compared the children of 20 white lesbian mothers to the children of 20 white heterosexual mothers in the San Francisco Bay Area. Mothers were matched according to socioeconomic class, with educational levels and occupations identified as class markers. To maintain a manageable sample, Hoeffer included only one child from each household—either the only child or the eldest child, aged six to nine years old. Children were matched according to age and gender. Hoeffer's study measured sex-role conformity through interviews regarding mothers' and children's' toy preferences.[32]

Like Hoeffer, Martha Kirkpatrick and her colleagues conducted research as a means to respond to the custody battles facing multitudes of lesbian mothers, and set out to measure the "psychological status" of 40 children ages 5-12. Comprised of a female psychologist, a female psychiatrist, and a male child psychiatrist, the research team noted that "custody proceedings have been hampered by a lack of judicial and clinical experience and a lack of research data on the development of such children." The researchers compared the children of lesbians and heterosexual women through an analysis of the mothers' psychosexual development.[33] Several other procedures measured children's intelligence and psychological health through such measures

as the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), human figure drawing, and the Holtzman Inkblot Technique. Such measures were administered to determine the children's "psychological functioning," with special attention paid to "gender development." The researchers noted carefully that tests and interviews were conducted in conditions whereby the mothers' sexual orientation was unknown.[34] Kirkpatrick, Smith, and Roy measured "gender development" by interviewing children about toy preferences, friend/playmate preferences, "special interests," cross-dressing or non sex-role conformity, and drawings. The discussion of findings painstakingly pointed out that "Measures of gender identity, object choice, or indices of future sex role behavior in childhood are not well established [whereby indications of] a developmental stage may be mistaken for established personality structure. The fluidity of developmental process, which makes new levels of integration possible, mitigates against any measure or any single evaluation being definitive. These concepts should be kept in mind in appraising any childhood gender measures."[35] Moreover, the researchers found both groups of mothers to exhibit highly similar "maternal interests, current life-styles, and child-rearing practices." Finally, the study found no significant correlation between mothers' sexual orientation and children's psychopathology. Instead, when children did manifest emotional difficulties, such problems were most likely related to the children's experience of family strife and divorce.[36]

Daniel Patrick Moynihan and former Vice President Dan Quayle are not the only men obsessed with the concern of the effects of single motherhood on children. Psychological research is also fascinated with discovering what happens to children's sexual identity development "in a father-absent household." As such, Richard Green and four other researchers set out in the late 1970s to "assess aspects of the psychosexual and psychosocial development of prepubescent children living with their mothers." [37] Comparing 56 children of 50 lesbian mothers to 48 children of 40 heterosexual mothers in 10 states, Green and his colleagues studied the psychological health of both mothers and children. Mothers completed questionnaires concerning child-rearing, romantic relationships, and parenting experiences. Researchers measured mothers' attitudes toward divorce, sex roles, and their children's sex education. Mothers also completed the Bem Sex Role Inventory and two other measures designed to test "general personality variables" and

"psychological sex typing." Children ages 3-11 submitted to two separate Wechsler Intelligence tests, other examinations assessing "sexual identity and family relationships," and answered interviewers' questions regarding "play preferences, friendship, television preferences, and thoughts about life as an adult." Green also measured the extent to which lesbians participated in "lesbian activist groups." Green found no significant differences in children's sexual identity, and no children "met the criteria of gender identity disorder in childhood." Finally, the study revealed "no psychopathology related to the mothers' sexual orientation."[38]

Barbara McCandlish's article, "Against All Odds: Lesbian Mother Family Dynamics," did not explicitly compare lesbian mother households to heterosexual families, but instead focused on the "health of children raised from birth in lesbian families." Characterizing her work as a "preliminary study," McCandlish contacted five lesbian couples who had borne children through donor insemination. "The purpose of the investigation," she wrote, "was primarily to develop a theoretical model of normal lesbian mother family structure, which would lead to more appropriate clinical services to these families and to future research." Using a two-hour interview format, McCandlish's approach included open-ended questions regarding the couples' romantic relationships, parent-child interactions, and extrafamilial support systems. Her study found, among other things, that the couples' relationships underwent significant changes subsequent to the birth of their children. McCandlish also noted that none of the children exhibited signs of gender identity disorder.[39]

Lesbian couples raising children born through donor insemination also sparked the research interests of David Flaks, Ilda Ficher, Frank Masterpasqua, and Gregory Joseph at the Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology at Widener University. Concerned initially with lesbian mothers' poor legal status, the Flaks study compared the children of 30 lesbian couple households to the offspring of 30 heterosexual parent households. The researchers focused on the first child between the ages of three and nine in each family. Flaks matched the children by birth order, sex, and age; he matched families by educational level and income. All families were white. Measurement instruments included the Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children, a Parent Awareness Skills Survey, Dyadic Adjustment Scales for parents, and other questionnaires. The

researchers noted that each area measured "was chosen because it has been the subject of negative judicial assumptions about lesbian-mother families." The researchers found no significant differences in the children's general behavioral and cognitive functioning The researchers also found that lesbian mothers tended to be more highly aware of parenting skill guidelines.[40]

"Despite psychological, judicial, and popular prejudices," University of Virginia researcher Charlotte Patterson observed, "a substantial body of research now attests to normal adjustment among mothers and normal development among children in these families." Patterson developed the Bay Area Families Study in response to the lesbian "baby boom," and examined the lives of 66 lesbian mothers and their children. A total of 37 households were studied. Patterson's study addressed mothers' mental health and their children's psychological development. Mothers completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a Child Behavior Checklist, and the Derogatis Symptom Checklist, which measures psychological distress (including "anger/hostility, anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity, obsessive/compulsiveness, paranoid ideation, [and] phobic anxiety)." She found all mothers within the "range of normal functioning," with "generally positive views about themselves."[41]

Patterson studied and evaluated children's mental health through standard interview and questionnaire techniques. The interview focused on matters related to "sex-role identity," with questions addressing four topics: "peer friendships," "favorite toys", "favorite games," and "favorite characters on television, in movies, or in books." Children's responses in each area were coded for "sex-role relevant qualities." Patterson found children of lesbian mothers similar to the "normal sample," and she reminded the reader that the "aspects of children's sexual identity studied was that of preferences for sex-role behavior." In other words, Patterson found that most children conformed to traditional sex-roles and gender identities.[42]

Contemporary psychological academic discourses of motherhood are constituted as always-already heterosexual. While granting marginal visibility to lesbian mothers, the research nonetheless unwittingly casts lesbian motherhood as a silhouetted identity overshadowed by a hegemonic heterosexual maternal identity. All six studies confirmed researchers' the oft-cited hypothesis that children of lesbians were no more likely to "become homosexual" than children

of heterosexuals. The problem with such claims, however, as I will attempt to show in the next section, is that such notions are predicated on the idea that "becoming gay" is necessarily bad. Lesbian mothers are often criticized for exposing their children to "immoral" and "unhealthy" influences. Lesbian mothers are also accused of attempting to "recruit" their children into homosexuality. Trying to demonstrate that lesbians' children are, for the most part, heterosexual, does little to subvert the hegemonic characterizations of lesbians as "bad" women. In fact, I will argue that the six representative studies effectively reproduce the oxymoron by granting implicit credence to the notion that "becoming homosexual" is something that must be avoided at all costs.

Any reliance on psychological research must be eliminated as a basis for pursuing legal protections—the studies are flawed on epistemological and methodological grounds, and are of precious little value to lesbian mothers. The studies may serve the short-term practical concerns that (a) lawyers need in their advocacy for lesbian mothers and may also provide (b) resources for social workers and mental health practitioners, but serving only those interests works against the long-term ideological interests of emancipating people from compulsory heterosexuality. The argument from expedience is not necessarily negative, but it does little to disrupt or subvert the reification of lesbianism as a pathology or neurosis.

Everything We Always Wanted to Know about Heterosexual Child Development, but Were Afraid to Ask

Psychiatric and psychological discourses of lesbian motherhood must be abandoned immediately, for they pose a grave rhetorical danger to the struggle for queer equality generally and justice for lesbian mothers and their children in particular. The studies are predicated on the assumption that heterosexuality = psychological health, whereby "normal" gender identity or compliance with gender norms is characterized as an a priori or "natural" predictor of future heterosexual orientation. The literature characterizes children's noncompliance with hegemonic sex-role norms as a dispositive factor in the development of latent homosexuality. Since researchers would be hard pressed to ask children what their sexual orientation "is," researchers instead seek to correlate compliance with gender and sex roles to progress toward a healthy

heterosexual future. If it can be demonstrated that lesbian mothers engage in specific nurturing practices that encourage such compliance, then "naturally" the children will develop into "normal," "healthy," and "successfully" developed heterosexual adults.

The Hoeffer study, for instance, deploys this rhetorical strategy in its well-intentioned attempt to "normalize" lesbian families. The study makes much of social learning theory's characterization of parent-child role modeling. Social learning theory suggests that children's performance of "stereotypical" sex-role behavior is often encouraged and modeled by adults, including but not limited to one's parents. If the models exemplify and "directly encourage less stereotypic" behavior, children's behavior will also be "less stereotypic."[43] It should not escape our attention social learning theory presumes that lesbian identity is "naturally" an outcome of violating normative sex role expectations. More importantly, if lesbians cannot as a matter of nature "fit" into a culture's norms for gender-appropriate attitudes, appearance, and behavior, then lesbian mothers will automatically role model inappropriately—in Hoeffer's terms, in "less stereotypic" ways.

Such assumptions are not limited to professional psychiatric discourses. The idea that lesbians are inappropriately feminine—not feminine "enough," "butch," and with or without a latent wish to "be" a man—pervades popular and legal discourses too. Lesbians and gay men, such reasoning holds, should be prohibited from employment as elementary school and high school teachers due to their own problematic role behaviors. Nor should lesbian mothers' partners be allowed near the child, for they might teach their partner's daughters that playing with Lincoln Logs is not only fun, it's acceptable! The recruitment metaphors that infiltrate journalistic and legal representations of lesbian maternal identity are thus complicated within the academic sphere through the addition of a particular character to proselytic behavior: this logic suggests that recruitment becomes an innate aspect of lesbian identification, rather than a "behavior" as such. Moreover, such logic dictates the inference that if lesbians are proselytical by nature, then children must be protected at all costs, since the last thing American culture needs is another generation of "queers."

The implied claim that "successful" child development will result in fixed adult

heterosexuality is not unique to the Hoeffer study. The 1995 Developmental Psychology article by Flaks, Ficher, Masterpasqua, and Joseph made similar claims. Their review of relevant research found "no significant differences between the children of lesbian and heterosexual parents, suggesting that sexual orientation of custodial parents is not an important predictor of successful child development." "Healthy development outcomes for the children in this and other studies of lesbian families," Flaks, et al., write, support other research findings "that neither father presence nor parental heterosexuality is crucial for healthy child development. Such a conclusion, although uncontroverted in the research literature, remains controversial because it challenges widely accepted psychoanalytic and social learning theories of child development."[44] Patterson's 1996 report of findings from her Bay Area Families Study noted similar results. "Despite psychological, judicial, and popular prejudices," Patterson observed, "a substantial body of research now attests to normal adjustment among mothers and normal development among children in these families." Patterson's study find that "preferences for sex-role behavior among the children of lesbian mothers" was apparently "quite typical" for pre-adolescent children.[45] As with the Hoeffer study, Patterson's research approach included a focus on children's toy preferences. Is it reasonable to assume, however, that a child's toy preferences are indicative or correlative of sex-role conformity?

One dangerous rhetorical effect of such characterizations and assumptions is the severe constraints upon human agency in the negotiation and performance of gender as such. Lesbian mothers, if they are to enjoy the support of professional psychiatric discourses, had better do all they can to go against their "nature" and teach their children that only little girls may play with tea sets, and that only boys can play with model cars. If not, custody rights will be in question, and the wrath of an angry heteronormative majority will be unleashed. Psychiatric discourse in this sense (re)produces broader sociopolitical constructions of lesbian identity and deploys them with pernicious rhetorical effects.

Hoeffer's study attempts to demonstrate the theoretical possibility that lesbian mothers might be able to overcome their inappropriate gender identifications to serve their children's best interests. Hoeffer administered a toy preference test to mothers and children; data coders then

rated the toys and activity preferences on a masculinity-femininity scale. Hoeffer found that while "lesbian mothers preferred a more equal mixture of sex-typed" toys than heterosexual moms, lesbian mothers were, like their heterosexual counterparts, more likely than not to raise boys who preferred toy rockets, gorillas, snakes and tool kits. Daughters tended to select gender "neutral" sea shells, marbles, and whistles, though they also liked to play with feminine toys in their preparation for future homemaking: tea sets, cradles, doll children, and kitchen items.[46]

Why do studies like Hoeffer's fail to question the reification of gender-role norms? Why is gender-role conformity constructed rhetorically in such studies as an ideal? What ideological interests do these studies serve? Hoeffer's study claims to create an "understanding of lesbian mothers and their children based on empirical reality instead of stereotypes and myths."[47] One must inquire as to the specific stereotypes Hoeffer had in mind. While it may appear as if her study, and others like it, are the key to legal protection for lesbian mothers and their children (by presuming that compliance with gender role norms = heterosexuality), such approaches and characterizations effectively do more harm than good. These studies both reify stereotypical characterizations of lesbians and preclude the disruption of normative ideals that constrain children's abilities to play with toys of their own choosing. Such "disruption" would theoretically place their lesbian mothers in danger of social censure, accusations of recruitment, and at risk of suffering the legal system's wrath. Compliance with gender norms does not guarantee heterosexual development, nor does the contestation of such norms automatically produce transgressive sexuality.

Parental non-conformity to sex and gender norms is characterized rhetorically as a significant correlative factor in the development of queer tendencies. The Green study, for instance, measured lesbian mothers' "frequency of participation in lesbian activist groups." In addition, Green and his colleagues made special note of their findings of lesbian mothers' non-normative gender behaviors. In their survey of 50 lesbian mothers' "psychosexual development, Green found that 69% "frequently" or "usually played with masculine toys;" 67% had at some point dressed in boys' clothing; and 68% were called "tomboy" during childhood. To worsen matters, 92% "usually dressed in slacks" and slightly more than half "never wore makeup." The

deployment of such statistical claims begs at least one question: what set of rhetorical and historical conditions enable and encourage psychological professionals to focus on such matters in their efforts to protect lesbian mothers from unjust legal maneuvers? One might argue that the professional discourses of academic psychiatry are disciplined in such a way as to reproduce normative expectations and also to reproduce anti-lesbian assumptions. Such an inference is reasonable in light of the fact that Green's (and others') statistical claims about lesbian mothers are always already contextualized within a heteronormative framework—heterosexual mothers function as the ideal yardstick population against which lesbians are measured. The Green study found, for example, that less than 40% of their sample heterosexual mother population engaged in any presumptively gender-transgressive behavior as children or as adults—77% usually avoided wearing slacks, and 90% tended to wear cosmetics.[48]

One crucial feature of the comparative studies deserves further critical consideration. Those studies that adopted a comparative methodology failed to entertain the possibility that heterosexual mothers might occasionally engage in gender-transgressive behavior. "There are few, if any, data pointing to a role-modeling influence of a parent's homosexual orientation on the sexual orientation of the child."[49] How can heterosexuality function as the grounds for adequate role modeling if its "other," homosexuality, does not? Can the researchers have it both ways? The Green study implies that parental heterosexuality will and does play a role in child development. On what reasonable grounds can the researchers claim that one sexual orientation and not another will influence child development? How is it possible for lesbian mothers to role model properly when their own sexual orientation is tied so closely in the literature to the transgression of normative gender role preferences, attitudes, and behaviors?

Green's statement here indicates a slightly different interpretation of role modeling than the Hoeffer study, but the result is the same: "Our study," Green writes, "revealed no psychopathology related to the mothers' sexual orientation." But why "should there be no major demonstrable effect on sexual identity development of children being raised by homosexual mothers? [citation omitted]. If homosexual behavior reflects a fundamental conflict or confusion over anatomic maleness and femaleness, and/or reflects disorder in gender-role sexual expression

by children, why do our groups of children look so similar?" Green answers his own query with the following conventional wisdom: "It may appear facile, but nevertheless is accurate, to state that nearly all homosexuals had heterosexual parents." Moreover, Green and colleagues conclude, the "child does not live in a social vacuum with its homosexual parent."[50]

If most lesbians had heterosexual mothers, were their mothers inappropriate role models in some way? Heteronormative "logic" appears to dictate such an inference, though the researchers in these six studies excluded such questions from critical consideration. Such exclusions effectively exempt presumptively heterosexual parents of future lesbian children from any perception of wrongdoing. Within the heteronormative conceptual framework, lesbians must learn their transgressive roles outside the heterosexual family—parents of gay children everywhere can now stop asking the futile question "where did we go wrong?" Why are lesbians presumed to engage in transgressive role modeling, but heterosexual parents of homosexual children are not held to the same standard?

The studies reproduced homonegative and sexist characterizations of lesbians as "too" masculine in appearance and behavior by reporting their "shock" at some findings. The Kirkpatrick study, for example, found "no evidence of 'role-playing' of heterosexual marriage stereotypes in the lesbian couples." Moreover, Kirkpatrick, Smith, and Roy "were surprised to discover that the lesbian mothers tended to be more concerned with providing male figures for their children than were the comparison mothers."[51] This "surprise," I think, is contingent upon the researchers' unstated doxa-based assumptions about gender, sexuality, and lesbian identity.

In classical rhetorical theory, a claim is doxastic when it comprises or typifies conventional wisdom within a particular collective culture or community. Doxa thus indicates a community's prevailing ideological commitments. Once a doxastic claim is made, however, the claim does not function once and for all as a "truth"—such a rhetorical effect would be contingent upon any number of factors, including an audience's receptivity to such claims. Social, political, and rhetorical conditions must be "ripe," in other words, for the production, circulation, and reception to occur. Doxastic knowledge in Aristotelian terms often constitutes one or more of the premises upon which deductive claims are made. Doxastic claims are sometimes codified into a

culture's legal doctrine (as in the U.S. founders' claims that slaves were 3/5 human); other claims circulate widely in popular or journalistic culture (as in the claim during the 2000 presidential election that the contest was "really" between two [and only two] legitimate candidates).

Regardless of the doxastic claim's specific site of production, circulation, and consumption, however, the (re)production of unexamined claims limits the possibilities of progressive social change. Unquestioned doxa preserves and conserves a community's hegemonic ideological commitments. As Robert L. Scott observes, "Silence symbolizes hierarchical structures as surely as does speech. Agreements as to what doesn't count may be verbalized, but they may be observed also silently. The latter may be stronger; that is, verbalizing a negative calls attention to a possibility. It becomes thinkable, whereas silence leaves it in the realm of the unthinkable."[52] "Ironically," Scott notes, "the most powerful rhetoric for maintaining an existing scheme of privilege will be silent. The voice that covers will tend to sound beneficent."[53] Using rhetoric in the service of social change, from this perspective, entails uncovering the silent (but powerful and sometimes dangerous) hidden claims that support or form the basis of policy deliberations. So, one may ask, how does doxa play a role in the "shock" and "surprise" noted by such researchers as Kirkpatrick?

The two illustrative quotes rest upon four unstated doxastic claims. The first such claim is that lesbian relationships mimic heterosexual marriage in some fashion. Why would the researchers search for such evidence? More importantly, what purpose would the query serve in the researchers' focus on motherhood? The Kirkpatrick study focuses on children's psychological functioning, with special attention directed toward gender development. The comment regarding "role-playing" (or lack thereof) reminds the professional audience that a heterosexual-two parent family is the minimal standard by which successful child gender development occurs. The claim regarding lesbian mimicry of ostensibly heterosexual roles, however, functions as a precise site of ambivalent contestation. Kirkpatrick noted "no difference found between the children of lesbian mothers and those living with heterosexual mothers in the type or frequency of pathology as evaluated by blind psychological testing and a playroom evaluation."[54] Such results could be explained through a particular demonstration that lesbians

engage in parental role-modeling behavior similar to heterosexual parents—in this way, the stereotype that lesbian couples mimic heterosexual couples may work in lesbian mothers' favor. On the other hand, the character of mimicry may be contested when a lesbian enacts "masculine" role modeling and therefore behaves disobediently. The study enacts ambivalence toward lesbian maternal identity at the precise moment it attempts to explain the "effect" of lesbians' gender performances on their children. Given that the children's behavior falls within the "normal" range of the comparative population, studies like this are necessarily caught in a rhetorical bind. Pure mimicry on the part of lesbian mothers would be interpreted as disobedience. Failure to enact mimicry in some sense would also theoretically produce "abnormal" or "troubled" children. But the problem that lesbian mothers face in this literature actually goes much deeper: lesbianism is constructed rhetorically in such studies as an automatically transgressive identity.

Researchers made special note of men's presence in children's lives. The McCandlish study, for instance, found that "all the children had access to males outside the family," which may have been "a factor in their healthy gender identity."[55] The Kirkpatrick study also noted "surprise" at the discovery that the sample lesbian mother population provided male role models. At least three assumptions make such "surprise" possible. First, "lesbian" status is conflated with separatist or "man-hating" behavior. The idea that lesbians hate men is not unique to Kirkpatrick's team; this idea pervades the American hegemonic collective imagination. It is not surprising that the Kirkpatrick study, among others, would replicate this assumption. Reliance upon and reproduction of the assumption, however, undermines the researcher's beneficent interests in helping lesbian mothers retain custody. Sarah Lucia Hoagland finds it "significant that 'lesbian' is <u>equated</u> with 'manhating' while 'woman' is not." As Hoagland writes, "Lesbians love lesbians, so some lesbian energy and focus is not accessible to men. But how is this manhating?. . . . So why are lesbians as a group perceived as manhaters? To hate someone is to direct energy toward them, albeit negative energy, to maintain an aggressive connection. So how is lesbian denial of energy to men such an aggression?"[56]

The unquestioned assumption that lesbian = man-hater has severely problematic consequences for the comparative psychological approaches to lesbian mothering. In one regard,

the false equation may lead to other flawed presumptions: if lesbians hate men, then they should not raise sons; if lesbians hate men then they will treat male children poorly; if lesbians hate men, then they will disallow any role for fathers (if the child is a product of a heterosexual union). The presumption that lesbians hate men is tied also to the misconception that lesbians think they can enact both masculine and feminine role modeling. Indeed, most of the studies examined here presume that lesbianism is nothing more than the enactment of a peculiar form of female masculinity, one that is reprehensible for children to witness. If the lesbians are coupled, researchers seek evidence of mimetic role modeling. If a lesbian mother is single, researchers like Kirkpatrick presume that the children will suffer from a lack of masculine role modeling, even as the research simultaneously presumes that lesbianism is a particular form of masculinity. In other words, this research reproduces the homonegative idea that lesbian mothers must seize the role of fatherhood because of their naturally transgressive gender identities and performances.

From such perspective, lesbian mothers simply cannot win. They are "losers" as women because of their innately masculine identities, preferences, appearances, or behaviors. Since they can't "be" men (excluding the possibility of transgender identification or sex reassignment surgery), however, lesbians must resent and literally hate what biological males embody and represent. All four doxastic claims involve maleness, men, and/or masculinity as central to the constitution and enactment of lesbian identity. Lesbianism is characterized implicitly as a false masculinity, an extreme case of penis envy, mimicry of maleness, an usurpation of fatherhood, or overt misandry. Lesbian identity is not constituted in positive or affirmative rhetorical terms. Lesbian mothers are thus on shaky ground when it comes to demonstrating their worthiness to function as proper mothers. If lesbians exist presumptively outside the grounds of femininity, then they can never quite function as adequate mothers. In other words, because "lesbian" is implicitly and repeatedly defined as a psychologically and morally corrupt mimicry of masculinity, then the oxymoron is solidified. Mother = femininity, lesbian = masculinity, therefore mother ≠ lesbian. Lesbian mother households thus represent abnormal family arrangements, subject to judicial and professional psychological scrutiny. Current psychological studies of lesbian mother households—specifically, the comparative approach represented

here—are doomed to reproduce and reify the lesbian mother oxymoron because of certain presumptions about what it means to be a "lesbian," what it means to "mother," and what it means to develop a sexual orientation. As the Flaks study observes, since psychoanalytic and social learning theories of child development "rely on traditional family structures to define the factors that promote children's development, they are not able to account easily for successful outcomes in nontraditional families, particularly those in which there is no opposite-sex parent in the home."[57]

Psychological studies of lesbian mother families are highly problematic on several grounds, then. The research is predicated upon homonegative assumptions and claims, and the research methodologies reproduce and reinforce binary gender-role norms that punish children and adults for non-compliance. The developmental and social learning models, as applied in these studies, hypocritically presume that a mother's homosexuality might correlate more highly to her child's sexuality/gender development. A mother's heterosexuality is not presumed to have such a potentially strong correlation. A closer look at one of the Green study's conclusions may elucidate this rhetorical problem. "Why should there be no major demonstrable effect on sexual identity development of children being raised by currently homosexual mothers?"[58] If the studies are truly comparative in nature, would it not make sense to question whether a parent's heterosexual orientation had any "demonstrable effect" on one's children? Examining the quote from another perspective, isn't it possible to conclude that lesbian parents are indeed having a "demonstrable effect" on their children's sexual identity development, i.e., that lesbian mothers are indeed socializing their children "appropriately" by enforcing compliance with hegemonic sex-role and gender performance norms? Lesbian mothers appear to be caught in an intricate and suffocating bind: if their children exhibit any form of non-compliance with sex-role stereotypes, they might be accused of "recruiting."

In the sample psychological literature, lesbian identity is constituted as essentially transgressive. How is it that lesbian mothers can role model properly, whereby "properly" entails socializing children into identification with, preferences for, and performances of normatively gender-appropriate behaviors and roles? How is it that when lesbians raise

"successfully" developed (read: heterosexual) children that they have done a "proper" job of parenting, but if their children are also gay, lesbian mothers have "recruited"? By what standards shall a profession distinguish between "socialization" and "recruitment"? The hypocrisy of this distinction need hardly be mentioned, but its pernicious effects should be emphasized: the subject position of lesbian mothers in professional psychological and psychiatric discourses is always-already wretched and inferior. Lesbians and lesbian families will never "measure up" to the hegemonic heterosexual standard. This failure to "measure up" is a function of at least four correlated factors: the originary definition of lesbianism as a psychopathology, a professional discourse disciplined by its own historical and cultural trajectories, professional failure to examine disciplinary assumptions, and a homonegative culture that rewards those professional discourses that reproduce anti-lesbian doxa.

While lesbianism may no longer officially be construed as a neurosis or mental illness, the academic rhetoric examined here illustrates the extent to which psychological professionals continue to conceive of lesbian identity as essentially problematic. The "illness" model, which typically individuates the pathological character of homosexuality, appears to have been replaced by the model of social transgression. The comparative studies replicate the depiction of lesbian identity as an arrested development. If lesbians exist in a state of arrested development because they fail to reach and enact the objective ideal of heterosexuality, then legitimation of lesbian maternal identity is difficult indeed. The arrested development paradigm is replicated unwittingly through an obsessive focus on "proving" that children of lesbians will develop "successfully" into happy heterosexuals.

Given that the comparative studies are produced in a specific academic context, it behooves one to remember Foucault's warning that knowledge claims will always be subject to discipline. In the current case, it may be unreasonable to expect scholars in psychoanalysis, psychology, and psychiatry to resist their professional socialization. While critiques of the illness paradigm were evident before the 1973 APA decision, it is unlikely that all scholars accepted the decision without reservations. As Bayer's research demonstrates, many contemporary scholars and practitioners still treat homosexuality as a psychological problem.

Thus, one might reasonably expect scholarly treatments of homosexuality to contain residual elements of originary constructions, and we have certainly seen such evidence in this essay. Given the history of the discipline, U.S. social history, and contemporary conditions of widespread discrimination and homonegativity, it is unlikely that academics would be able to completely resist or subvert the dominant paradigm.

At least one major objection to the academic discourse may be raised, however, as to the goals of the research. I claimed earlier that the comparative studies are doomed to rhetorical failure. The studies presume lesbianism as inherently problematic or transgressive, and the scholars thereby fail to question their own professional assumptions about what it might "mean" to be a lesbian. The studies are misguided in their beneficent attempts to help in the struggle for equality, because the studies' methodologies and research questions fail to reject the doxastic claim that being or becoming gay/lesbian is necessarily bad. The psychological research effectively implies that while a degree of tolerance is necessary for adult lesbians, such tolerance is acceptable only as long as the children don't "become" gay. The research intends to subvert proselytical characterizations, but the intention is undermined through the deployment of a rhetoric that replicates doxastic assumptions about lesbian identity, human sexuality, gender roles, and child development. The studies fail in spite of themselves through a logic that says "Look! Lesbian adults exist, and they parent. But look at how well they tend to parent! They're socializing their children appropriately by enforcing conformity to binary sex and gender norms!" "Successful" lesbian parents do a different kind of recruiting if they raise "successfully" developed children. Heterosexual parents are not subject to accusations of recruitment, even though some might occasionally encourage their children to violate gender role norms. Such parents are "progressive," but only if they're heterosexual. Any lesbian parent who encourages her children to resist, play with, or otherwise transgress gender roles risks a "bad mother" label.

The interests and intentions of the comparative research effectively masquerades as beneficent, but in the final analysis poses grave rhetorical and practical dangers to lesbian families. Lesbian mothers and their children will not be served adequately by a professional discourse that continues to presume that being or becoming gay is bad. The academic rhetoric

here is essentially debilitating, and the constraints upon human agency are both staggering and horrifying: gender roles, sexuality, and child-rearing practices are all subject to the panopticon of professional psychological surveillance. Unless and until researchers in fact reject the presumption that being lesbian is "bad," then the research should be rejected as a tool for advocacy and social change. Lesbian mothers will never achieve equality under the current psychological paradigms and the research that represents the vast ideological interests in preserving heterosexuality as a regime.

Homonegativity operates as a specific disciplinary mechanism in academic psychological discourses. The rhetoric examined here, then, does not (and in a disciplinary sense, cannot) transcend anti-lesbian ideological conditioning. Instead it is rooted in such socialization. The lesbian mother oxymoron is thus reproduced through scholarly voices that whisper originary constructions of lesbian identity while shouting the praises of constricting sex-role standards, compulsory heterosexuality, and conformity to outdated models of human sexuality. The research reifies heterosexual kinship bonds as the standard for comparison; such an approach masks the asymmetrical power relations along lines of gender and sexuality that place lesbians at an inherently disadvantaged status. Advocates for lesbian mothers must thus reject the debilitating rhetoric of psychology in the struggle for queer equality.

1. Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," The Archeology of Knowledge & The Discourse on Language, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (NY: Pantheon, 1972) 216.

2. Foucault "Discourse" 220.

3. Foucault "Discourse" 220.

4. Foucault "Discourse" 222.

5. Foucault "Discourse" 224.

6. Foucault "Discourse" 225-26.

7. Michel Foucault, "What is an "Author?" The Foucault Reader, trans. Josue V. Harari, ed. Paul Rabinow (NY: Pantheon, 1984) 117.

8. Foucault "Author" 118-19.

9. Foucault "Author" 120.

10. Foucault "Discourse" 234.

11. Robert Hariman, "The Rhetoric of Inquiry and the Professional Scholar," Rhetoric in the Human Sciences, ed. Herbert W. Simons (London: Sage, 1989) 213, 214.

12. Hariman 218.

13. www.apa.org/pi/bottoms.html

14. Ronald Bayer, Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981, 1987) 15-40; cf. Charles Silverstein, "Psychological and Medical Treatments of Homosexuality," Homosexuality:

Research Implications for Public Policy, eds. John C. Gonsiorek and James D. Weinrich (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991) 102.

15. Bayer 17-18.

16. Bayer 30, 34.

17. Richard Green, "Homosexuality as a Mental Illness." International Journal of Psychiatry 10 (March 1972): 78.

18. Alan Bell, "Human Sexuality—A Response," International Journal of Psychiatry 10 (March 1972): 99-102; Judd Marmor, "Homosexuality—Mental Illness or Moral Dilemma?" International Journal of Psychiatry 10 (March 1972): 115; Martin Hoffman, "Philosophic, Empirical, and Ecologic Remarks," International Journal of Psychiatry 10 (March 1972): 106.

19. Charles Socarides, "Homosexuality—Basic Concepts and Psychodynamics," International Journal of Psychiatry 10 (March 1972): 121, 120, 119.

20. Bayer 29-30.

21. Bayer 29-30.

22. Bayer 39.

23. Bayer 9.

24. Bayer 70-81.

25. Bayer 9-12.

26. Bayer 82.

27. Bayer 125. Bieber and Socarides continued to advocate the illness model well into the late 1980s. See Irving Bieber, Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1988), and Charles W. Socarides, The Preoedipal Origin and Psychoanalytic Therapy of Sexual Perversions (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1988).

60. Laura Benkov, Reinventing the Family (NY: Crown, 1994) 9.

61.Sarah Lucia Hoagland Lesbian Ethics (Palo Alto, CA: Institute of Lesbian Studies, 1988) 57.

62. David Flaks, et al., "Lesbians Choosing Motherhood: A Comparative Study of Lesbian and Heterosexual Parents and Their Children," Developmental Psychology 31 (1995): 105.

63. Beverly Hoeffer, "Children's Acquisition of Sex-Role Behavior in Lesbian Mother Families," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 51 (1991): 536-37.

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65. Martha Kirkpatrick, Catherine Smith, and Ron Roy, "Lesbian Mothers and Their Children: A Comparative Survey," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 51 (1981): 545, 546.

66. Kirkpatrick, et al. 547, 546.

67. Kirkpatrick, et al. 548, emphasis added.

68.Kirkpatrick, et al. 550-51.

69. Richard Green, et al., "Lesbian Mothers and Their Children: A Comparison with Solo Parent Heterosexual Mothers and Their Children," Archives of Sexual Behavior 15 (1986): 168.

70.Green et al. 169-70; 170, 179, 180.

39. Barbara McCandlish, "Against All Odds: Lesbian Mother Family Dynamics," Gay and Lesbian Parents, ed. Frederick W. Bozett (NY: Praeger, 1987) 24, 26, 31, 27, 32.

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41. Charlotte J. Patterson, "Lesbian Mothers and Their Children: Findings from the Bay Area Families Study," Lesbians and Gays in Couples and Families: A Handbook for Therapists, ed. Joan Laird and Robert-Jay Green (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996) 420, 424-25, 424.

42. Patterson 426, 427.

43. Hoeffer 537.

44.Flaks, et al 106, 112-13.

45. Patterson 420, 428.

46. Hoeffer 538.

47. Hoeffer 536.

48. Green et al. 170, 173.

49. Green 181.

50. Green 180, 181, 182.

51. Kirkpatrick et al. 550, 549.

52. Robert L. Scott, “Dialectical Tensions of Speaking and Silence,” Quarterly Journal of Speech 79 (1993): 15.

53. Scott 10.

54. Kirkpatrick 551.

55. McCandlish 33.

56.Hoagland 5.

57. Flaks 113.

58. Green et al. 90.