

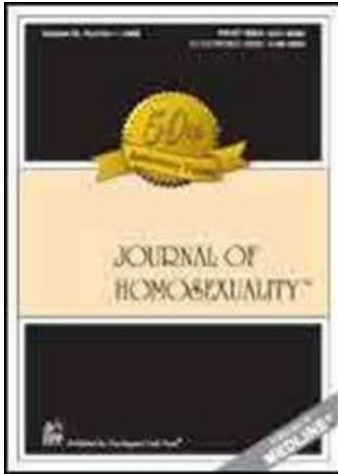
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Who is Mommy Tonight

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Who is Mommy Tonight? Lesbian Parenting Issues

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ABSTRACT. Developing an identity as mother and establishing what it means to mother is a task not defined by sexual orientation. Both heterosexual and homosexual women encounter role models and the dictates of society when mothering (Nelson, 1996). The present study explores how 18 lesbian adoptive parents, 49 lesbian parents who formed their families biologically, and 44 heterosexual adoptive parents experience and perceive their parenting role, how they respond when their children seek them or their partner for particular nurturing, and how the parents negotiate the cultural expectation of a primary caregiver. Lesbian couples were more equal in their division of childcare than heterosexual parents, and lesbian adoptive parents were the most egalitarian. In all types of dual parent families, parents were sought by their child for different activities. In heterosexual adoptive and lesbian biological families, the child's parental preference was rarely a source of conflict between partners. Lesbian adoptive parents were more likely to report that this preference caused occasional conflict. Reasons for this conflict

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are discussed in light of societal expectations of women and the role of mother. [Article copies available for a fee from *The Haworth Document Delivery Service*: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.Haworth Press.com>> © 2002 by *The Haworth Press, Inc.* All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS. Gay/lesbian parenting, adoption, mothering roles, parental roles, division of childcare, nurturing

Developing an identity as a mother and establishing what it means to mother is not defined by sexual orientation. Women, heterosexual and homosexual, encounter both role models and social dictates when mothering (Nelson, 1996). Some of the cultural messages regarding the primary caregiver or mother have been legitimately challenged as heterosexist, sexist, anachronistic and narrow (Mitchell, 1996). Although the desire to establish oneself in the primary caregiver role may be a response to an antiquated construction, that construction is still powerfully present in our society, and heterosexual and lesbian women alike have grown up indoctrinated with this notion. In fact, the sex of the parents may be of little significance in predicting pattern of shared parenting or the positive development of a child (Silverstein & Auerbach, 1999). Today, with the nuclear family now a nondominant family constellation, with more dual career couples parenting, and more non-traditional families challenging established assumptions of family, the cultural construction of mother may limit the scope of possibilities for all those in parental roles.

The present study examines how parents respond when their children seek them or their partner for particular nurturing—in essence, how women experience their perceived parenting role. The perception of the primary maternal role is influenced by the cultural expectation of mother, heterosexism, homophobia, sexism, as well as individual and couple psychological dynamics. Since these forces intersect, the struggle to establish the “primary” caregiver role may be even more complex in lesbian couples than in gay or heterosexual couples (Benkov, 1994). In lesbian couples, both women, separately and together, attempt to define mothering and how they will mother. In heterosexual couples, only one parent is to define and occupy the role of mother. This differs for lesbian couples. Mitchell (1996) proposed that lesbian parents are equal in their actual and ideal division of childcare tasks, and that in lesbian headed families the concept of primary and secondary caregivers does not exist. However, Patterson (1995a) reported that although household tasks and decision making are shared equally among lesbian parents, childcare tasks tend to be divided with the biological parent being more involved in childcare and the non-biological parent spending more time in paid employment.

We hypothesized that lesbian couples would be more egalitarian parents than heterosexual parents, and lesbian adoptive parents the most egalitarian. Further, we anticipated that the experience of negotiating the primary care-

giver role is different for heterosexual parents, for lesbian families formed through birth, and for those formed through adoption. Previous research often compared lesbian parents to heterosexual biological parents. We studied lesbian birth, lesbian adoptive, and heterosexual adoptive couples because they are similar in that they do not find themselves expecting the arrival of a child accidentally. Unlike heterosexual birth parents, typically it requires that these couples exert a great deal of thought and energy to become parents. This paper explores the three family types and how they respond to the childcare responsibilities section of the *Who Does What* (Cowan & Cowan, 1988) questionnaire, as well as to questions regarding their satisfaction with the division of child-related labor, how they feel about their own and their partner's involvement with their child, and several questions that ask who the child typically seeks for different nurturing tasks. Because of a lack of appropriate language, we use terms such as birth mother and non-birth mother, and primary and secondary parents.¹ Finally, this paper discusses our society's gender based parental roles. However, the fact that we acknowledge the assignment of these roles to men and women does not constitute support of these roles.

METHOD

We surveyed lesbian couples who adopted a child, lesbian couples who had a child through birth, and heterosexual couples who adopted a child. Most of the parents lived in Western Massachusetts' Pioneer Valley—a predominantly rural enclave, including several college towns. Many of the families lived in or near Northampton, Massachusetts, a town noted for its strong politically active lesbian community.

Procedure. Heterosexual and lesbian couples were recruited through newsletters, support groups, and word-of-mouth. Lesbian parents were also recruited at a local Pride March. Those who indicated an interest in the study were mailed a packet containing a description of the study, an informed consent form for both parents to sign and return in a postage paid envelope, two copies of the *Understanding All Families* questionnaire, and two addressed and postage paid manila envelopes for each parent to return the questionnaires separately. (Those recruited through support groups or at a Pride March were handed the packet, or completed an address label to have the packet mailed to their home.) The response rate for parents recruited through newsletters was approximately 50%, while the response rate of envelopes distributed at the Pride March and support groups was approximately 35%. We were satisfied with this response rate because response rates of 50% and lower are typical of survey research (Kerlinger, 1986). The largely invisible population of this study is often reluctant to participate in research that might "out" them and thereby place their family at some legal or social risk. Further, among lesbian parents, there may be significant mistrust of research results that might be used

to further legitimize discrimination against gay and lesbian parents. Thus, this population is difficult to recruit.

Sample. All parents were in committed relationships, and in most instances both parents completed the questionnaire. Eighteen lesbian mothers of an adopted child participated. They represented 10 different households, in 8 of which both parents participated. There were 49 lesbian mothers who had given birth or whose partner had given birth, and they represented 26 different households. For 22 of those households both parents responded. In 3 families both mothers had given birth to at least one child, and 4 families reported that the non-birth parent legally adopted the child.

Background and demographic variables for the three groups of parents are reported in Table 1. There were strong similarities in the background characteristics of the parents. They were predominantly caucasian, in their late 30s or early 40s, and well educated. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups with respect to education, occupation, or income. How-

TABLE 1. Demographic Information

		<i>Lesbian Birth</i> <i>n = 49</i>	<i>Lesbian Adopt</i> <i>n = 18</i>	<i>Heterosexual Adopt</i> <i>n = 44</i>
Age *		<i>M = 37.8 (sd = 4.4)</i> <i>Range 28-53</i>	<i>M = 43.1 (sd = 4.4)</i> <i>Range 34-49</i>	<i>M = 42.7 (sd = 5.3)</i> <i>Range 34-56</i>
Sex	Female	100%	100%	56%
	Male	0%	0%	44%
Race	Native American	2%		2%
	Oriental/Asian Am.	2%		5%
	White or Caucasian	96%	100%	93%
Hollingshead 7-Point Education Scale		<i>Median = 7</i> <i>Mode = 7</i> <i>Range = 4-7</i>	<i>Median = 7</i> <i>Mode = 7</i> <i>Range = 6-7</i>	<i>Median = 7</i> <i>Mode = 7</i> <i>Range = 4-7</i>
Hollingshead 9-Point Occupation Scale		<i>Median = 7</i> <i>Mode = 9</i> <i>M = 6.3 (sd = 2.5)</i> <i>Range = 1-9</i>	<i>Median = 8</i> <i>Mode = 9</i> <i>M = 7.9 (sd = 1.3)</i> <i>Range = 5-9</i>	<i>Median = 7</i> <i>Mode = 8</i> <i>M = 6.6 (sd = 2.4)</i> <i>Range = 1-9</i>
Hollingshead Index of Social Status *		<i>M = 50.4 (sd = 13.9)</i>	<i>M = 60.6 (sd = 6.5)</i>	<i>M = 51.6 (sd = 13.7)</i>
Income		Median \$61-80,000	Median \$81-100,000	Median \$61-80,000

* statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

ever, one-way ANOVA ($F_{(2,108)} = 4.2, p = .017$), and *post hoc* analyses indicated that lesbian adoptive parents scored significantly higher on Hollingshead's Index of Social Status (Hollingshead, 1975) than heterosexual adoptive and lesbian birth families. In addition, lesbian co-parents who had a baby through birth were significantly younger than adoptive parents ($F_{(2,108)} = 13.0, p = .001$).

Instrument. The *Understanding All Families* questionnaire has 11 sections and is 20 pages long. Because parents had different numbers of children, and children of different ages, they were not required to complete all sections of the questionnaire, only those relevant to her or his family. The sections important to the present study were: Family Composition; Cowan and Cowan's (1988) *Who Does What?*, which measures *family decision making*, *household tasks*, and *childcare*; the Parent Competition Scale; and Background Information. On average, completion of the paper and pencil questionnaire took 25-35 minutes. Instructions asked co-parents to complete the questionnaires alone and return them in separate envelopes. Parents were instructed to work quickly, give first impressions, and move on to the next item.

RESULTS

Where appropriate one-way analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted, and where there were significant differences, *post hoc Fisher's LSD* or Bonferonni comparisons were made. A significance value of .05 was used for all *post hoc* tests.

Parental Division of Labor and Role Satisfaction. There were no significant differences across types of families nor type of parent on the *Decision Making*, and *Household Tasks* sections of *Who Does What?* (Cowan & Cowan, 1988). Further, all types of parents reported a very egalitarian division of labor and on average were satisfied with their roles (see Table 2).

In contrast, the three family types were different with respect to how egalitarian their childcare responsibilities were ($F_{(2,101)} = 6.5, p < .002$). *Post hoc* analyses indicated that heterosexual adoptive couples were more likely to divide childcare tasks than lesbian adoptive or lesbian birth couples, and there was a trend toward lesbian biological parents to divide tasks more than lesbian adoptive parents ($p = .10$). A subsequent one-way ANOVA comparing the different types of parents on *Who Does What Childcare?* indicated that there were significant divisions of childcare tasks ($F_{(4,110)} = 6.4, p < .001$). *Post hoc* tests indicated that heterosexual adoptive mothers and lesbian birth mothers performed significantly more childcare tasks for their family's youngest child than did heterosexual adoptive fathers, lesbian non-birth mothers, and lesbian adoptive mothers. Similarly, when asked what they would like the division of childcare to be, there were differences ($F_{(4,101)} = 10.5, p < .001$), with heterosexual adoptive mothers and lesbian birth mothers indicating that they wanted to perform more childcare tasks than did heterosexual adoptive fathers and les-

TABLE 2. Who Does What? Task Sharing Scores

	<i>Lesbian Birth</i>		<i>Lesbian Adopt</i>		<i>Hetero. Adopt</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>sd</i>
Decision Making	.54	.62	.53	.55	.48	.44
Household Tasks	.84	.65	.80	.57	.65	.60
* Childcare Tasks	.98	.83	.58	.52	1.41	.95

* statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

bian non-birth mothers. This division of childcare reflects the number of hours spent working outside the home. Heterosexual adoptive mothers and lesbian birth mothers spent significantly fewer hours in work outside the home than heterosexual adoptive fathers, and lesbian non-birth mothers ($F_{(4,107)} = 4.0, p = .003$). Not surprisingly, parents who worked more hours outside the home engaged in less childcare ($r = -.36, p < .001$).

There were also significant differences across types of parents in their satisfaction with how they divided family tasks related to children ($F_{(4,109)} = 3.0, p < .02$), how they felt about their own involvement with their child ($F_{(4,109)} = 2.7, p < .03$), and how they felt about their partner's involvement with their child ($F_{(4,109)} = 2.8, p < .03$). *Post hoc* analyses indicated that lesbian adoptive mothers were significantly less satisfied with their division of family tasks related to children, and their own involvement in their child's life than were all other types of parents. Further, lesbian non-birth mothers and heterosexual adoptive fathers were significantly more satisfied with their partner's involvement than were lesbian birth mothers, heterosexual adoptive mothers, and lesbian adoptive mothers.

Lesbian parents who had given birth, lesbian parents who adopted, and heterosexual parents who adopted responded to several questions that asked them to indicate who the child typically sought out to engage in different tasks (see Table 3). Comparisons between lesbian birth and non-birth mothers indicated that birth mothers are more often sought by the child for going to bed, feeding and mealtime, when the child is afraid, tired, cranky, sick or hurt. In contrast, non-birth mothers are more often sought out by the child for rough and tumble play. Heterosexual adoptive mothers are more often sought out by the child for going to bed, feeding and mealtime, when the child is afraid, tired, cranky, sick and hurt, and adoptive fathers are sought for rough and tumble play and reading and watching television. Similar patterns of interrelationships across these variables emerged for all three family types. Because the patterns were the same for all three family types, Table 4 reports the intercorrelations for all families combined. Parents sought for rough and tumble play, are unlikely to be sought out by the child when she or he is tired and cranky or sick and hurt. The

TABLE 3. Parental Report of Child's Preference During Activities

	Lesbian Birth			Heterosexual Adopt						
	Non-Birth <i>n</i> = 15		Birth <i>n</i> = 30	<i>t</i>	Father <i>n</i> = 18		Mother <i>n</i> = 25			
	<i>M</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>M</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>df</i>		
Rough & Tumble Play	2.9	(1.5)	5.4	(2.3)	3.8***	3.4	(2.7)	6.2	(2.1)	3.9***
Read & Watch TV	4.7	(1.4)	5.0	(1.2)		5.6	(1.5)	4.3	(1.5)	-2.8**
Going to Bed	5.8	(2.3)	3.9	(2.3)	-2.6**	5.6	(1.5)	3.8	(1.9)	-3.4**
Feeding/Mealtime	5.6	(1.8)	4.3	(1.9)	-2.3*	5.9	(1.8)	3.7	(1.8)	-4.0***
Afraid	5.7	(1.3)	4.2	(1.7)	-3.1**	6.0	(2.0)	3.9	(1.4)	-4.1***
Tired and Cranky	5.9	(1.6)	3.7	(1.7)	-4.0***	6.1	(1.9)	3.5	(1.7)	-4.4***
Sick or Hurt	6.1	(1.4)	3.8	(1.7)	-4.5***	5.9	(2.1)	3.2	(1.6)	4.8***

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

variables sick or hurt, tired and cranky, afraid, feeding time and bedtime are all positively correlated. Thus, parents reported that children seek them out for different activities. While heterosexual adoptive and lesbian birth families reported that their child's preference for one parent over the other is rarely a source of conflict between the partners, the lesbian adoptive parents were more likely to report that their child's preference is occasionally a source of conflict ($F [2,109] = 9.9, p = .001$).

DISCUSSION

The three types of families that participated in this study are far more similar than different (Shelley-Sireci & Ciano-Boyce, 1999). That fact makes any differences between the families even more intriguing to explore. The following is an exploration of differences in nurturing found to exist between heterosexual adoptive families, lesbian biological families and lesbian adoptive families.

Previous research indicated that lesbian parents are equalitarian in their actual and ideal division of childcare tasks, and that in lesbian headed families the concept of primary and secondary caregivers does not exist (Mitchell, 1996). However, similar to the findings of Patterson (1995a), in the present study, lesbian families that had given birth to a child divided childcare tasks with the birth mother performing more childcare. Further, birth mothers re-

TABLE 4. Whose Attention Does the Child Seek? Pearson Correlations

		Play	Read/TV	Bed	Mealtime	Afraid	Tired/Cranky	Sick/Hurt
Play	<i>r</i>	1.000	.068	-.101	-.167	-.095	-.309	-.200
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000	.477	.287	.077	.319	.001	.034
	<i>N</i>	113	113	113	113	112	112	113
Read/TV	<i>r</i>		1.000	.367	.333	.413	.370	.295
	<i>Sig.</i>			.000	.000	.000	.000	.001
	<i>N</i>			114	114	113	113	114
Bed	<i>r</i>			1.000	.397	.536	.556	.587
	<i>Sig.</i>				.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>N</i>				114	113	113	114
Mealtime	<i>r</i>				1.000	.560	.605	.587
	<i>Sig.</i>					.000	.000	.000
	<i>N</i>					113	113	114
Afraid	<i>r</i>					1.000	.694	.799
	<i>Sig.</i>						.000	.000
	<i>N</i>						113	113
Tired/Cranky	<i>r</i>						1.000	.779
	<i>Sig.</i>							.000
	<i>N</i>							113
Sick/Hurt	<i>r</i>							1.000
	<i>Sig.</i>							
	<i>N</i>							

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

ported that they wanted to do more childcare, and non-birth mothers were satisfied with their role and the role of their partners. In contrast, lesbian adoptive parents, although highly egalitarian in their child care practices, reported more dissatisfaction with their division of child care tasks. Previous reports suggested that anti-gay prejudice accounts for much, if not all of the concerns unique to lesbian and gay adoptive parents (Patterson, 1995b), but the present

study suggests that some stress in lesbian-headed families might also be related to how parents define their roles as mother.

Lesbian birth mothers and heterosexual adoptive mothers perform significantly more childcare tasks for their families' youngest child than did all other parent types in our study. Though lesbian birth mothers and heterosexual adoptive mothers indicate that they wanted to participate more in childcare tasks, they reported being less satisfied with their partner's involvement in their child's life than the non-birth lesbian mothers or heterosexual adoptive fathers. Heterosexual adoptive fathers and lesbian non-birth mothers in the present study, by choice or necessity, spent significantly more time in work outside the home than do their partners. Clearly, the partners in both couples were in somewhat typical divergent gender roles, although sex obviously was not the differentiating factor in the lesbian biological families and birth was not the differentiating factor for heterosexual adoptive parents. Perhaps their sex or the fact of biological birthing differentiates these women from their respective partners and this differentiation begins a process of identification with a role or identity. Our society has clear relational roles with accompanying tasks and evaluations and these roles are most often thought to be gender based. Perhaps the societal demand to have these dichotomous roles in relationships is so strong that even when a couple is the same sex, there is a push to revive the traditional roles. As Slater (1995) suggests, couple relationships cannot only be based on gender difference between partners, but also on the "relational roles that society associates with appropriate male and female behavior" (p. 47). So, although lesbian couples are frequently more conscious in their attempt to form an egalitarian life as a couple, the additional layer of role expectations encountered when parenting may make it even more difficult to grapple with creating new definitions of family.

Various factors contribute to the assumption of cultural roles. Gender has been thought of as the primary determinant of the traditional roles in heterosexual relationships. In terms of relationships with same sex partners, other factors must invoke the role assumption. In the lesbian biological and adoptive families in this study, all women grew up with the social constructions of mother and father. Although the lesbian couples in this study were made up of two women who were satisfied with their "marital" relationship and were egalitarian in most of the other measured tasks, they did not completely escape the requisite traditional parental roles. Dichotomous roles existed and were occupied by couples consisting of a woman and a man and by couples consisting of two women.

If lesbian biological couples divided into more traditional roles as parents, with the birth mother the more traditional "primary" caregiver and the non-birth mother the "secondary" caregiver, was this division influenced by the fact that one of the mothers gave birth? Benkov (1994) discusses the effect of the biological asymmetry caused when one mother gives birth. Some couples consciously work to balance this asymmetry and thereby resist the soci-

etal norm of a “primary” and “secondary” caregiver. Some couples may choose who is to be the birth mother and create their role out of a conscious preference. Some couples may not have questioned the assumption that birthing a child automatically designates the birth mother as the “primary” caretaker. Clearly, many factors, including logistical ones, are considered when and if lesbian biological families attempt to counterbalance the asymmetry created by one partner giving birth. The child’s specific needs, employment and financial considerations as well as the preferences of each partner are only a few of the relevant elements in each family’s circumstance. What then happens in lesbian couples formed through adoption?

Lesbian adoptive parents showed the same pattern as the other two family types in terms of whose attention the child sought. Again, parents who were sought for feeding, bedtime, when the child was cranky, sick, tired or hurt were unlikely to be the parent sought for rough and tumble play and reading and watching television. While heterosexual adoptive and lesbian biological parents reported that their child’s preference for one parent over the other was rarely a source of conflict between the partners, the lesbian adoptive parents were more likely to report that their child’s preference caused occasional conflict. These lesbian adoptive couples were the most egalitarian on all measures. Although they participated equally in many tasks, their children turned to each mother for different activities. This division caused measurable conflict in the couples. To understand this distress, a look at the societal roles women in particular are expected to enact may be useful. Women are most often expected to occupy the primary nurturing role in relation to their children, regardless of sexual orientation. In the lesbian biological families in this study, one woman, usually the birth mother, occupied a more traditional primary caregiver role. In the lesbian adoptive families in this study, children did seek one mother for the typically primary maternal activities such as bedtime, feeding, when cranky, tired, sick or hurt, and the other mother for what society would call the traditional paternal activities, but this division was not based upon sex, or on one mother having given birth to the child. Under these circumstances, lesbian adoptive mothers experienced their child as having chosen them or their partner for the primary maternal role, and yet had no way of explaining this choice. Having been raised in a society that promotes traditional gender roles, these lesbian adoptive mothers were fully cognizant of the expectations of their sex. They may have desired the “primary” maternal role and if denied it by their child’s choice, were left with conflict. Adoptive lesbian parents begin their relationship with their child on what the parents would describe as equal footing. Yet the child typically seeks the parents for different activities, activities all essential to the psychological, emotional, physical and social development of the child. When the child repeatedly chooses one of the lesbian adoptive mothers for the role most akin to the secondary caregiver role, the lesbian adoptive mothers cannot attribute the child’s choice to gender because as women they have been brought up in a society that expects them to occupy the primary role.

In many instances, they then begin an internal search for a reason (an inadequacy, a defect, a lack) that could explain why they are not chosen. This self doubt can develop into pain and conflict for and between the lesbian partners. In some couples, the child's choice may be seen as the fault of the preferred partner. The non-preferred mother, feeling rejected by being relegated to the "secondary" maternal role may wish to distance from this and thus may emotionally detach to some extent from the dynamic, and subsequently from her partner. Contributing to the distress is the fact that the mother in the "secondary" caregiver role may feel shame at not meeting society's standard assumptions about the role of mother. This is the same society that denigrates her sexual orientation, her choice of partner, and her relationship.

The conflict that occurs for some lesbian adoptive mothers regarding their nurturing role might also be associated with a general struggle to define their role. Though the lesbian adoptive partners reported that they were participating equally in childcare tasks, they questioned themselves. Perhaps they were in more ambiguous caregiving roles. Choosing to create a non-traditional family, lesbian women already are consciously challenging society's dictates. Then, already in somewhat uncharted territory, the lesbian adoptive couple enters parenthood without some of the bearings that might come from one woman giving birth to the couple's child, which helps to define the "primary," and "secondary" parental roles.

In a recent article by Silverstein and Auerbach (1999), the authors challenge the notion that biological differences between men and women automatically dictate parenting behaviors. Mothers traditionally are the "primary" nurturing figure, usually associated with fulfilling dependency needs and fathers the "secondary" caregivers usually associated with a the child's need for autonomy and independence. These roles are not supported by research. In fact, when fathers are the "primary" caretakers, they are competent nurturers (Lamb, 1997). The traditional parental roles have been unambiguous, but they have artificially polarized men and women. When a woman then forms a family with another woman, this dichotomy is challenged. In fact, the ambiguity that lesbian adoptive couples may face in establishing their roles around childcare is an ambiguity necessary for societal changes that might benefit all families. It is possible that if heterosexual couples experienced more ambiguity in their roles instead of the ascribed gender based roles, childcare and other family tasks might be divided based upon preference, ability, time, and other factors that have more to do with the idiosyncrasies of each family.

Vital to the process of exploring the ambiguity of new roles is being able to talk to one another, and to other couples experiencing the same issues. Although lesbian women and couples do form close supportive communities, many are silent when dealing with the nurturing conflicts described in this study. Therapists, particularly those who work with lesbian clients, need to be aware of their own assumptions about gender based parental roles, and to encourage their clients to explore and label these issues. Adoption specialists,

agencies, and social workers who are in a position to discuss parenting issues with prospective adoptive parents need to be sensitive in their interactions, language and written materials so as not to promote the traditional polarized notion of the "primary" (mother) and "secondary" (other) caregiver. The tension inherent in role ambiguity can be seen as providing the potential for change rather than as a failure to meet society's expectations. This tension can then serve to launch all couples into an era where the options for families match each unique family rather than cultural expectations.

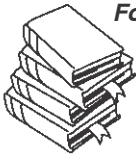
NOTE

1. These terms imply a value judgment. In our view, both parents are important. Our use of the various terms is to describe our research, not to perpetuate outdated roles or terms.

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