



March 1991

The Newsletter by, for, and about kids of gay and lesbian parents.



I was reading the bios of some of the contacts and saw phrases like "we are all in this together," and there was another sentence where someone wrote we "all have the same problem." I can only assume that the mutual problem they were focusing on was our gay parental background. I can't see how citing our familial background as a problem is going to do any good for the children who are growing up under these circumstances. I have never declared it as a problem for myself, it scares me that some people do, and that they are conveying this perception to children who may not know any better.

This isn't a war we are fighting; we aren't "all in this together" because there's nothing to "be in together". We all are just normal young men and women who share a common bond. That's wonderful to form friendships under and give support to each other in any time of need, but the slogan for Just For Us or S.P.A.S. or O.P.A.S. or any other youth group should not be "we're all in this together."

Aw heck Ali, if we're "in" anything together it's the battle of growing up, which is hard enough to fight without stapling the word "problem" to our parents just because of their sexual preference. I think young folks who are confused and seeking support should get support from their peers. I think they need to feel that their parents are normal human beings with normal relationships within the business community, with friends and most of all with their children. I would love to be a part of any program that helped children and young people to understand that the only reason they are special is because of their individual uniqueness, and not because their parents are gay.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DAVID ABBITT
AGE-22
CALIFORNIA

Jennifer's Story

I am 12 years old, and I have two homes. I have my home at my dad's, where he and his wife and my adopted brother live. I am there as often as I wish. And then I have my home, where I live with my two moms, my two sisters, and my three brothers.

My natural mother and my dad were divorced when I was just two, so it did not affect me too much because I was so young. And I have been fortunate enough to have both of them in my life even though they were divorced. At age 5, though, I was very affected by the custody battle that broke out. The whole battle was created out of society's closed minds and cruel ways. Some of my mom's so-called friends turned on her when she opened up about being a lesbian. They called my dad who at that time was living out of state and they, with their closed, uneducated mind and lies, they upset my dad's life and convinced him to come home and take us kids from our mom.

It was the worst nightmare of my life. I remember it as if it were just yesterday. I lived every day and night in fear that I was going to be taken from my mom, the only person that had always been with me, always! I love my dad, but my home is with my mom.

Finally, the custody battle was over, and my mom won. Soon after the tension broke, and the battle between mom and dad was over too. My dad and mom are friends today, and I think my dad understands that just because my mom's lifestyle isn't what he would choose, it is right for mom and being a lesbian doesn't make her unable to be my mom.

My mom is a lesbian, and I am very proud that she is my mom, and I am very proud of her for standing up for what she believed in and fighting to keep our family together.

It bothers me that our society is so closed-minded, and they think they

(Continued on page 2)

1991 GLPCI Conference Update

The GLPCI Youth Conference to be held on June 14, 15, and 16, 1991 should be one of the most exciting ones yet. Here's just a brief glimpse of workshops and activities planned for the conference. We hope you all can attend!

AIDS

- My Gay Dad
- My Lesbian Mom
- Religion and Homosexuality
- Telling/ Not Telling My Friend
- Our Sexuality
- How Do I Feel About All This Homophobia in the Family
- Gay and Lesbian History

There is also a planned panel discussion that will be made up of Youth from the conference talking to their parents, answering their questions. A box will be provided for confidential questions that will be answered every day. Please join us in Houston; it should be an exciting experience for everyone!

Our next Just For Us will be almost entirely devoted to conference information and will be mailed in early April.

(Jennifer's story, cont'd from pg. 1)

can just come and take us kids from our moms and in some cases from the dads and that everything will be OK. But what about the homes and families they bust up? Who is society to make these decisions? And who are they to say "no" to gays being families?

I think our courts and society needs to take the time out to talk to us kids of "gay parents". How about asking us kids what we want! Ask us if we are happy! It bothers me that my moms are denied by our society to have a legal marriage. When I have more of a real family with my two moms, my two adopted sisters, my adopted brother and my two natural brothers, than most of my friends have with straight parents.

I am not gay. I am straight, and I have a boyfriend, but my moms don't criticize me for being straight. If I ever had a kid that was gay, I'd want them to be allowed to get married and have a family that loves them, too. My two moms are the most important people in my life, and I love them both. They are my moms! So, to any of you out there, if you find yourself in a similar situation, hang in there! And I offer my friendship and support to all of you!

We Need Your Help!

The Steering Committee of the Youth Conference of GLPCI needs your help with the costs of the conference and newsletter. If you would like to make a donation, in any amount, please send a check or money order to Just For Us, c/o Ali Dubin, 8830 Noble Ave, Sepulveda, CA 91343. Please make checks payable to GLPCI Youth.

Recommended Reading

There are many books and other literary works (poetry, plays, etc.) that have been written about children of gay and lesbian parents and about gay and lesbian history in general. This section is designed to highlight a good book or work for reading or viewing.

Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past

Edited by Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey, Jr.

Hidden from History is a large compilation of articles and illustrations commenting, reporting, and historically documenting the past experience of homosexuality up to the present day.

The articles examine homosexuality in all historical contexts, from American Indian culture to China to 17th Century London to Ancient Greece. This broad scope provides an excellent overview of the social history of homosexuality as well as affirming the historical importance of homosexual culture.

The book is divided into five major sections: Ancient World, PreIndustrial Societies, The Nineteenth Century, Early Twentieth Century, and World War II and the Post War Era.

For anyone interested in a comprehensive history of gay and lesbian life, this is an excellent book to look into. It is clearly divided by essay as well, so if you are particularly interested in a one aspect of gay and lesbian history, you can simply read the article that applies to that subject.

This book is published by the New American Library, a division of Penguin Books, Inc. : New York.

To Receive JUST FOR US
If you would like to receive JUST FOR US, fill out the form below and mail to JUST FOR US, c/o Ali Dubin, 8830 Noble Ave., Sepulveda, CA 91343

Name _____

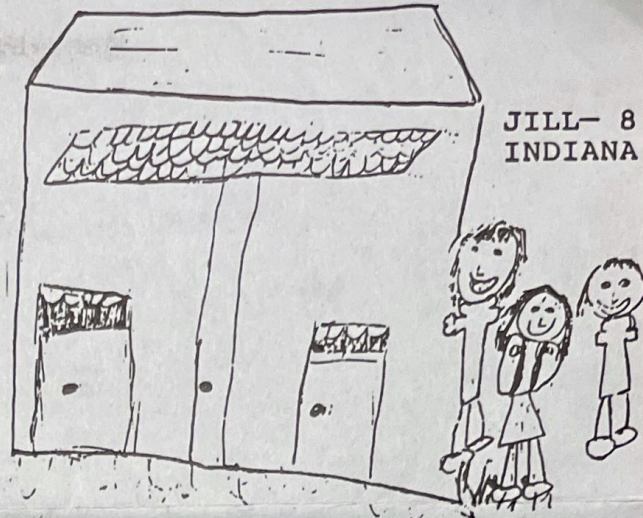
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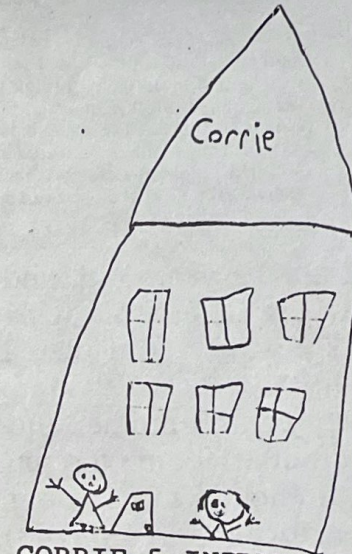
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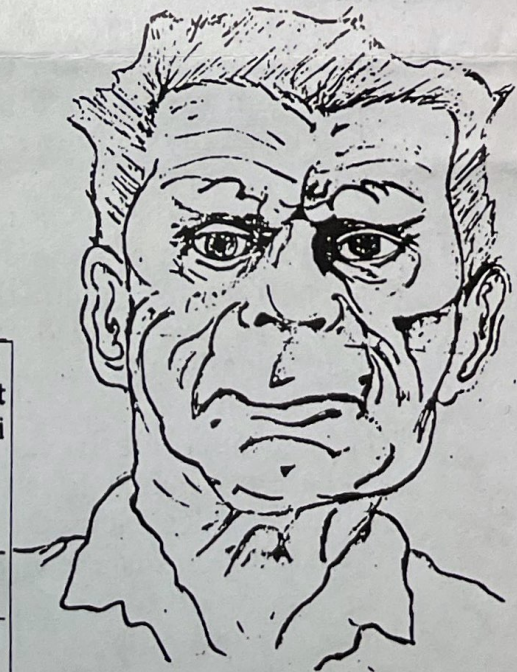


JILL- 8 INDIANA



CORRIE-5 INDIANA

ARTISTS:
Please make sure your artwork is dark. I needed to go over these drawings so you would be able to see them. Thank you.
-Ali

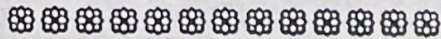


MAC- 13 CALIFORNIA

I have never had any problems with my mother being a lesbian. I know a lot of people who have, but fortunately, I have never experienced some of these problems. So I'm writing this for those of you who have problems with your parents being gay or lesbian to let you know that it is not always that bad.

I have always known that my mother was gay. I really don't remember her telling me. My father died when I was just a baby, so I never had a problem with fighting parents.

So when I got to the conference in Washington, it really surprised me that so many kids are so upset because of their parents. I never dreamed of having to deal with the things that some kids have to go through with their parents. I have had it really easy and I can't even begin to really understand everything, but the best advice I can give you is to get together with people who do understand. The best place for that is the National GLPCI Conference in Houston, TX this next June 14, 15, and 16. I can't wait to see you all there!



In Search of a Name

In forming our own organization, we are trying to find a name to call ourselves. Here are some of the names that were suggested.

O.P.A.S.- Our Parents Aren't Straight, the name of the group founded in Indianapolis.

S.P.A.S.- Some Parents Aren't Straight

K.W.G.P.- Kids with Gay Parents

K.O.L.A.K.O.G.- Kids of Lesbians And

Kids of Gays

T.R.U.S.T.- Teens Relating Unique

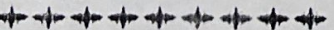
Situations Together.

If you have any ideas of your own, please write to Just For Us. Our address appears below.



Write to Just For Us

If you would like to tell your story to Just For Us, you can use the addresses of the members of the steering committee. Just send your story to the person in your region (Donna Ippolito for the Central Region). As always, you do not have to include your last name, and your address will be kept confidential. If you would like to simply write a letter to us, you can mail it to Just For Us, c/o Ali Dubin and include the address listed for her later in this newsletter. Poems, artwork, and related news stories or special interest stories are also welcome and should be sent to the regional contacts. We hope to hear from you!



Emily's Story

I did not find out about my father's homosexuality until I was 19 years old. I am now almost 22. Over the last three years I have learned a lot about understanding other people's points of view and lifestyles. Gay and lesbian issues never really occurred to me until my father came out, and I began to recognize what coming out was all about.

My father has had a rewarding but difficult time over the last few years. He is now honest with himself and his loved ones, but that honesty has made life sometimes very difficult. I come from a Catholic background, and although I am no longer religious, much of my family still is, or at least has carried over much of the doctrines of Catholicism into their everyday lives. When my brother found out that my father was gay, he shut my father out of his life. They have not spoken for three years. It's very difficult for me to understand why my brother has reacted in this way. He has not seen the wonderful changes that have happened in my dad over the last three years. My father and I get along better than we ever did when he was married, and even then, he and I had a very good relationship. I wish my brother could understand how good it was for my dad to finally come out, and that Dad didn't do it because he wanted to hurt us or leave us behind. Just the opposite, my father wanted to bring us closer to him by being honest with us. I hope that someday my brother will join my other brother and I in our new relationship with Dad. Because right now, the person keeping my family apart is not my father, but my brother.

I'm interested in talking to any of you at the conference who have had a similar problem with your brothers or sisters. I can't wait to meet all of you, or, as the case may be, see you again.



Some Support Groups in Your Area

Listed below are the names of some support groups for children of gay parents. For more information about these or other groups in your area or information about starting your own group contact Hope Berry or Ali Dubin (listed in the Anchor).

Some Parents Aren't Straight
Contact: Ali Dubin
8830 Noble Ave.
Sepulveda, Ca 91343
Meeting location: Hollywood, CA

Our Parents Aren't Straight
Contact: Donna Ippolito
7710 Hollybrook Ln.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
Meeting location: Indianapolis, IN

Kids of Gay Parents
Contact: Hope Berry
754 Saventh Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
Meeting location: Washington, DC



The Anchor

Here are the addresses you can write to for support. Your letters will be kept strictly confidential; please write to the person in your region as this will help us respond to your letters faster.

Eastern Time Zone Region
Molly Heller
214 Oakwood Dr.
Windham, Conn. 06280

Hope Berry
754 7th Street
Washington, DC 20003-BE

Central Time Zone Region
Emily Gmerek
912 Hamlin St. #2
Evanston, IL 60201

Donna Ippolito
7710 Hollybrook Ln
Indianapolis, IN 46227

Mountain Time Zone Region
Meghan Waterman
476 Clayton Street
Denver, CO 80206

Pacific Time Zone Region
Ali Dubin
8830 Noble Ave.
Sepulveda, CA 91343



JFU is a non-profit organization. We can only continue by, for, and about children of gays and lesbians if we receive your donations. If you can make a tax deductible donation of \$10.00, \$25.00, or ANY amount, that would be WONDERFUL!! If you cannot help to support us financially please continue to send us your poems, stories, and artwork. Please make checks payable to GLPCI/ JUST FOR US. Thank you very much!

EDITORIAL RESPONSE
(this is a portion
of the response
letter to David)

At first I thought you were one hundred percent correct and that we have been making a big mistake allowing people to give the impression that we all need help with our 'problem' of having a gay and/or lesbian parent. I thought why didn't I realize we all just have something in common and that it shouldn't be a problem. So I took out a copy of that newsletter and reread it bearing in mind all your thoughts and suggestions. What I decided was that you were correct, but to a point. The newsletter as written does come across a bit harsh. However, many people do have a problem having a gay and/or lesbian parent. Those that wrote about dealing with problems have themselves a problem dealing with it. Not everyone is as well adjusted as you and I. I would love to think that everyone accepts their parent or does not accept their parent for reasons other than that of their sexual orientation. But some people are brought up thinking that gay is wrong.

JUST FOR US
PO Box 50360
Washington, DC20091 USA
Address Correction Requested

