

Raised by Unicorns: Stories from People with LGBTQ+ Parents

Frank Lowe

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Raised by Unicorns, edited by Frank Lowe of the Twitter persona “@GayAtHomeDad,” is an anthology featuring the stories of children raised by queer parents. Playing on the old adage “raised by wolves,” this anthology brings outsiders into the conversation, illuminating the complexity, similarity, and uniqueness of the children’s experiences.

One of the anthology’s most resonant points comes through an early essay by Jenny Gangloff Rain. She states, “I am not an ally. No child of LGBTQ parents is. We are too inescapably linked to the orientation and gender identities of our parents to remain at the safe distance that allies can.” The people here undergo varying amounts of the trauma, fear, shame, and outing normally associated with LGBTQ experiences, often in amounts directly proportional to the recognition of LGBTQ civil rights during their childhoods. Children of parents who are out fare better than their counterparts from closeted homes, especially since the legalization of same-sex marriage.

While essayists are diverse in age, orientation, and experience, their parents are identified as either lesbians or gay men. Children of bisexual, trans, asexual, or mixed-orientation parents aren’t represented. This may be a byproduct of demographics; as the editor notes, the number of US children raised in queer-identified households has boomed from a few thousand in the 1980s to six million today.

Nonetheless, all of the people represented here have faced erasure. Many grapple with how to claim membership in the LGBTQ community, especially as they age out of their childhood homes. The pain is especially poignant within the stories of cisgender and heterosexual children who’ve had the community recategorize them as outsiders or “other.”

Raw and unfiltered, *Raised by Unicorns* captures the experiences of children raised before and after the legalization of same-sex marriage. Lowe breaks new ground, highlighting the dire need for further exploration.

LETITIA MONTGOMERY-RODGERS (LGBTQ+ 2018)

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