

Looking through the eyes of a child: same-sex partner families in Latvia

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Pre-considerations

- Weston: G & L families carved of a different substance – love and choice (opposed to blood and affiliation of straight families)
- Watson: gender becomes the key issue for creating inequality in the former post-socialist space – women seen as “naturally” different from men

Sexuality as an ordering mechanism

- Principle of ordering
- Naturalised through procreation
- Creates LGBT as a “naturally” different group with a different kind of relations

Creating gay and lesbian family

- Presence of the group identity → developing shared system of symbols, contrasting to the hetero ones
- Absence of a group → acknowledging sameness and limitations in qualifying to this publicly

Research questions

- What does it mean to live in a society where gender is taken for granted in creating persons and family relations?
- How does it happen that despite the growing deviation from the heteronormativity people still hold to the principles that “do not work”?

Families

- Same-sex parents
- Actual not legal relation to the child →

Structural opposition to heteronormative
procreative family:

G & L families

Intergenerational families

Imagining family

- Importance of love in creating relations ← Christianity and psychotherapy; gender irrelevant when speaking of ordering mutual relations
- Introducing “temporarily” absent husband-father figure even the pattern of same-sex parentage persists as long as for 3 generations, debating “missing” gender competence
- Problems arise outside the closet where the story should be reformulated

Nature work

- Justifying hopes of parents and being a gay → importance on keeping relations one gets (through nature and love)
- Relying on traditional roles and fighting with real relations
- From the position of children significant relations are created without borders → families just work but should be justified outside the closet

Outcomes

- Same-sex parent families from outside are seen as individual “failure” rather than a failure of categories → re-affirms gender difference
- Looking from the inside relations can be masked under gender categories in straight families and worked out independently of gender in GL families
- Uncovering the disguise on natural gender order, allowing to focus on quality of relations makes all families stronger