# Are they family?: Queer parents and queer pasts in contemporary American culture

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## Description

**Title:** Are they family?: Queer parents and queer pasts in contemporary American culture

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Abstract: The early twenty-first century saw a marked increase in depictions of LGBTQ people and communities in American popular culture occurring alongside political activism that culminated in the repeal of the Pentagon's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy (2010) and the Supreme Court's overturning of same-sex marriage bans in Obergefell v. Hodges (2015). Even as these events fueled a triumphant progressive narrative in which social and political representation moved LGBTQ people into a better future, a significant strain of LGBTQ-focused popular culture drew its attention to the past. My dissertation, Are They Family?: Queer Parents and Queer Pasts in Popular Culture, examines how American film, television, and literature between 2005 and 2016 construct relationships among LGBTQ people across recent history in generational and familial terms. These works queer the concept of the family by deploying parents and parental figures to examine the role of families in the transmission of queer knowledges, practices, and identities, countering notions of families as mere precursors to queer identity—"families of origin"—or as the agential creations of out LGBTQ people—"families of choice." These works demonstrate how such dichotomous conceptions of family limit the people, experiences, and forms of affect that are legible within the category of LGBTQ history. In my first chapter, I analyze how the reality series RuPaul's Drag Race (2009-present) produces kinship through shared queer knowledge and how contestants cite this knowledge in their performances. My second chapter examines how the melodramatic aesthetics and narrative of the film Carol (2015) re-inscribe pleasure and sensation into historical narratives of the lesbian 1950s. Together, these two chapters analyze how contemporary media demonstrate how seemingly retrograde queer modes of constructing kinship through shared relationships to dominant culture persevere even amidst a relative surfet of LGBTQ representation. Chapters three and four turn to the nuclear family, examining the figures of the closeted gay father and husband and the ostensibly heterosexual wife and mother in Allison Bechdel's graphic memoirs Fun Home (2006) and Are You My Mother? (2012) and Mike Mills' films Beginners (2010) and 20th Century Women (2016). In the third chapter, I analyze how these works by the children of closeted fathers use non-linear narratives to overcome the historical meanings assigned to the lives of closeted men and establish affective connections to their fathers. Chapter four examines how Bechdel and Mills position their mothers, who are often reduced to stand-ins for compulsory heterosexuality in their husband's stories, as figures queered by their proximity to LGBTQ history—a project later taken up by the Netflix series Grace and Frankie (2015-present). Together, these chapters demonstrate how queerness within families is not limited to the presence of LGBTQ individuals within them but that families of origin themselves, often seen as queer-antagonistic structures, contain people, experiences, and forms of affect that are rendered illegible within a conception of LGBTQ history that sees LGBTQ-identified people—and the families and communities that they make—as its sole province.
In my opinion, the nowadays modern society cannot afford to reject the traditional values. In all known civilizations, these values are:
- Family
- Rejecting killing, murder and theft
- Honesty
- Modesty
- Freedom
- Religion

Modern family

To unite families, it is worth mentioning three things first:

- CONCLUSIONS.
- Nowadays, young people tend to be more independent and want to live separately from parents, grandparents, and withdraw. They also have fewer children. This family has 1 or 2 children.
- Marriage is also becoming a rarity. Many couples try to live together without being husband and wife. Thus, modern families differ a lot from each other. However, they all have something in common: when all family members love, respect, and understand each other, they will surely find happiness in the sea of life.

7. The two-parent nuclear family has become less prevalent, and pre-American and European family forms have become more common.[1] Beginning in the 1970s in the United States, the structure of the “traditional” nuclear American family began to change. It was the women in the households that began to make this change. They decided to begin careers outside of the home and not live according to the male figures in their lives.[3] Historically, among certain Asian and Native American cultures, the family structure consisted of a grandmother and her children, especially daughters, who raised their own children together and shared child care responsibilities. Uncles, brothers, and other male relatives sometimes helped out.