



**What To Expect ...**  
**WEWORK**  
**BABIES**



What To Expect ... WEWORK BABIES

## INDEX

04	In Search of A Nanny
05	WeWork shows need for 'unicorn' boards to grab reins
09	<b>Early Text</b>
11	11 Women On How They Knew They Didn't Want Kids
15	<b>WEWORK BABIES Scenario (Version 7)</b>
17	YOUR Self-Confident BABY (Popular Highlights)
19	<b>Performer Emails</b>
33	Talking With Grown Kids of Gay Parents
37	The Artist with His Children
38	<b>Family/Tabula Rasa (Lyrics Modified)</b>
39	<b>Music Credit / A Composer with Ei</b>
41	1 Year Later, Mystery Surrounds China's Gene-Edited Babies
45	<b>POETIC BABY NAMES</b>
46	<b>Q &amp; A with Lanka Tattersall</b>

WEWORK BABIES (11 Courtlandt Alley)  
Ei Arakawa

Sunday, December 8, 2019  
2pm

Performers: Ei Arakawa, Malik Gaines, Tony Jackson, Sohee Kim, Erika Landström,  
Shuang Liang, George Liu, Yuri Manabe, Molly McFadden, Gela Patashuri,  
Jamie Stevens, Tinatin Tsiklauri

Music by Stefan Tcherepnin & Igor Törnudd-Tcherepnin (7-month-old)

ARTISTS SPACE  
11 Courtlandt  
New York 10013

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### Experienced Sitter Needed For Art & LGBT Event For 2 Days (Chinatown / Lit Italy)

One time event.

Two experienced sitters (10+ years of paid experience) needed for an art & LGBT event with the theme of parenting, babysitting, and new family. You will do a group work and discussion with young artists (in their late 20s, 30s, 40s) who are interested in parenting. You may have to talk in public on Sunday because Sunday is a public event.

\$25 per hour.

11am - 5pm, Saturday, December 7

11am - 3pm, Sunday, December 8

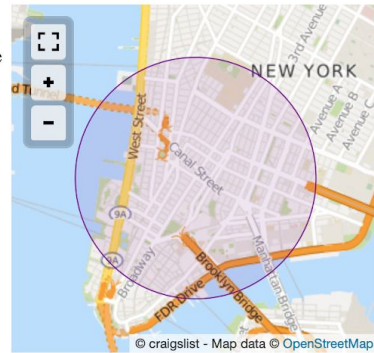
Please write us your answers to these questions.

1. Do LGBT Parents Raise Their Children Differently Than Straight Parents?
2. What Is The Best Piece Of Advice For Same-Sex Couples Who Want To Raise A Baby?
3. What is the Hard Part of being Parents?

Thank you

EA

- do NOT contact me with unsolicited services or offers



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[\(google map\)](#)

2:45 PM

We want to give this job to you. Please reply me. Thank you, Ei

Tuesday, December 3, 2019



Good morning, my deepest apologies. I have walking pneumonia and need to rest.

6:55 AM

Financial Times, Oct 25, 2019

## **WeWork shows need for ‘unicorn’ boards to grab reins**

Andrew Edgecliffe-Johnson



Adam Neumann has ceded his role as chief executive of WeWork © Getty Images for WeWork

There is plenty of blame to go around for the debacle that in two dizzying months took WeWork from expecting to raise billions of dollars in an initial public offering to counting how many weeks' cash it had left.

Some have laid it at the many doors of Adam Neumann, the co-founder known for his consciousness-elevating conflicts of interest. Others have pointed at SoftBank for assigning a \$47bn valuation to such a determinedly lossmaking company, or the bankers who seemed so keen to put the greater fool theory into practice.

But as David Erickson, a senior finance fellow at Wharton business school, puts it, the problem with blaming the bankers "is that you don't get hired for telling somebody that their baby's ugly".

So we should spare a moment to remember the board, which has a responsibility to provide the kind of ugly-baby feedback that could have spared WeWork some of its agonies.

Crowded out by such larger-than-life characters as Mr Neumann and SoftBank's Masayoshi Son, WeWork's directors have had only bit parts in this drama. Their uniform maleness was noticed only when investors absorbed the company's norm-flouting listing document.

Employees, landlords and other WeWork stakeholders have heard little from the board, except for canned statements from Benchmark Capital's Bruce Dunlevie and former Coach chairman Lew Frankfort thanking Mr Neumann for his leadership when he ceded his chief executive position last month.

Even then, Mr Frankfort raved that "Adam is that very rare breed of entrepreneur who has the vision and drive to conceptualise an enormous business opportunity and then attack it relentlessly".

A month later, they and other directors signed up to a SoftBank rescue. Mr Neumann surrendered his chairmanship, leaving him to contribute his vision as a mere board observer — albeit one with a \$185m consultancy fee, a \$500m loan facility and a chance to tender \$1bn of the stock he had not already sold pre-IPO.

Without hearing directors' accounts of what was going on in WeWork's boardroom before its crisis, outsiders must judge from what they can see. That includes a definition of corporate governance that was extraordinarily accommodating to Mr Neumann, a willingness to approve accounting novelties such as "community-adjusted ebitda" and a tolerance of the profligate spending that appeared to accelerate into the company's cash crunch.

Few WeWork directors can claim to be independent. Mr Dunlevie's Benchmark fund was one of the company's earliest investors — so early it is still in the money. John Zhao represents Hony Capital, WeWork's partner in China. And both Ron Fisher and Mark Schwartz have ties to SoftBank.

That said, the high-vote shares that gave Mr Neumann majority control would have made it difficult for the board to exert much independence even if they had objected to his personal behaviour or business decisions.

These factors should concern any stakeholder outside the magic circle of founders and executives at a company like WeWork. They should also offer a warning to the millions of people who either work for or have money indirectly invested in the growing number of large, entrepreneurial businesses that use their private status to perpetuate founder-friendly governance arrangements.

The record sums of venture capital that have let emerging companies stay private for longer have also allowed them to avoid the kind of board structures that evolved to keep public companies out of trouble. According to CB Insights, the world now has 410 “unicorns”, or private companies valued above \$1bn. Together, they are worth \$3tn, and many are governed much as WeWork has been.

Shareholders’ overlapping governance roles in venture-backed start-ups create tensions between the interests of founders, investors, executives and employees, Loyola Law School’s Elizabeth Pollman showed in a pertinent paper this year. The longer the company stays private and the more complex its capital structure becomes, the greater those tensions will become.

US corporate law, she notes, does not say much about who should be gripping a unicorn’s reins. But, as the social and economic impact of private start-ups grows, somebody needs to.

Corporate governance sounds dry beside the tales of marijuana-scented private jet flights now emerging from WeWork. But for 4,000 people who went to work for Mr Neumann and now expect to lose their jobs, it is anything but academic.





WEWORK BABIES (11 Courtlandt Alley): Ei Arakawa

What are babies? A thought. An Asian gay man in his 40s.  
Babies in a Winter dream. CMYK vision of soft plastic bodies. A dream of field day.

Who has babies nowadays? Pre-crisis baby. Post-crisis baby.  
Softbank bailout. Family bankruptcy. Climate protests.

All pre-programmed? Adoption? Surrogacy? Fostering?  
An attempted intersubjectivity. Do I deserve babies?

Fuel traveling to China. Slow and power-draining VPN.

11 adult carriers with babywearing fabrics, some with real nanny experience. Babies  
on the back, and on the chests. 20 or more babies, all 20 inches (6 month old size).  
Excessive energy on a Winter street. Babynoise.

When in your life do you do this?  
Will babies eat away your creative edge?  
A sacrifice of your individual time?  
Is there an artist's anxiety about having babies?  
Will babies give you a wonderful idea?  
Finance? Fin-tech babies? Koreeda movies?

How to live and deal with babies.  
How to make art with babies. Looking at coming individualities. Coming subjects.

Some names for babies:

Taburo. Bailout. Aggretsuko, Rosemary, Angeleno, and Miwako.

Motherless babies. Quasi hetero-normative test-drive.  
There will be a precarious shrine for babies.

Babytower.

Kind of a future version of Shanghai, where I recently visited.

In a brief moment, Genzken's church-side babies are in my sight.  
It's 40 fahrenheit or below, and almost frozen on Cortlandt alley.

New York City babies.

Babies inter-actions.

"Prière de toucher" as Jutta quotes from MD.

Ikumen (Stay-at-home childcaring dad).

Carrying bodies of another human.

Group pilates with baby's weight. Shower of babies.

Thinking about the funeral, but then, maybe our bodies with babies are more suited  
on Cortlandt alley. Our aging aching bodies on the street. Birth and death on the  
alley. Or mid-life crisis on the alley. Post-death.

Beginning of a cycle. New Artists Space. A space with babies. Living young again.  
Living with a new set of babies from next generation. Architecture and babies.

A gay architect at the entrance. How do babies see our art?  
How do babies see our art structure? How do babies see you?

6 month babies as temporality. Feeding timelines.

Tempo = Babies. Deliverers of time. Babies never come back.

Trial to pass values. Apology. Trial not to shape them!

HUFFPOST, July 28, 2015

## 11 Women On How They Knew They Didn't Want Kids

### **Getting pregnant made everything clear.**

When I was 27, I got pregnant with a guy I was dating. I wasn't far along, but I could already feel my body changing. My gums were swollen and bled. My breasts were tender. The guy I was seeing said he would support whatever decision I made, and my mother and sister were just as supportive. It was entirely my decision. On the third day after taking the test, as I woke up to grab my Gatorade (which was the only thing I could stomach) it hit me: I don't want a child. I don't want the pregnancy experience. I don't even like to hold babies, much less give birth to one. Before I got pregnant, I would say I was 98 percent sure I didn't want kids. When people would ask me, I'd say no — but always follow that up with “you never know, maybe one day.” In that moment, however, it was like, no. Just, no. — Callie, 33, South Carolina

### **I've just always known.**

I've never wanted children, for as long as I can remember. If I played house with other kids, I was never the mom. I went to a very small Catholic grade school and I vividly remember an assignment for our confirmation classes that asked us where we saw ourselves in five to 10 years. Every girl in my class talked about how they wanted to be married with children, a white picket fence... the whole package. I was literally the only person that said I wanted to live in an apartment in Chicago with a dog. — Katie, 28, Illinois

### **I realized I don't want to bring kids into a world like this.**

I was always on the fence about having children, but then I started to volunteer as a sexual assault crisis counsellor in my mid-20s and that pretty much got rid of my ambivalence. As I worked with more and more women who were survivors of childhood sexual trauma, it became obvious to me that our justice system is not in their favor. They were courageous survivors, but most of them never saw justice as children and battled lives full of PTSD, fear, depression, addiction and anxiety. I quickly realized this is not the type of world I wanted to bring a child into — it simply was not right for me. I believe I would have come to the same decision if I hadn't had that experience; however, not as decisively as I did. What I witnessed as a sexual assault crisis counsellor was not something I could shake — especially when I thought about bringing my own child into this world. Until we care more about the well being of our children in general, I won't be in a hurry to have any myself. — Sara, 28, Canada

### **For no particular reason, I suddenly had my answer.**

I've known for as long as I can remember that I never wanted kids and I never even thought twice about it until my late 20s. At that point, I went through some real angst over it, wondering how I could look at a baby and feel nothing inside, and trying to talk myself into having a kid or two. A lot of my friends were having kids, and my mom was asking about it. It was almost a daily thing — I'd just be spinning the wheels in my head. One day something inside of me snapped and I told myself that I was making the decision then and there. I said, there are no new facts to consider. You're not suddenly going to get some new information that makes this easier, so just go with your gut. In that moment, I knew the answer was I

didn't want kid — and then I instantly felt so relieved. I haven't looked back since. (I have a lot of weird epiphanies, like, I can tell you the exact moment I began liking bell peppers.) I don't know what it was about that particular moment; it was just... time. It's like being at a restaurant and not being able to choose between a salad and a burger. At some point when the waitress comes, you just have to order. — A, 33, Texas (for privacy reasons, only first initial has been used)

### **I finally saw a model for what a childfree life looks like.**

I've never had an interest in children, but it was in college that I decided that I would be childfree. I had a few female professors who did not have kids and who led perfectly fulfilling lives, with books and pets. I spoke to one of my professors about it, and I follow her on Facebook, so I get a lot of updates about her life. I never had a model for it before then, as my entire family is "traditional" — you get married, have kids, that kind of thing. I had never considered the childfree life a "complete" life, having grown up with that, but I knew it was the life I wanted to have. It's taken a lot of work to accept that it's not selfish to want what I want. — Jessica, 25, South Carolina

### **I still have some fears (and that's natural)**

I've never wanted kids, I just feel like I don't have the "mother gene." The only real regret I have is that I know how badly my own mother wanted grandchildren, and that I never gave her any — she has stage IV colon cancer, so that definitely makes the regret run a little deeper. But I don't think these fears or regrets need to be eased, and they don't run my life. They are more fleeting thoughts, which I believe are normal — natural. There was no defining moment for me, no a-ha. To this day, kids and babies just make me very uncomfortable. I don't relate to them. — Niki, 38, Chicago

### **I'm 39 and still unsure.**

I'm 39 and always thought in the back of my mind I might have kids someday, but now I'm ambivalent about it. I have a good job, a house, I travel several times a year and have a lot of freedom. So if kids were to happen now, fine. If not, that'd be fine, too.

I'm surprised by my ambivalence. I always said 35 was my cutoff to have a baby... and then 35 came and went. I was briefly married in my early 20s and figured it would just happen eventually, but then the marriage ended before it even became a topic of conversation. If I met a man I felt would truly make a good father and life partner, I would consider it, though at 39, I am not sure it's even a reasonable expectation that it would occur naturally. It's also definitely not a priority in my life. — Kristen, 39, Florida

### **Spending a lot of time around kids gave me my answer.**

When I was a child, I thought I would get married and have four kids. Then I became a teacher and realized that I really like children, but I don't really like them after 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. It was a sudden realization. I would think to myself, "How could I go home and deal with more kids, even if they were my own?"

I have a niece and a nephew who I helped take care of when they were babies, which was a pleasure, but when their mother or father came to get them, I was elated. I realized that I just

don't have that thing, that factor, to be the type of mother I'd want to be — the kind that gets on the ground and plays, is patient when they're moody. I just... don't. I hear all the time, "You're so good with kids!" People just assume that if you're a nurturing person, you should automatically have children, but I don't have that desire. — Andi, 33, Texas

### **I don't want to go off my medication.**

I have always loved children — I love being around them, listening to the things they have to say. How they perceive the world is magical to me. When I was younger, I thought that I would have lots of babies, but now at 25 I have a feeling in my very core that I'm not meant to. I have been taking Paxil, the anti-anxiety medication, since I was 12, and it has been linked to birth defects. I've tried to get off the medication, but every withdrawal has been filled with cold sweats, vomiting, dizziness, chronic fatigue and weight loss. The thought of going through nine months of withdrawal while pregnant is something that terrifies me. The stress it would put on the baby and myself wouldn't make for a healthy pregnancy. I know that I will probably never be able to carry a child. Call it instinct. — Samantha, 25, Florida

### **I feel ill just thinking about pregnancy, but I worry about regret.**

I'd always planned that I'd get married and then have kids by the time I was 30. I was engaged at 21, but realized I didn't want to spend the rest of my life with my husband. Then I was in a relationship with a guy for seven years who was a terrible father to his kids already, and I left him. Since then, I've traveled. I volunteered in Africa for two years.

I'm 36 and I really don't know if I want kids or not — I've cried over the fact that I may well now be too late (I'm not sure I have enough time to find someone and bring kids into the world with him) and at the same time, I'm not sure that I actually want to go through pregnancy at all. I love the freedom I have, and the fact I have a well-paid job with plenty of time to travel; however, I'm scared from everybody's hype that one day I'll wake up and regret not having kids.

To be really certain that I want to have kids, I'd have to meet the right guy, and know that he wants to have kids also and that we'd continue adventuring together. But then I read an article about pregnancy and childbirth and I think no again... I feel nauseous just thinking about pregnancy and childbirth. — Kayley, 36, UK

### **When I got my tubes tied, I finally felt "childfree."**

I remember telling my mother when I was about 5 years old that I never intended to have children. Of course, she brushed me off and gave me the usual, "Oh, you're young. You will change your mind." As I grew older I wavered — not because I was unsure, but because of the pressures of society. But when I was 25, I decided to be loud and proud about my childfree status — that was the year that I became pregnant while on birth control. My boyfriend and I were terrified at the thought of being parents. We decided that if my pregnancy was viable, we would go through with an abortion. Lucky for us, it turned out to be ectopic so no other action was needed on our part.

I don't think I needed the pregnancy to make things clear for me about where I stood, but I do think I needed it to make things clear to others. After the ectopic pregnancy, I decided to actively pursue getting a tubal ligation. It was performed in April, 2014 and that was the first moment that I truly felt childfree and in control of my reproductive health. — Ulonda, 27, Ohio





**WEWORK BABIES Scenario (Version 7)**

13:50      **Gentle Lullaby Loop TMK YASURAGI**  
              Ei (without babies) Coordinate Limbo Platforms

14:05      Performers come out from the hidden entrance  
              Strike a pause

              MC “A nanny has a walking pneumonia today”

              MC “Helicopter parents, Monster parents, WeWork parents”

**Weird Music**

Coin Game (Whistle once to end)

Running and Passing

Limbo Platforms (Audience holds the bars)

              MC “So many structures and platforms”

              Setting up Plunge structure (spray, drills & ladders)

14:20      **Gentle Lullaby Loop Baby Lullaby 2**  
              Audience Move inside  
              Decorate Attaching to babies to the bars / baby wearing  
              around the entrance

              MC “Salute Mike Smith, Salute Artists Space” (If he is there)

              MC “Let audience hold babies” Takai Takai, Hikui Hikui (high  
              high, low low)

              MC “Poetic Name for babies”



## **Harsh Music**

Procession to the basement

MC "Airport lounge with babies Bed Bath & Below"

MC "Institution speaks too much"

14:35

Unbuild Plunge structure, then carry to the basement

Audience Follows

MC "Zine distribution"

MC "Baby checking the space"

**Sad Music** (WeWork Commercials Around The World)

Basement Babies (3 On bar)

BABYTOWER action (ladders)

Mobiles Dance action

Passing Babies

MC "Quadruple Consciousness and babies?"

MC "FURTHER OPEN TALK"

**Tabula Rasa** by Tony, Molly, Sohee, Ei

Extreme Pilates with Babies

Unbuilding? Collapse?

Strike a pause

14:50

End MC **Gentle Lullaby Loop** TMK YASURAGI

## **YOUR Self-Confident BABY**

Magda Gerber and Allison Johnson  
Popular Highlights

What does respect mean, in terms of parents and children? It means accepting, enjoying, and loving your child as she is and not expecting her to do what she can not do. It means allowing your child the time, the space, and the love and support to be herself and to discover the world in her own unique way. It means trying to understand her point of view.

Uninterrupted play promotes concentration and a long attention span. When we interrupt a child we also stop what she is doing, whatever process she may be in the middle of, as she focuses on us. Our interruptions, no matter how well intended, become distractions.

Consistency goes hand in hand with discipline. As a parent, you set the limits. A rule is always a rule. Knowing this makes a child feel secure.

The DIP philosophy maintained that in learning new tasks and finding their own solutions to situations in everyday life (fitting an object in a box, climbing onto a piece of equipment, resolving disputes over toys) children are self-rewarded, learning internal rewards as opposed to external ones. This leads to self-confidence, which carries over into later life.

“Every time we teach a child something, we keep him from inventing it himself.”

If your child gets your undivided attention when you are together, she will feel freer to separate.

Tell your child what you are going to do before you do it. Before you pick up your child, say, “I’m going to pick you up now.” Tell her, too, when you’re going to put her down. Give her a little time for the information to sink in. Wait for her response. There will always be one, usually a subtle change of expression or movement that indicates her interest and readiness. Then proceed. She may not understand the words, but one day she will and it will pay off.

Slowing yourself down will promote calmness in your baby. Though your baby has her own individual temperament, she also picks up on your level of peacefulness or stress.

Newborn babies, those in the first several months of life, need predictability, not entertainment. Predictability will help your baby fall into a routine and adapt to your family. Newborns need peaceful, quiet time and a slow transition into our busy world.

Reflecting entails neither praise nor criticism, rather it acknowledges, informs, and illuminations. This is how a child learns, by starting to understand connections between things. Reflections are simple phrases and expressions of feeling. Reflecting does not teach or preach. It is a statement of support that allows your child to learn.



## Performer Emails



### Malik Gaines:

I may be too old to start with a baby, which I have always felt ambivalent about anyway. So I'll probably be a baby-less person, which is nice in many ways. Some of my friends have donated sperm for other people's babies, but no one has ever asked me. My good friend has a new baby, which is beautiful, because her last baby passed away, which was horrible. So now I think of babies as extremely vulnerable. My boyfriend just read "The Female Man" by Joanna Russ; the people in it are expected not to form strong bonds with their babies, and they send them away to farms to be raised as farmers. Sci-fi has a lot of alternate structures for reproduction.





**Ei Arakawa:**

Very powerful and convenient/effective structure of hetero mother and father. How to deal with that?

How to imagine and shape a new structure so that we can be more free? Even from the pattern of our parents?

Being less selfish???

Versatile moms, Versatile dads

“A baby, who is living together (not to shape), kind of like a roommate”



**MO (A Nanny who didn't join in the end):**

1. Do LGBT Parents Raise Their Children Differently Than Straight Parents?

No, they raise their children the same. I can personally attest to this as a childcare provider who has sat for LGBT clients.

2. What Is The Best Piece Of Advice For Same-Sex Couples Who Want To Raise A Baby?

Take care of yourself or you can't be a fully engaged parent.

3. What is the Hard Part of being Parents?

It's hard to have faith in yourself and in your own ability to be a great parent.



**Molly McFadden:**

How literal will this structure be?

Do you want me to consider form and materiality or just qualities?

Is it abstract /invisible structure or physical?

The overall tone of parenting is here in the US is pretty heavy. The main idea is, there are a million ways you could mess up your baby and child and you have to try to avoid them all, like a minefield. Does your child have good attachment? psychological health? healthy relationships? healthy boundaries? healthy diet? is a good sleeper? knowledge of consent? educational opportunities? extra curricular opportunities? .....

When I think about alternative structures for raising babies, I think about **privacy**. People can be very nosy and judgmental about parenting (people with and without kids of their own). These judgmental thoughts seep into your own brain (like surveillance) and you find yourself scolding your child for the weirdest things that you don't even really care about, but you're pretty sure you'll get judged for later.

I wish the experience of parenting were more about individual, emerging relationships between parents and children without developmental theories and arbitrary value systems factoring in.

Here are some problem areas where I have potentially messed up and/or been judged for:

- having a baby.

- sharing behavior: Whether or not your child is good at sharing their things with other children. Expectations about kids sharing start very early here, before children can actually understand why sharing is socially beneficial. On a playground, for example, there's pressure to make a show of forcing your child to share their things with other kids (while they cry and freak out because it feels like you're just taking away their things). If your child is not a good sharer, it could be a sign of lack of empathy, or an asocial, materialistic adulthood down the road.

- bed-sharing: if your baby sleeps in your bed, rather than in their own crib. Some people think this will make the baby spoiled, whereas sleeping in their own crib alone might build character. I think this idea comes from the time when mothers weren't supposed to touch their babies too much or they would grow up to be "soft" and dependent.

- sleep training methods (cry-it-out v. no cry ever/attachment)

At some point, you have to teach your child to sleep through the night. There's a method called "cry it out" where you put the baby in its crib and leave the room. Then the baby starts crying and instead of going in to comfort the baby, you just let them cry until they fall asleep. This can last for HOURS. I knew from the start I didn't have the stomach for this. To me, it seems like the baby is crying for hours because it thinks it's been abandoned and this is a mortal wound. But some parents swear it's the only way to teach children to sleep. We didn't do it and Martine is still a terrible sleeper.

- nursing for too long

I did this.



**Erika Landstöm:**

Regardless of structure, the most important thing, at least according to attachment theory, is that the child has a “secure attachment“ to its primary caregiver/s, whomever this is. I’m interested in this micro-structure, the very close, emotional one between caregiver and child. This particular attachment follows us throughout our whole life, and affects how we form relationships with friends and lovers as adults, and with our own children if we should decide to have them. Whatever issues we might have as adults, often go back to how these very early primary relationships were formed. If spending time in psychoanalysis or therapy, we are often prompted to “go back” to this very primary relationship, to understand how and why we might repeat certain patterns. It’s like we need to acknowledge the “baby within” to fully understand the patterns. So, some say we need to get to know this “baby within” to learn how to provide healthy structures for our own children. These emotional patterns or behaviors that we have, are in a way almost like a dna, passed down through generations. Maybe my mother was always providing me with material security but was emotionally unavailable because her mother was, and then, how can I be a warm and emotionally giving mother to my own children, if I should decide to have them? In this way, the primary attachment between caregiver (often a woman who is the biological mother but not necessarily) and child is connected to larger structures such as heteronormative patriarchy. For instance, me and my sister were raised very differently from our brother by our parents, and this has consequences. This might lead to an internalized misogyny that I might risk passing



down to my own children, should I chose to have them, if I am not very careful and aware. Rationally or intellectually I might be very aware and critical of these inherited structures, but emotionally and unconsciously I might still reproduce them. When interacting with and caring for a child, we are faced with millions of decisions every day that are made in a split second; we say “yes” or “no” to a child almost intuitively, especially when they are very small. In those cases, I think we often repeat the relationship with our own parents, even if we don’t want to. So how can we have this vast almost cross-generational awareness in those moments? Maybe this is where the “baby within” comes back.



**George Liu:**

I was talking to Nora Schultz a few months ago about her experience with her daughter Lucia. Nora told me that before Lucia was born, she imagined that she would take Lucia wherever Nora went in her life. However, she later realized her plan was presumptuous—what right does she have to bring Lucia into Nora's world without Lucia being able to say otherwise? Nora told me that now she is going more into Lucia's world, inverting her expectations of the relationship between parent and child. I really liked this idea of respecting a baby's autonomy. It seems like the baby could melt down some of the adult's habits, as long as the adult is willing to listen to them and enter the baby's world, negotiating between adult and baby terms. It's probably important for the survival of both baby and adult for the adult to keep one foot in adult world, but seems like it could be freeing and supportive for the adult to have the other foot in baby world.

When I was a baby I think I lived in my mom's world. She tells me of her feverish preparation for my coming, reading self-help books and parenting guides. She was determined to be the best mom, studying for the mom examination. Well the mom examination isn't a one-day event and it also doesn't seem like something reading books can quite prepare you for. My mom has told me about her own mother's neglectful and abusive tendencies and how she promised to herself that she would never repeat them. She has always showered my brother and I with love, but more and more, I'm not sure what the center is in our solar system of mother and child anymore. My mom ostensibly rotated around me, but from my view now, she's the center more often than not. In her singleminded pursuit of somehow righting her mother's wrongs, she has reproduced similar effects of neglect and dismissal. I tried to exit the solar system of mother but found myself always under the influence of the center, always running away from it. It seems like running away is impossible.

## Yuri Manabe:

weworkのfailing が重なってるの面白いよね。weworkは各国のいい場所を所有しちゃったから、経営に負荷がかかったって話があるよね。決まったそこにあるストラクチャーじゃなくてそれぞれの人が思い思いにやる行為に任せるのが、これからのシェアワークの形ってはずだったのに。airbnbにしても今うまくいってるのは、所有しないで今あるものをうまく回すっていう方。

そういうことが今までのヘテロノーマティブな家族のあり方オーダーに繋がってる気がする。家族の形がこうあるべきっていうあり方を社会が所有するんじゃなくて、今ある人たちのあり方や構造を含めたものを前提にするような。そこにどんどんアップデートされてもいいじゃない。核家族だとできることが煮詰まってきた、つい余計に自分たちをも苦しめる言い方とかやり方になっちゃうこともあるかもだし、今までこうだったからこうすべきっていう選択を、やり方がわからない時にこそ参照したりするけど、もっとトラディショナルなモラルが緩めばいいんじゃないかな。今までのトラディショナルな形を引きずったやり方じゃなくて、今すでにあることを、どうしたら未来にありたい形につなげるのにはどうしたいんだろうって、何が必要なのか、山登りの前のギアチェックみたいに考えてみる。

おばさんやおじさん、周りの大人は親みたいなものとか、シングルマザーへのサポートをもっとオープンにする、カウンセラーやコーチングとと同じくらいに、親相談所、家族相談所、シングルマザー相談所とかLGBT親相談所とかがフラットに世の中にわかりやすくある。

”こうあるべきストラクチャー”にフィットするためのサポート<<”こうなんです”けど”こうしたい”をサポート相談できる。



## **Gela Patashuri & Tinatin Tsiklauri:**

Gela გელა

ყველაზე დიდი შემოქმედება არის ჩვენი ანასტასია, მაგრამ ამას ანასტასიას დაბადებიდან რამდენიმე წელში მივხვდი.

ანასტასიამ შეცვალა, გაამდიდრა და გააფერადა ჩვენი ცხოვრება!!!

I can talk about what it means to have a kid from my experience and from my family in general. When we decided to marry it meant we will have a kid or kids, (That is the traditional Georgian idea) but we did not know what means to be a father and a mother.

We asked ourselves will we be a good father and mother? Can we take care of our child?

Be a kid and have a kid at the same time!? We are just older, but still kids inside.

I'm trying to be a good father, a friend, a teacher, and at the same time I think about how to live! I can say that it's very difficult, but I'm coming back home, and my daughter totally changes everything when she tells me so much. She loves me and every evening she is running to hug me! Being parents is the biggest responsibilities in my experience and now I'm better understand my father and mother!!!

Tiko - თიკო

შეილი ერთ სიყვებაში ნათქვამი მთელი ცხოვრება, ჩემთვის ყველაზე ძვირფასი და დიდი პასუხისმგებლობა!

ხანდახან შიში, ხანდახან სიხარული, ხანდახან გაბრაზება, მაგრამ მთლიანი ემოციებისა და გრძნობების ბუკეტი...

როცა გინდა, რომ მთელი ცხოვრების გამოცდილება გადასცე, რო არ ეტკინოს, რომ არ შეეშალოს და ცხოვრებამ არ შეაშინოს. როცა გინდა, რომ ჯამრთელი და ბედნიერი ადამიანი აღზარდო, რომელიც ცხოვრების მანძილზე სიყვარულს, სიკეთეს დათელავს და სხვასაც გაულამაზებს ცხოვრებას!

Sometimes fear, sometimes joy, sometimes rage, but a bouquet of emotions and feelings ...



**Tony Jackson:**

Growing up, I always imagined that I'd become a father. Partially because it's the status quo, especially if you're heterosexual, which I was for 20 years of my life. Also because of the desire to correct the things I felt my own father did wrong. Now at 30, I see babies and baby-making as a privilege for a select group of people but not necessarily a right, what with all of the other options available to create a family. A lot of ideas surrounding babies and baby-making seem to come from wanting to see oneself in another being and perhaps creating a legacy, which I find to one of the more comical aspects of toxic masculinity and for which I have absolutely no desire. If you can provide, at the very least, emotionally and financially for a baby then have one and if

you can't, well, have one if you want. I've found my calling in being a Gay Uncle!

> What a gay uncle does?

gay uncles take babies to the park/playground & play with babies then give them back to their parents when were done, and when they get older they give them cool clothes and answer questions that theyre too afraid to ask their parents, like about sex and boys and drugs etc basically all the fun of having a baby but they always go back to their parents lol

> Did you wish you have a gay uncle?

Yes, because when you're growing up and gay there aren't a lot of people to look up to. It would've been cool to have someone to show me the ropes, a gay brother would've been even better.



**Sohee Kim:**

아직 20대인 나에겐 아기와 부모라는 것은 애매모호 하다. 주변 친구들과 대화를 하면 우리는 지금의 부모세대와는 다르다는 것을 느낄 수 있었다. 나와 내 주변은 대체적으로 부모가 되는 것에 대해 상당한 의문점을 가지고 출발하지만 그 이전 세대는 상대적으로 부모가 되는 것이 당연시 했다. 달라진 세대에서 나는 과연 어떠한 방향을 선택해야 할지 과연 이전과 다른 대체적인 사회적 구조가 무엇일지 항상 고민이다. 아직은 불투명한 나의 입장이지만 한 가지 중요한 점은 '안정감' 이라고 생각한다. 어떠한 사회적 위치, 성적취향, 가치관이든 간에 이 세상에 태어나져야 하는 (선택권이 없는) 아기는 절대적인 정서적 안정감을 부모로부터 느껴야 한다고 생각한다. 아기가 성장해 학교나 사회로 나가 어떠한 구성원이 되고 사회의 힘듦을 몸소 체험할 때, 부모는 안정감의 상징이 되어야 한다고 생각한다.

For me who's yet in 20's, the relationship of child and parent is ambiguous to me. I was able to notice we are living in a different generation compared to our parents after talking with my friends. We often begin with the question of becoming a parent but it was without question to be one in the past. It's always a concern to me which path is the one for me in this new generation of society and what the alternative structure of society is today. Although my perspective is yet transparent, one important aspect I believe is 'stability'. I believe for a child to come into this world regardless of status, perspective or even perception, is in dire need of stability and comfort from a parent. Thus I believe for a child to make way into education through school and into the society where hardships presents for a child to go through on their own, a parent must be a symbol that represents a sense of stability.



**Jamie Stevens:**

I have a nephew, Joel, who is a healthy two year old but was born without a forearm and also has a missing eye on his left side. I went to a pizza restaurant with my extended family last year. It was a fun and raucous meal with two young children and all the normal family tensions. Towards the end of the meal, an older man from another table came up to my sister-in-law and pressed a five pound note into her hand. He simply said: "this for your beautiful little baby - he's an angel". It was a powerful and awkward moment in this extremely packed restaurant full of young families. My brother and his wife present as professional middle class people. But the older man, upon seeing this *different* baby was overwhelmed by the impulse to help. Joel's parents were embarrassed, maybe angry too. But to get through the moment, my sister-in-law accepted the money and thanked the man. My nephew has a visible alternative structure in the form of an arm whose extremities end at a nearer point than most other bodies. And in recognizing that alternative structure, where perhaps there might usually be a limb, or an eye, this older man needed to make an immediate compensation in the form of money.



**Shuang Liang:**

My most important nanny experience was for a 9 mo baby girl and supporting her professional artist mother. My job needed me to play poker face in this mother-daughter strong-bonding because it was hard for both of them to not being-together. A mother instinctively answers baby's crying, but I have to separate them so that the mother can get back to her professional work, or continue her long term goal. The baby tries to find his/her way to get mom's attention, especially when I was taking them away from parents. There was a bad or hurting feeling towards myself when I separated them, but I simply had to be the least emotional characters in this game.







Gays With Kids, Aug 31, 2015

## Talking With Grown Kids of Gay Parents

E.J. Graff

Excerpt

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### **Lesson #2: Let them know they don't have to protect you from pain.**

When your children hear antigay attitudes, they worry about protecting you.

By the time Jenny Rain was in middle school, early in the AIDS crisis, the culture wars were going full blast. She was bewildered by – and afraid of – what she remembers as hate-mongering media portrayals of sex-crazed, half-naked gay men. “It was cognitive dissonance for me because I’m like, *My dad is normal. We go to church and brunch on Sundays or we go to the beach for vacation.* It was ridiculously normal.”

But children don't have the defenses that adults have: they are sponges for others' attitudes. “If there was shaming to be had in society, I took more on than I needed to,” she says. She tells the story of a time when she was 11, and she and her dads were walking on a beach – and teenage boys started yelling antigay slurs. Here's how she tells it.

“My dads didn't hear any of it. I was 11 years old, I heard all of it: ‘Fag, queers, sissy!!’ That was the day shame dug its spikes into my heart. I didn't have words for it and so I just went numb and silent.

“And as we rounded the corner to go back to our hotel, Papi and Dencil noticed that. Dencil could be appropriately sassy at all the right times, and he said, ‘Oh! She's just having an 11-year-old moment.’ It was actually the perfect thing to say and I didn't have words around it. I needed for us as a family to just move on.”

That may have been the right response at the time – but wouldn't it have been even better if the family had an ongoing conversation about how to handle the haters? Neither her mother nor her father had that language in the 1970s and 1980s. In Peoria, Rain says, “We just didn't talk about it a lot. ‘How do you feel about this? How did this impact your identity? How did this impact who you are?’ Those conversations did not happen.” Even though her father did try, she said, “My dad is of German descent, and so you just.... We just didn't talk about it a lot at all as a family and that was hard. The silence did not help.”

How anxious was Robin Marquis about keeping her family structure safe and secret? Here's how much. Except among her parents' small community of gay- and gay-friendly folks where she could relax and feel at home, she had never heard an adult say “gay” in a positive way – until Ellen DeGeneres decided to come out in her sitcom's puppy episode in 1997. “I remember crying and like wanting to tell her to not do it because I was really scared for her,”

Robin explains. That's how worried she was about protecting her parents with her silence. She felt the shame being inflicted by the haters – and then felt ashamed of feeling shame.

Annie Van Avery was born in 1978 to a former seminary student and a nun. When she was five, her parents explained to her and her little sister that the family wouldn't be staying together, because her dad wanted to find "his prince." That made sense to her: Who wouldn't want to find his prince? Today, Annie is the executive director of COLAGE – originally abbreviated from Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere – which she found in her twenties, and which gave her a profound sense of coming home. She told me the story of "a really wonderful young man" – let's call him Jonah – with two dads who were, she said, "very open and communicative, just incredible parents." The dads were constantly vigilant about protecting him from homophobia – talking with the school, clearing the way with other parents.

And so it wasn't until high school that Jonah let his dads know that, all through middle school, he had been viciously bullied every single day for having gay dads. "They were absolutely stunned by this," said Annie.

Why hadn't he told them? Because they were so determined to protect him from hatred. That was their priority. So he wanted to protect *them* from feeling they had failed, from the pain it would cause them to think that their being gay had hurt *him*.

The lesson? Let them know that cruelty, discrimination, and bullying happen. *Haters gonna hate*, and all that. Let them know that most people haven't really thought about us much, so they'll pass out forms that say "mother" and "father," without meaning to exclude. Those moments are painful, but not the end of the world, if you take them as an opportunity to educate. Tell them to come talk with you or some other adult about whatever makes them uncomfortable. And when they do, listen, without judgment. Don't try to jump in and fix the problem. Let them find their own way through, with your help if they ask.

...

#### **Lesson #4: Talk with your children about your family structure.**

Sometimes our new family models seem creative to us – but can be opaque to our children. If yours is unusual, keep up an ongoing, age-appropriate conversation about that difference.

In high school, Robin struggled with the fact that she and her brother had grown up calling their semi-attached donor a "dad." If he was a *dad*, like other kids' dads, why didn't they see him every day? "He was around on important dates and once a year we would have camping trips, just alone-time together," she says. But her model of fatherhood was what she saw in others' families. She felt abandoned rather than loved.

Looking back, she says, she realizes that her parents were trying to create another model beyond the nuclear family while using the same terms. But they never communicated that to her – and the term "dad" was just too powerful to tweak without explanation. For a few years, she was so angry about his distance that they just didn't speak at all.

...

### **Lesson #7: Be ready to have them queer our identities.**

However you conceive of your gay identity, be ready to have it challenged by your children, someday. That's been Robin's role in her family. Once she felt free to "come out" as having gay parents, her other feelings started to flow more freely – and she started to realize that she, too, was attracted to women. When she returned from Spain, she began announcing that she was queer.

But since she presented as generally feminine and had had boyfriends in high school, the reaction was denial. Her friends thought she was just trying to be shocking. Still more stunning, one of her moms said, " 'Don't go be one of those straight girls that breaks gay girls' hearts.' I was 19, and both of my moms didn't start dating women until they were in their twenties!" It was a breathtakingly insulting rejection, an alienating experience of being "othered" by her own family.

"We call ourselves second generation," Robin says, explaining that often it's *harder* for the children of gay parents to come out themselves than it is for kids in straight families. That's true partly because of the pressure to prove that gay parents have "normal" kids.

And it's partly because their identities don't necessarily match up with their parents'. The new generation defines themselves differently than we once did, paying less attention to one fixed definition of who they love and closer attention to where they might belong on a spectrum of gender and attraction. Robin, for instance, dates people of all genders and sexualities, she says; for the past seven years she has dated mainly women and transmen, but isn't opposed to dating cisgender men.

Just as important, she keenly feels that her gender is closer to that of her gay dad than to that of her moms. She and her dad, she says, are both "semi-boy-gender-fluid goddess-worshipping fairies" while her moms are androgynous dykes in the 1970s lesbian feminist mode. That makes her especially grateful to have him in her life, despite the years of alienation while she was in high school. Odd though it may sound to outsiders, her dad has been an important gender role model. "Gender matters and having role models matters," she says, but your "same-gender" role model doesn't have to be your same sex.

### **Lesson #8 They're not allies. They're family – literally.**

But coming out as straight can also feel like being exiled from their native land. Dori Kavanagh, the therapist, says that it's common for our offspring to feel unsteady in their identities once they start coming of age. "There's almost the pressure to say that you're queer-identified yourself," says Kavanagh, "because you're culturally queer." No one wants to be called an "ally" when they are, quite literally, family. Some are outraged and offended that they're cast out of the community and culture in which they were raised – including that feeling of being under siege together.

Says Annie Van Avery, "A majority of us feel deeply connected to our family roots as LGBTQ. I've spoken with many people who, if they are heterosexually identified as adults,

mourn the loss of their queer families if they don't feel connected day to day." Annie herself grew up surrounded almost completely by gay people. First her father came out. Later, her sister came out. Finally, her mother the ex-nun took her aside and said: I'm worried about you – because I think you might be the only straight one in the family! For Annie, COLAGE was a lifesaver, a place where everyone understood how deeply she belonged.

They grew up with rainbows lining the bookshelves, with Pride as a happily awaited holiday, and their hearts cracked open with excitement hope the first time President Obama endorsed marriage equality. And so they're beginning to insist that they fit, even if they are personally straight. Some call themselves "gaybies." Others playfully embrace the term "queerspawn," a word that insists that they were born amidst LGBT culture.

As parents we have to insist that our children belong amongst us. Confirms Annie, "especially in the last couple of years, youth in LGBTQ communities are being considered part of the movement. We are side to side with our parents, our support networks, with pride and affinity."

...



When the artist Donald Judd died he instructed his children that his work, and the buildings where he made and installed it, be preserved exactly as he left it.

WEWORK  
Tabula rasa for our children  
WEWORK  
Not repeating the fuckups of the fathers  
Our deepest wish

Is that you're immersed in grace and dignity  
But you will have to deal with shit soon enough  
We hoped to give you the least amount of luggage  
Got the right to make your own fresh mistakes  
And not repeat others' failures

WEWORK  
Tabula rasa for our children  
Let's WEWORK  
Break the chain of the fuckups of the fathers

Is there a place called WEWORK  
Where we can pay respects  
For the death of our family?  
Show some respect  
Between the three of us WEWORK  
There is the mother and the child  
Then there is the father and the child  
But no man and a woman and LGBTQ  
No triangle of love

Father, mother, child  
Mother Father Child  
Child Mother Father

How will we sing ourselves  
Out of this sorrow?  
Build a safe bridge and art institution  
For the child out of this danger, danger

Music by Stefan Tcherepnin & Igor Törnudd-Tcherepnin (7-month-old)  
2 Mixes by Forrest Nash with Ei Arakawa

Music for Outside:

**A Dog Came In the Kitchen Drum'n Bass (Babies Overloaded Mix)**, 2011/2019

Music for Entrance:

**hƚp°dErMiX (WeWork Plunge Mix)**, 2012/2019

Music for Basement:

**Baby Hush**, 2019





(Ei & Igor)

Associated Press, Nov 26, 2019

## **1 Year Later, Mystery Surrounds China's Gene-Edited Babies**

Chinese scientist He Jiankui shocked the world by claiming he had helped make the first gene-edited babies. One year later, mystery surrounds his fate as well as theirs.

He has not been seen publicly since January, his work has not been published and nothing is known about the health of the babies.

"That's the story — it's all cloaked in secrecy, which is not productive for the advance of understanding," said Stanford bioethicist Dr. William Hurlbut.

He talked with Hurlbut many times before He revealed at a Hong Kong science conference that he had used a tool called CRISPR to alter a gene in embryos to try to help them resist infection with the AIDS virus. The work, which He discussed in exclusive interviews with The Associated Press, was denounced as medically unnecessary and unethical because of possible harm to other genes and because the DNA changes can pass to future generations.

Since then, many people have called for regulations or a moratorium on similar work, but committees have bogged down over who should set standards and how to enforce them.

"Nothing has changed," said Dr. Kiran Musunuru, a University of Pennsylvania geneticist who just published a book about gene editing and the CRISPR babies case.

"I think we're farther from governing this" now than a year ago, said Hurlbut, who disapproves of what He did. However, so much effort has focused on demonizing He that it has distracted from how to move forward, he said.

Here's what's known about the situation:

### HE JIANKUI

He was last seen in early January in Shenzhen, on the balcony of an apartment at his university, which fired him from its faculty after his work became known. Armed guards were in the hall, leading to speculation he was under house arrest.

A few weeks later, China's official news agency said an investigation had determined that He acted alone out of a desire for fame and would be punished for any violations of law.

Since then, AP's efforts to reach him have been unsuccessful. Ryan Ferrell, a media relations person He hired, declined to comment. Ferrell previously said He's wife had started paying him, which might mean that He is no longer in a position to do that himself.

Hurlbut, who had been in touch with He early this year, declined to say when he last heard from him.

## THE BABIES

The Chinese investigation seemed to confirm the existence of twin girls whose DNA He said he altered. The report said the twins and people involved in a second pregnancy using a gene-edited embryo would be monitored by government health departments. Nothing has been revealed about the third baby, which should have been born from that second pregnancy in late summer.

Chinese officials have seized the remaining edited embryos and He's lab records.

"He caused unintended consequences in these twins," Musunuru said of the gene editing. "We don't know if it's harming the kids."

## OTHERS WHO WERE INVOLVED

Rice University in Houston said it is still investigating the role of Michael Deem, whose name was on a paper He sent to a journal and who spoke with the AP about He's work. Deem was He's adviser when He attended Rice years ago.

The AP and others have reported on additional scientists in the U.S. and China who knew or strongly suspected what He was doing.

"Many people knew, many people encouraged him. He did not do this in a corner," Hurlbut said.

## THE SCIENCE

Scientists recently have found new ways to alter genes that may be safer than CRISPR. Gene editing also is being tested against diseases in children and adults, which is not controversial because those changes don't pass to future generations. Some scientists think gene editing will become more widely accepted if it's proved to work in those situations.

"It's moving forward slowly because it's being done responsibly," Musunuru said.

## PUBLIC OPINION

A forum was held in Berkeley, California, last month to get public views on gene editing — everything from modifying mosquitoes and crops to altering embryos.

The National Academy of Sciences recently pulled a video it made after concern arose about how it portrayed the ethically dicey science and its possible use to make designer babies. The academy has been leading some efforts to set standards for gene editing, and it gets most of its funding from the government, although a private grant paid for the video, a spokeswoman said.

An AP/NORC poll last year found that most Americans say it would be OK to use gene-editing to protect babies against disease, but not to change DNA so children are born smarter, faster or taller.

## REGULATION

A moratorium is no longer strong enough, and regulation is needed, CRISPR pioneer Jennifer Doudna of the University of California, Berkeley recently wrote in a commentary in the journal *Science*.

She noted that the World Health Organization has asked regulators in all countries not to allow such experiments, and that a Russian scientist recently proposed one.

"The temptation to tinker" with the DNA of embryos, eggs or sperm "is not going away," she wrote.

# DESIGNER BABIES

**POETIC BABY NAMES** (In Alphabetical order)

Algy	Amorphous	Another
Aggretsuko	Aye-Pee	Baby Briva
Baby Nothing	Bankrupt	Barlette
Brian	Coffeefee	Daddyslittlegirl
Diversity-Inclusion	DNA	DNB
.com	Darejani	Fortune
Hafnium	Hush	IluvBoba
Ikura	Kiwi	LaWindows
MeAgain	Mix	Newsy
11216	Oops	Privacy
Permanence	Precaria	Puddle
Quartzite	Radish	Renter
Rosemary	Rusudan	Regretel
Reset	Sandbag	Serendipity
Share-I	Softbanky	Tabula Rosie
Taburo	Tungsten	Varskvlavisa
Whatever	XOXO	

## Q & A with Lanka Tattersall

Very powerful and convenient/effective structure of hetero mother and father. How to deal with that?

Maybe it's because Brooke's dad is queer (and has been with his partner for 30+ years), and Brooke's sister is too, and also because I grew up in a pretty matriarchal family, I've never felt the hetero mother/father conventions to be relevant or useful or worth giving much energy too. Of course, I know the hetero world will try to impose itself on us at times, but especially living in NYC (or LA) and having other queer families around it's been OK for us so far. For Brooke and me, it started with really sharing nurturing and parenting responsibilities as equally as possible.

One queer thing I love but which is also a challenge is the whole question of naming. I go by "mama" and Brooke goes by "Pops" or "dada". When I'm talking about myself with other people I sometimes say I am the "gestational parent" so as to avoid the whole "mother" thing while also indicating that I was the person who gave birth. It's important to me that our daughter also hears and meets as big a range of families as we can introduce her to, all the "Pops", "mommy/mama" families, the "abbas" and "papis" and uncles and aunties and surrogate angels and "special so-and-sos" and on and on. It's a rainbow.

Another really important thing your question raises in paid parental leave. As I'm sure you know, in the U.S., some employers contribute zero dollars to family leave, and some states contribute very little or nothing. Meanwhile other countries have very robust, state-sponsored long family leave policies that allow both parents to take ample paid time off. I think it's pretty nuts that in the U.S. some people have to use "vacation" when they go into "labor" and use "sick days" when they are doing something which is often the healthiest and most life-giving thing they have done in their lives. We were fortunate that Brooke was able to take a month of parental leave after I went back to work. The bonding they did together during that time was so important to all of us. Of course, this will be a little different for you as an artist, but the question of how to balance studio time and parenting time is one that would be really helped by universal paid parental leave of course.

When interacting with and caring for a child, we are faced with millions of decisions every day that are made in a split second; we say "yes" or "no" to a child almost intuitively, especially when they are very small. In those cases, I think we often repeat the relationship with our own parents, even if we don't want to. So how can we have this awareness in those moments? (Erika Landström's comment)

The "Self-Confident Child" book has some advice about this. I also took a class with this queer, deep feminist person named Ruth Beaglehole who focuses on nonviolent communication with children. She recommends that instead of saying "no" you consistently teach and use a few words from an early age—specifically, "hot", "hurts" and "tastes bad"—which actually describe the issue rather than simply being a vague prohibition. I love this teaching, and use it all the time. I do still say "no" of course, but try to always follow it up

with an explanation of why I've said no. Children understand so much language from an early moment, long before they can talk.

How to imagine and shape a new structure so that we can be more free? Even from the pattern of our parents?

Eternal question... Extended paid family leave for everyone! Free, high quality day care so all parents who need/want to work (including artists, of course!) are free to do so without facing enormous childcare costs.

The cliché that it “takes a village to raise a child” really is true. When our baby was very small I went to a new parent group almost every week and being in the presence of other new parents (most of whom were probably hetero) was a lifesaver. The village also includes both biological and chosen family, and all the people who helped make and bring our kiddo into the world and help nurture her. We try to talk about all of these bonds a lot, even though she doesn't yet understand all the words.

One thing that's helpful about being a queer parent today is that there are lots of books with queer families represented and even in the few “mommy/daddy” books we have we often switch pronouns around when reading (using singular “they”, or “daddy and daddy” “mama and Pops” etc.)

The pattern of our parents is there, and it will inevitably creep in sometimes, but I don't think we need to let those patterns rule us. When this happen to me, I acknowledge them and keep on moving on. I know this sounds like a self help book, but for me it's been true.

Are there any texts/books you are inspired of? Any architectural model of queer family? What is queerness of being parents? These might inspire us to perform/build next Sunday ...

- The most meaningful and complicated book I've read about queer family architecture is Maggie Nelson's book “The Argonauts” – it's a universe in a small book.
- When our daughter was first born (and slept a lot) we watched this show called “The Fosters” pretty compulsively. It's a completely a teen drama series about a bunch of adopted kids being raised by a multiracial lesbian couple and has its over the top silly cheesy moments, but actually talks about very real issues that queer families confront and as far as mainstream representation goes it's really pretty good. You can find it on the internet.
- And of course there's the true story of the gay penguins at the Central Park zoo who were given a penguin egg of their own to hatch and who raised their baby together. So there's one model and also SO cute! There's a kids book about it called “And Tango Makes Three”



And here's a couple of suggestions that aren't about queer parenting but which I turned to early on:

- "Gentle First Year" by Gowri Motha was a helpful guide in the early days. Her approach to infant months is much more holistic than I found in some other books and I liked that it was written by someone with perspective from outside of the U.S.

- And a friend of mine who is a massage therapist recommended a book called "Baby Massage: The Calming Power of Touch" by Alan Heath which I really love - it was wonderful and really bonding, to set aside time almost every day with the baby when she was small to give her a little massage. (Now that she's basically a toddler she gets too bored for massage but she still loves lots of cuddling, which is the best!) I'm a big believer in nurturing through physical touch- Brooke and I both did "skin to skin" right after she was born - that's where you put a baby on your bare chest and let them rest there. It's deeply bonding and relaxing for baby and parents, so if you can do this as soon as possible, I really recommend it.

Some final thoughts:

- The queerness of being parents... I think it's really different for everyone I know. There is also a way in which I found that becoming a parent brought me to a place that felt very different from my queer individual self, of even the queerness of my relationship with Brooke. I felt "connected" to hetero people I haven't before but also deeply attached to my queer chosen family. My raw human animalness, and a bigger and different feelings of love and kinship than I've known before are what have kept me going in the middle of the night when I've been totally exhausted. Also, there is no "perfect" way to parent, we all make mistakes.

- When your baby comes, you will truly be more deliriously tired than you thought possible! There was one day when I was so tired I kept calling myself "Brooke" (!!).

When the baby is close to arriving, make tons of soups and stews and freeze them because you won't have time or energy to cook when they arrive! Also, when baby arrives nest as much as possible for at least the first 40 days.

It's a wild, joyful and very real ride!

Xo, L







WEWORK BABIES (11 Courtlandt Alley)

Ei Arakawa

Sunday, December 8, 2019  
2pm

Performers: Ei Arakawa, Malik Gaines, Tony Jackson, Sohee Kim, Erika Landström,  
Shuang Liang, George Liu, Yuri Manabe, Molly McFadden, Gela Patashuri,  
Jamie Stevens, Tinatin Tsiklauri

Music by Stefan Tcherepnin & Igor Törnudd-Tcherepnin (7-month-old)

ARTISTS SPACE  
11 Courtlandt  
New York 10013