

And We're Gonna Get Ma-a-ried!

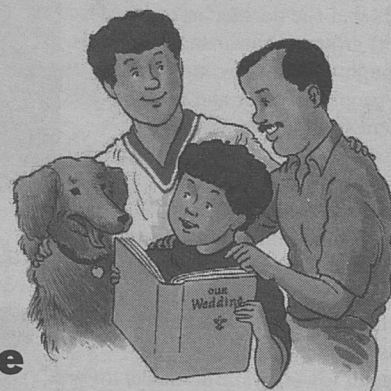
More Faerie Tales from the Rainbow Library

BY NETH URKIEL-TAYLOR

Imagine with the commencing of marriage for same sex couples in Massachusetts, there will be more need for children's books about same sex weddings and divorces. Two well-known Massachusetts queer authors, Michael Willhoite and Leslea Newman, have written children's books on these topics. While I looked for books showing lesbians in commitment/civil union/marriage ceremonies, the books available showed only gay male couples in these situations.

Written almost a decade ago, *Daddy's Wedding* by Michael Willhoite is a fairy tale come true. Michael is not only a writer, but an illustrator whose work is very animated and clear. This helps to hold the attention of people of whatever age who like to look at the pictures.

The story shows men exchanging rings and vows, men kissing and the best-case scenario of how families share in a special announcement and day of love between two gay men.



The book's central figure is a boy name Nick. It is Nick's Dad, Daniel, who is getting married to another man. The book's age is revealed when

Daniel's partner Frank refers to the wedding as a "commitment" ceremony. But the story shows men exchanging rings and vows, men kissing and the best-case

scenario of how families share in a special announcement and day of love between two gay men. The "ex-wife" and her guy, along with Nick's grandparents, are shown throughout the story as supportive and happy about this union.

Family acknowledgment and support of same-sex couples are not always so perfect. In March, I wrote about *My Two Uncles* by Judith Vigna. The main character, Elly, must come to terms with the struggle facing her Uncle Ned, and Ned's "friend" Uncle Phil: the gay couple is unwelcome to attend the 50th wedding anniversary of the grandfather patriarch of the family.

Another book I have mentioned before and will note again here is *King and King* by Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland. This book takes a very comical and entertaining approach to finding and marrying prince charming! I would suggest this book for laughs, to open a discussion about gay marriage, and/or prior to reading *Daddy's Wedding*.

Currently, many marriages lead to divorce. New Victoria Publishers, Inc., in Norwich, Vermont, published

Saturday is Pattyday in 1993, authored by western Massachusetts writer Leslea Newman. Similarly to *Daddy's Wedding* and *My Two Uncles* this book looks at the subject matter through the eyes of a child. Frankie allows us to experience some moments of her difficult transition when one of her two moms moves out of the house. The book is honest and recognizes from page one that both Patty and Allie are Frankie's moms. The relationships shown are between Frankie and Allie, and Frankie and Patty. Each mother shares with Frankie her thoughts about the divorce. The book concludes on a very positive note, leaving room for smiles and good-byes. ▼

Neth is currently involved in *The Rainbow Library*, a reference library and Vermont resource for queer-themed picture books, videos, and family information. Library staff are willing to facilitate reading circles with your friends and family, group, school or organization. Call 652-0878 to learn how you can become involved, to get a bibliography or to learn more about the library.

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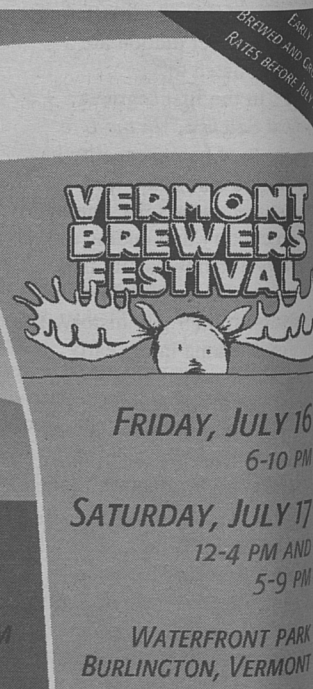
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