

IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®

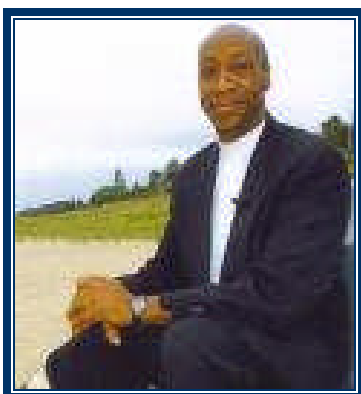
SUMMER 2008

**WHY DO FATHERS WORLDWIDE FEEL THEY ARE ON THE “OUTSIDE LOOKING IN”?
WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY?
HOW CAN WE MOVE FATHERS BACK INTO THE PARENTING EQUATION?**

**THREE FATHERS AND KEY PLAYERS IN THE FATHERHOOD MOVEMENT
PAUL M. CLEMENTS, MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH AND DEAN TONG
PROVIDE POWERFUL ANSWERS
IN THE
GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS**



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SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR TO IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD® AND
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NICOLE S. DANTZLER
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FATHERHOOD IN THE MILLENNIUM: RAISING CHILDREN . . .RESHAPING PUBLIC POLICY

Our fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers – against the backdrop of a devastating global economic depression and World Wars – created and implemented plans that sustained our families. Under the most difficult set of circumstances – and for some, against all odds -- our fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers went about the business of keeping our families together, putting food on the table, and positively shaping the minds and souls of their children – their future – their bridge to the future. In the Millennium, Married Fathers, Divorced Fathers, Single Fathers, Custodial Fathers, Non-Custodial Fathers, “Long Distance” Fathers, and “Stay-At-Home” Fathers throughout our global village struggle with great difficulty to positively shape the minds and souls of our children – our future – our bridge to the future. They find themselves searching for answers to questions which, in all probability, may not have entered the minds of their fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers: *Why is being a Father so difficult today? Who can I talk to about the support services and resources I need to help me be a good parent? How can I obtain sole custody of my children?* As a result, Fatherhood in the Millennium has become more than just about raising children. Fathers throughout our global village are creating resources and support services that are responsive to their unique parenting and health issues. They have created support groups and coalitions which transcend the boundaries of geography, religion, politics, culture, ethnicity, economics, and language. And Fathers are reshaping public policy. As an example, in October 2007, Equal Parenting became the law of the land in Denmark. What does this mean? It means that when Danish parents divorce or separate, children have equal access to both *Dad* and *Mom* and the right to be nurtured and mentored by both *Dad* and *Mom* despite their parents’ divorced or separated status. In the United States, Equal Parenting Initiatives have been launched in California, Michigan, North Dakota, Ohio and West Virginia.

Three Fathers and key players in the Fatherhood Movement – **PAUL M. CLEMENTS, MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH**, and **DEAN TONG** examine the causes of the breakdown of the family, why Fathers worldwide are feeling that they are “on the outside looking in”, and how we can move Fathers back into the Parenting Equation in the **GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS**.

PAUL M. CLEMENTS is the architect of the **GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS**. He is a Father, Fathers’ Rights Advocate for over 20 years, and one of IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®’s Senior Contributing Editors, and the *Founder and President of Dads Against Divorce Discrimination* (www.DADDNH.org). Clements first presented the idea of this nation’s and the State of New Hampshire’s first Commission On The Status Of Men to the New Hampshire Chapter of the National Congress for Fathers and Children and assisted in the lobbying efforts which led to its establishment.. He is a member of the American Coalition For Fathers And Children; Children’s Rights Council; and Coalition For The Preservation Of Fatherhood. In his article, ***Money Is The Root Of All Evil***, Clements attributes the cause of the Fatherhood Crisis to, among other things, “feminist angst against men in general” and the institution of laws that have made divorce an attractive option for women. He goes on to say that “although men are often blamed for abandoning their families, the truth is, they are the most reluctant of the couple to dissolve the marriage.”

It was through **ALICIA M. CROWE, ESQUIRE**, an author, attorney, Fathers’ Rights Advocate and entrepreneur from Nyack, New York that I learned about **MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH** and the work that he is doing which is empowering Fathers, our families, our communities and our world. **MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH** is a religious leader, author, the *Founder and President of Children Need Both Parents, Inc.*, one of the most proactive Fatherhood organizations in the United States which is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a Father. Minister Smith and his son **ARIEL D. SMITH** have co-authored a powerful book, *‘Cheated: The Story Of A Father Who Would Not Give Up On His Children – A Documented Account Of Parental Alienation Syndrome’*, which is a gripping exploration of parental alienation and is being hailed as a “must read” for Fatherhood advocates, activists and practitioners. Through his article, ***African American Fatherhood And Marriage***, Minister Smith identifies, among other things, the components of the root causes of the Fatherhood Crisis in the African American community and why “the

relationship between African American men, women and their children is dictating a rise in single parenthood in the United States.”

DEAN TONG is a Father, author, and an internationally known family rights and forensic consultant on child abuse, domestic violence and child custody. He has been a media commentator for a number of high profile cases which include Elian Gonzalez, Jon Benet Ramsay, and Megan Kanka which led to the creation and enactment of “Megan’s Law”. Tong’s expert opinion has been sought after by more than 2,000 radio talk shows over the past 13 years and numerous national and local TV programs such as *Dr. Phil*, *FOX News*, *COURT-TV*, *The Montel Williams Show*, and *Crier Live*. He has been interviewed or quoted by *the Boston Globe*, *Washington Times*, *Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and *The Washington Post*. He is the author of three books – *Elusive Innocence* which was reviewed by the American Journal of Family Therapy; *Ashes to Ashes... Families To Dust*; and *Don’t Blame ME Daddy*. Mr. Tong also is an Affiliate member of the Academy of Behavior Profiling Forensic Section, an Advisory Board Member of the Coalition for the Preservation of Fatherhood; a member of the Children’s Rights Council Section; the Coalition for the Preservation of Fatherhood; and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Fathers Resource Center. In *A Time Of Nightmare, Daylight And Redemption*, Tong identifies the causes of the Fatherhood Crisis and shows us how the crisis can be resolved through “*Fifty Ways To Stay A Father*” and a *Proposal For Change* which is designed to create a “father and family friendly system”.

While the burgeoning demand for food, soaring food prices buoyed by astronomically rising energy prices, declining investment in the agricultural sector, the imposition of export restrictions which has led to hoarding and panic buying of food and food products, and food riots in a number of countries has moved **UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON to establish and chair a Task Force On The Global Food Security Crisis**, in the City of Philadelphia, social entrepreneurs **QUEEN MOTHER FALAKA FATTAH** and her husband **MR. DAVID FATTAH, the Co-Founders of the House Of Umoja, Inc.** (<http://www.houseofumoja.org>), **an internationally acclaimed organization which is celebrating 40 years of service to the world community**, have launched the “**THINK GREEN PEACE**” Campaign which is being heralded as a global model for self-sufficiency and peace. Thousands of miles away – in Hilo, Hawaii -- **DOUGLASS CAPOGROSSI, PH.D., the President of Akamai University** (<http://www.akamaiuniversity.us>) recently announced that the academic institution has created an **ONLINE PARENTING EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING PROGRAM FOR INCARCERATED FATHERS**. which is being heralded as a model for parenting education programs for Incarcerated Fathers worldwide. You can learn more about how two phenomenal organizations – the *House Of Umoja, Inc.* and *Akamai University* are creating empowering options for our families, our communities and our world in **FATHERHOOD NEWS BRIEF**.

What do our children -- our most precious assets -- think about the future – their future? What is their perception of the world outside of their immediate environment and their place in it? And when they become mature members of our society, what will they do with their intellect, talent and creativity? One very creative, smart and talented young lady -- **Ms. NICOLE S. DANTZLER** – has not only looked into the future – her future, but she has also decided upon the career she will embark upon when she reaches adulthood. Ms. Dantzler has decided that she wants to be a journalist and a publisher. She shared her dream of becoming a journalist and publisher with her parents, **MR. AND MRS. LEONARD DANTZLER**, who talked to me about their daughter’s dream and the collection of short stories and poems she has authored. As a result, **MS. NICOLE S. DANTZLER** is making her debut as a Contributing Editor to **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®** and with her parent’s permission, she has become a Publishing/Journalism Intern for **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®’S INTERNATIONAL FATHERHOOD AND MEN’S ISSUES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**. Ms. Dantzler is the creator of **NIKKI’S WORLD** in our **CHILDREN’S CORNER**. And while I am on the subject, in 2004, the concept for **CHILDREN’S CORNER** was suggested to me by one of our publication’s staunchest supporters, a phenomenal gentleman who prefers to remain anonymous. While I am not at liberty to reveal his identity, I can tell you that he celebrated his 94th birthday several months ago and that, in his own unique way, he empowers and strengthens not only his family but the community in which he lives and has worked.

A few weeks before Father's Day, **MARIYA MAZURYAN** of **Precedent Media Unlimited** in New York contacted me about a great book written by **New York Times columnist and National Public Radio Contributor BOB MORRIS**, **Assisted Loving: True Tales Of Double Dating With My Dad** (<http://www.assistedloving.com>) which had just been published by Harper Collins. I was intrigued by the title of Mr. Morris' book. So, I asked to receive a review copy. Ms. Mazuryan contacted **KATHERINE BEITNER** at **Harper Collins** in New York who shipped out a copy of **Assisted Loving: True Tales Of Double Dating With My Dad** to me. Morris weaves an unflinchingly honest, humorous and compassionate tale about a widower and octogenarian who re-enters the world of dating which is examined in **BOOKS FOR DAD**. You'll also find our review of a book written for pre-teen and teenaged girls by journalist, entrepreneur, poet, and former New York City radio personality **Ms. KEYSHA WHITAKER** entitled **Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living and Loving** (<http://www.hiccupsandhomework.com>) in **BOOKS FOR DAD**. So, how did I learn about Ms. Whitaker's book? During the waning days of Spring, I was introduced to Ms. Whitaker and her book by **BRUCE GEORGE**, poet, author, social entrepreneur, *Co-Founder of Def Poetry Jam, Executive Consultant for the Russell Simmons' Def Poetry Jam on Broadway which was the recipient of a 2003 Tony Award, and Executive Producer and Talent Executive Producer from 2001 through 2003 for Russell Simmons Presents Def-Poetry for HBO.* After reading **Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living and Loving** which provides Fathers and Mothers with some insight into the fears, stress and disappointments that their daughters may be experiencing but are not talking about, I arranged an interview with the book's author which you can check out in the **LITERARY CHAT ROOM**.. You'll learn, among other things, why Ms. Whitaker decided to write **Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living and Loving**, and how fatherlessness and the lack of a dominant male presence in the lives of pre-teen girls and teenage girls affects their self-esteem and academic achievement and determines whether they will succumb to peer pressure

GEOFFREY D. HOLMAN is a father, author, artist, playwright and poet who juggles the demands of Fatherhood and a career with great agility. Viewed by many as an "Urban Renaissance Man", Mr. Holman, who was brought to my attention by **BRUCE GEORGE**, is featured in our **FATHERHOOD ROUNDTABLE** where he discusses the challenges of Fatherhood, his role models, and stepping out on faith and living his dreams. Self-empowerment guru, poet and Senior Contributing Editor to **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®** **CARRY GREAVES** tells us that we must come together as a nation, put aside our ideological differences, and find common ground and solutions that can heal our pain in **Growing Out Of Pain (Our Response To Change)**. **GREAVES**, in his poem **Brand New** which is featured in **POETS-IN-RESIDENCE**, speaks of "new beginnings" and "happy endings" and reminds us that we have the power to make our lives better. Free-lance journalist and Contributing Editor **CARLOS MOORE** tells us in **Helpless No More** that "Long Distance" Fathers are willing to walk through fire, if need be, in order to maintain a dominant presence in their children's lives. And **Our Global Fatherhood Resources** offers an array of men's health and parenting resources and support services.

Many thanks to **Ms. KATHERINE BEITNER, DOUGLASS CAPOGROSSI, PH.D., ALICIA CROWE, ESQUIRE, MR. AND MRS. LEONARD DANTZLER, Ms. NICHOLE S. DANTZLER, QUEEN MOTHER FALAKA FATTAH, Ms. MARIYA MAZURYAN, MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH, MESSRS. PAUL M. CLEMENTS, BRUCE GEORGE, CARRY GREAVES, GEOFFREY HOLMAN, CARLOS MOORE, and DEAN TONG and Ms. KEYSHA WHITAKER** for their contributions to our Global Dialogue on Fatherhood. We would also like to say "Thank You!" to the wonderful gentleman who shared his vision for **CHILDREN'S CORNER** with us and our subscribers and the male parenting organizations throughout our global village who continue to support us

Best Regards,

D.A. SEARS
MANAGING EDITOR

GLOBAL FATHERHOOD RESOURCES

ARGENTINA

Association de Nuevos Padre – Cramer 4031, Buenos Aires, Argentina 1429. Telephone: 011-054-703613, 011-054-1-15-4906295; 011-1-054-1-15-4736002.

AUSTRALIA

Australia Family Association - Post Office Box Q69, Queen Victoria Building, PO 1230, Level 12, 456 Kent Street, Sydney 2000, Australia. Telephone: 011 61 02 9267 6159 or 011 61 02 9283 1472

Australian Information and Support Services for Men Pty Ltd. – Unit 5a, 21 Stud Rd., Bayswater Vic 3153 Australia. Telephone: 011 03 9738 2478. Facsimile: 011 03 9878 4725. Its website address is www.aissm.com.au. E-mail messages can be sent to info@aissm.com.au.

Dads Against Discrimination – Post Office Box 83, Forestville, NSW Australia. Telephone: 011-61-02 9451 1305.

Dads In Distress (“DIDs”) – Founded and headed up by **Mr. Tony Miller**, DIDs promotes awareness for the need for support for men going through the trauma of divorce, separation or a relationship breakdown; raises awareness of male suicide particularly relating to divorce or separation; offers and encourages ongoing support to members in the form of relevant courses, counseling, legal and medical advice. DIDs’ headquarters is located at The Men’s Survival Centre, The Mud Huts, Duke Street, Coffs Harbour 2450 NSW Australia. Letters can be sent to DIDs at its postal address: Dads In Distress Inc., P.O. Box J395, Coffs Harbour Jetty 2450, NSW Australia. Or via e-mail at dids@nor.com.au. Or telephone DIDs at 011 61 1 300 853 437.

Equity for Fathers – 90 Lady Davidson Circuit, Forestville, NSW 2087 Australia. Telephone: 011-61-02 9975 4324.

Fathers for Family Equity - Post Office Box 260, Nunawading 3131, Australia. Telephone:

011-61 3 9878 8588. Visit the organization’s website at: [HTTP://WWW.FAMILYEQUITY.ASN.AU](http://www.familyequity.asn.au)

Mater Medical Research Institute – Level 3, Aubigny Place, Raymond Terrace, South Brisbane QLD 4101 Australia. Telephone: 011-61-7-3840 2555. Facsimile: 011-61-7-3840-2550. E-mail: INFO@MMRI.MATER.ORG.AU.

Men’s Rights Agency – Post Office Box 28, Waterford, Queensland, 4183, Australia. Telephone: 011 61 07 3805 5611. Facsimile: 011 07 3200 8769. Visit the organization’s website at www.mensrights.com.au. E-mail messages can be sent to mra@ecm.net.au.

Michael Green, Q.C. – Mediator and counselor and author of *Fathers After Divorce – Building A New Life And Becoming A Successful Separated Parent. A strong advocate of “shared parenting,”* Green can be reached by telephone or facsimile at 011 61 02 9519 7988 or by e-mail at magnews@bigpond.com.

Stepfamily Australia, Inc. – P.O. Box 1162, Gawler, South Australia 5118. Telephone: 011 61- 08 8822 7007. Its website address is www.stepfamily.asn.au. E-mail messages can be sent to sasa@stepfamily.asn.au.

CANADA

Alliance National des Organizations Pour L’entraide des Parents Non-Gardiens –722 de Brabant, #C, Sainte Foy, Quebec G1X 3H1, Canada. For further information, contact Mr. Aurélien Lessard via e-mail at: arlessard@videotron.ca.

Association Pour Les Liens Peres Enfants De Quebec – 722 de Brabant, #C, Sainte-Foy, Quebec G1X 3H1, Canada. Telephone: 418-659-4213. E-mail: gilclaes@oriocom.ca.

Canadian Men’s Parenting Association – 21 Morris Street, Ottawa K1S 4A6, Canada. Contact Mr. Bruce Rosove at the Canadian Men’s Parenting Association by telephone at: 613-233-8013 or facsimile at 819-994-2085.

Ex-Fathers – Contact **Lloyd Gorling** at RR1, Williamstown, Ontario, K0C 2J0 Canada. Telephone: 613-931-2104/Facsimile: 613-931-2104. The website address for Ex-Fathers is <http://www.kalypso@glen-net.ca>.

Fathers Are Capable Too (“FACT”) – 3044 Bloor Street West, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario M8X 2Y8. Telephone: (416) 410-3228. For further information about FACT, visit the organization’s website at <http://www.fact.on.ca>.

Fathers Battling Injustice -- Contact **Dave Foster** at 1500 Royal Fork Rd., Box 57507, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M9P 3B6. Mr. Foster can be reached at dave@canadian.net.

Fondation Gilbert Claes – 515 St-Olivier, Quebec, Canada, G1R 1G8. Telephone 418-529-4648. E-Mail: gilbert.claes@oricom.ca

The Children’s Voice – Contact **Bill Flores**, President of The Children’s Voice, Post Office Box 61027, Maple Grove Post Office, Oakville, Ontario L6J 7P5 Canada. Telephone and Facsimile: 905-829-3639. E-mail: kidshelp@ican.net.

Victoria Men’s Centre – Contact **Ken Wiebe** at 1967 Oak Bay Avenue, Victoria, British Columbia V82 1E3 Canada.

FRANCE

L’Enfant Et Son Droit (A Child and His Right) – 12 rue Alphan, 75013 Paris, FRANCE. Telephone: 01 33 0 1 45 81 19 84. Visit their website address at <http://www.magic.fr/enfant-pap/welcome.htm>

SOUTH AFRICA

The Fatherhood Project, which is led by the Child, Youth Family and Social Development Research Programme at the Human Sciences Research Council (“HSRC”) in Durban, South Africa, encourages and supports men’s care and protection of children. Its goal is to stimulate discussion and action that is supportive of men’s involvement in caring for their children. For further information about the Fatherhood Project, send a note to its postal address: The Fatherhood Project, Private Bag X41, Pretoria, South Africa 0001. The Fatherhood Project’s street address is: 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria, South Africa 0002. The organization can be

reached by telephone at: 011 27 12 302 2000 or by facsimile at 011 27 12 302 2001.

SPAIN

Asociación de Padres de Familia Separados (“APFS”) – **Juan Luis Rubio Azcúe** serves as the National President of APFS and Carlos Villacampa Orús serves as APFS’ National Secretary. Correspondence for APFS can be sent to Palafox 10, 28010-Madrid, SPAIN. The organization’s National President can be reached by telephone at 011 607657244. Or you can send an e-mail to APFS at APFSJLRA@terra.es.

SWITZERLAND

Health in Prisons Project – World Health Organization – Avenue Appia 20, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland. Telephone: 011 41 22 791 2111. Facsimile: 011 41 22 79 1311.

UNITED KINGDOM

Families Need Fathers – 134 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3AR England. Telephone: 011 44 0207 613 5060). Visit their website address at <http://www.fnf.org>.

MK Family Rights Initiative - Visit its website at www.MKfamilyhuman-rights.org. Its e-mail address is MK.familyrights@ntlword.com.

Prostate Cancer Charity – Miss Melody Lennon, MBA, RGN serves as the Chief Executive Officer of this organization which is located at 3 Angel Walk, Hammersmith, 69HX London in the United Kingdom. Telephone: 011 44 208 222 7622.

The Cheltenham Group – Acts as an advocate of men’s rights issues through publishing, research and lobbying. Visit its website at www.c-g.org.uk. Its e-mail address is bpw@c-g.org.uk.

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA

Arizona Fathers & Families Coalition, Inc. (“AZFFC”). AZFFC is based in Phoenix, Arizona where **James Rodriguez, M.S.W.** serves as its President and Chief Executive Officer. The organization offers uniquely comprehensive programs for Fathers, Fatherhood practitioners, faith-based organizations, early childhood educators, educational administrators and policymakers through training seminars,

workshops and annual conferences. For further information about AZFFC, visit its website at www.azffc.org. Inquiries about the organization can be sent via e-mail to AZFFC at info@azffc.org. Or send a note or letter to the Arizona Fathers & Families Coalition, Inc., Post Office Box 8267, Phoenix, AZ 85006.

Native Nations Institute For Leadership, Management And Policy (“NNI”). NNI is a resource for self-determination, self-governance and development for indigenous nations in the United States, Canada and other parts of the world. NNI’s Leadership and Management Programs, Policy Analysis and Research Projects and Strategic and Organizational Development programs assist Native Nations, organizations and individuals in building effective sovereign governments; developing vigorous economies that are not incongruent to circumstances and culture; resolving difficult social problems; achieving objectives in interactions with other governments; managing the environmental and natural resources; balancing change and cultural continuity. The Native Nations Institute is part of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, a research and outreach unit at the University of Arizona organized under the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. The Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy is located at the Udall Center For Studies In Public Policy, 803 East 1st Street, Tucson, AZ 85719. Telephone: 520-626-0NNI. Facsimile: 520-626-3NNI. For further information, visit the organization’s website at www.nni.arizona.edu or send an e-mail to nni@u.arizona.edu.

CALIFORNIA

Almasi Scholars – Contact Master R.J. Daniel, 537 Jones Street, #9295, San Francisco, CA 94102. Telephone: 415-273-4626.

Circulo Hombres – First launched in 1988 in Jolon, Monterey County, California, as an informal movement, Circulo Hombres guides and assists men in clarifying their roles and responsibilities and in their outreach work in the community through the establishment of a set of values. Circulo Hombres has evolved into a formal organization – National Compadres Network – and offers a series of programs and workshops. For further information about Circulo Hombres, contact the National IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®

Compadres Network at 6741 Friends Avenue, Second Floor, Whittier, CA 70601; telephone: 562-789-8632; facsimile: 569-789-2833. Or visit the organization’s website at www.nationalcompradesnetwork.org.

The National Men’s Resource Center™. Visit their website at www.menstuff.org or send an e-mail to menstuff@aol.com.

National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute – 5252 East Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90022. Contact **Jerry Tello**, Executive Director of National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute at 323-728-7770 or via e-mail at nlffi@nlffi.org.

The Salk Institute for Biological Studies – Mailing address: Post Office Box 85800, San Diego, CA 92186-5800. Street Address: 10010 North Torrey-Pines Road, La Jolla, CA 92037. Telephone: 358-453-4100 Ext. 1226. Facsimile: 358-453-8534. E-mail: communications@salk.edu

COLORADO

Focus on the Family – 8605 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80995. Its website address is www.family.org.

La Pa’s – Contact **Randy Mergler, M.S.** and **Roger Coughlan, LCSW** at La Pa’s at Transformation of Fatherhood. Telephone: 970-495-4624. La Pa’s e-mail address is dads@lapas.org and its website address is www.lapas.org.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Health In Prisons Project – Regional Offices for the Americas/Pan American Health Organizations – 525 23rd Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037. Telephone: 202-974-3000. Facsimile: 202-974-3663.

Men’s Health Network – Post Office Box 75792, Washington, DC 20013. Telephone: 202-543-6461. Facsimile: 202-543-2727. The organization’s website address is <http://www.menshealthnetwork.org>. Its e-mail address is info@menshealthnetwork.org.

FLORIDA

Commission on Marriage & Family Support -- Contact **Anne Carpenter**, Administrative

Assistant at the Commission on Marriage & Family Support (formerly, Florida's Commission on Responsible Fatherhood) at 111 North Gadsden Street, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Telephone: 850 488-4952 x135. Facsimile: 850-921-9070.

GEORGIA

100 Black Men of America, Inc. – 141 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30303. Telephone: 404-688-5100. Toll Free Telephone: 800-593-3411. Facsimile: 404-688-1024. 100 Black Men of America, Inc.'s web site address is www.100BlackMen.com.

HAWAII

Akamai University – Located in Hawaii, Akamai University offers a comprehensive Men's Studies and Fatherhood curriculum. Inquiries concerning admission requirements can be obtained by contacting **Douglass Capogrossi, Ph.D.**, President of Akamai University at 193 Kinooole Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720 USA. Akamai University's United States and Canadian telephone numbers are 1-877-934-8793 while its international telephone number is 1-808-934-8793. Visit Akamai University's website at www.akamaiuniversity.us.

KANSAS

Million Dads March - Thomas Lessman serves as Chairman of the Million Dads March. Its web site address is www.milliondadsmarch.org. The Million Dads March's mailing address is 4121 N.E. Brier Road, Topeka, KS 66616. Telephone: 785-230-4546. Facsimile: 785-665-9230. The e-mail address for the Million Dads March is chairman@milliondadsmarch.org.

The National Center for Fathering – 10200 West 75th Street, Suite 367, Shawnee Mission, KS 66213. Telephone: 913-384-4661 or 800-593-3237. Its website address is www.fathers.com.

MARYLAND

African American Male Leadership Institute – **Richard A. Rowe** serves as the Executive Director of the African American Male Leadership Institute (“AAMLI”). Correspondence can be sent to AAMLI at its mailing address of P.O. Box 32025, Baltimore, MD 21208 or via e-mail at AAMLI51@aol.com.

AAMLI's telephone number is (410) 637-5564 and its facsimile number is (410) 602-8067.

A Good Black Man, Inc. (“AGBM, Inc.”) – **D. Anne Browne** serves as the President of AGBM, Inc. which enhances the educational experience of young African American males between the ages of 11 through 13 through computer literacy training, career awareness activities, empowerment workshops and leadership training. For further information, contact AGBM, Inc. via “snail mail” at Post Office Box 692, Randallstown, MD 21133 or via e-mail at info@agoodblackman.com. And you can visit the organization's website at www.agoodblackman.com

Gary's Homework Help Page – An award-winning homework help web site created by entrepreneur and certified management trainer Gary Johnson which provides resources for teachers and educators and thousands of pages containing information for math, geography, language, art and literature homework assignments. The address for Gary's Home Help Page website is www.homeworkhelppage.com.

National Diabetes Information Clearing House – 1 Information Way, Bethesda, MD 20982-3560. Telephone: 1-800-860-8747 or 301-654-3327. Facsimile: 301-907-8906. Its website address is www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov and its e-mail address is ndic@info.mddk.nih.gov.

National Fatherhood Initiative – 101 Lake Forest Boulevard, Suite 360, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. For general information, Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, call 1-800-790-DADS. Its office telephone number is 301-948-0599. Its facsimile number is 301-948-4325.

MASSACHUSETTS

Joslin Diabetes Center – One Joslin Place, Boston, MA 02215. Telephone: 617-732-2400. Its website address is www.joslin.harvard.edu.

Judge Baker Children's Center – **Alvin F. Poussaint, M.D.** serves as the Director of the organization's Media Center which is located at **53 Parker Hill Avenue, Boston, MA 02120**. The telephone number for the Judge Baker Children's Center is 1-800-779-8390 and its

Development Office can be reached at 1-800-779-8930 – Extension 4279. Facsimile transmissions can be sent to (617) 232-8399 and e-mails can be sent to info@jbcc.harvard.edu. Visit the organization's website at www.jbcc.harvard.edu.

NEW MEXICO

The National Hispanic/Latino Community Network – Post Office Box 2215, Espanola, NM 87532. Telephone: 505-747-1889. Facsimile: 505-747-1623.

NEW YORK

Death to Diabetes – 940 Holt Road, Suite 190, Webster, NY 14580. Email: engineer@deathtodiatetes.com, Telephone: 585-671-0577, web site addresses: www.deathtodiatetes.com, www.parwel.com. DeWayne McCulley, an ex-diabetic and the author of the acclaimed book "*Death to Diabetes*" is an African-American diabetes educator, who provides wellness training to diabetics, including African-Americans, who are twice as likely to develop diabetes.

"Fatherhood" – Nick at Nite Network: If you've been searching for a television show which the entire family can watch together, the **Nick-at-Nite Network** has what you're looking for. **"Fatherhood,"** an animated television series based on a best-selling book authored by America's Favorite Dad -- William H. Cosby, Jr., Ed.D. -- airs on **Nick-at-Nite** on **Tuesdays at 9:00 P.M. (Eastern/Pacific Time) and Saturdays at 10:00 P.M. (Eastern/Pacific Time).** **"Fatherhood"** which made its television debut on Father's Day – Sunday, 20 June 2004 – explores the challenges of parenting with a touch of humor while simultaneously providing valuable life lessons. **Alvin F. Poussaint, M.D., serves as a production consultant to the series.** Want to know more about **"Fatherhood"**? Check out **Nick-at-Nite's** website at www.tvland.com/nickatnite/schedule.

Fathers Incorporated – Mr. Kenneth Braswell serves as the Executive Director of Fathers Incorporated. Correspondence can be sent to Fathers Incorporated at its mailing address of Post Office Box 738, Latham, NY 12110. Fathers Incorporated can be contacted by telephone at (518) 542-1233 or via e-mail at info@fathersinc.org. For further information,

please visit the organization's website at www.fathersinc.org.

New York University Urology Associates – New York University School of Medicine, 150 East 32nd Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 646-825-6300.

OHIO

Healthy Fathering Collaborative of Greater Cleveland – Established in August 2001, the Healthy Fathering Collaborative of Greater Cleveland is a working group of service providers and funders providing services to low-income fathers in Greater Cleveland which meets bimonthly. The Community Endeavors Foundation provides funding for the Healthy Fathering Collaborative of Greater Cleveland which includes all community-based and faith-based organizations that serve fathers in Greater Cleveland as well as representatives of a number of City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Departments. For further information about the Healthy Fathering Collaborative of Greater Cleveland, visit the organization's website at www.neofathering.net or contact **Mr. Steve Killpack, Coordinator** for the organization via "snail mail" at Healthy Fathering Collaborative, P.O. Box 94078, Cleveland, OH 44101. You can contact the organization by telephone at 216-502-4795 or send an e-mail to: info@neofathering.net. Administrative staffing of the Healthy Fathering Collaborative is provided by the Community Endeavors Foundation.

Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families ("OPNFF") – OPNFF was founded in February 2004 and is highly regarded as the "one-stop organization" for fatherhood advocacy, information, resources and opportunities among public and private stakeholders. The mission of OPNFF is to enhance the outcomes of children, families and communities by providing training, support and strength to the professionalism of fatherhood practitioners. For further information about the Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families, visit the organization's website at www.opnff.net or send an e-mail to: info@opnff.net.

OKLAHOMA

Tulsa Area Fathers Rights Association – The organization is headed up by Gregory Romeo. Visit the organization's web site at

www.tulsafathers.org and its online discussion group at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Tulsa_Area_Fathers-Rights_Association. The organization can be reached by telephone at 918-447-3094; by facsimile at 419-710-1976; or by e-mail at TulsaFathers@aol.com

PENNSYLVANIA

BSI International, Inc. – Exclusive publisher and distributor of **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®**, a quarterly international male parenting journal which facilitates a Global Dialogue on Fatherhood. Contact BSI International, Inc. at Post Office Box 3885, Philadelphia, PA 19146-0185.

Daddy UniverseCity, Inc. – Single Father, and Fathers' Advocate **Mr. Joel Austin** serves as the organization's President. Daddy Universe City, Inc. provides information and resources to Fathers through seminars and the manufacture and distribution of "father-friendly" merchandise that includes "Daddy Bags", a sleek and hip line of diaper bags for Fathers. The organization facilitates training for Expecting Fathers, New Fathers, Existing Fathers, and "Return-to-the-Community" Fathers as it educates and instructs men and women on the importance of the male role in the lives of children. Visit the organization's website at www.daddyuniv.com. Or send an e-mail to info@daddyuniv.com.

Diabetes and Education Research Center – Franklin Medical Building, 829 Spruce Street, Suite 800, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Telephone: 215-829-3426. Facsimile: 215-829-5807. Its website address is www.diabeteseducationalandresearchcenter.org.

Frontline Dads – Mr. Reuben Jones serves as the Director of this organization which is located at the Progress Plaza Shopping Center, 1501 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122. The organization can be contacted by telephone at (215) 684-3400, by facsimile at (215) 236-9497 or by e-mail at mail@frontlinedads.org. The website address for Frontline Dads is www.frontlinedads.org.

House of Umoja, Inc. – Founded in 1968 by **Queen Mother Falaka Fattah** and her husband **Mr. David Fattah**, the House Of Umoja, Inc. is an internationally acclaimed organization which, since its founding in 1968, has provided interventions in negative behavior and improved

the quality of life for at least 3,000 urban adolescent males between the ages of 15 through 18 and a reduction in gang-related homicides. The House of Umoja, Inc. has established numerous programs including the Peace in the Hood anti-violence program; the Food of Thought Program launched to provide emergency food assistance and self-sufficiency services to neighborhood residents; and a Culinary Arts Component in cooperation with the Restaurant School which has encouraged entrepreneurial independence through catering. The House of Umoja, Inc. is located at 5625 W. Master Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131. For further information about The House of Umoja, Inc. and its programs visit the organization's website at www.houseofumoja.org or contact Queen Mother Falaka Fattah via telephone at (215) 473-5893 or via e-mail at falakafattah@aol.com.

Mayor's Office of Community Service Fatherhood Initiative Program -- Mr. Gilbert A. Coleman serves as the Director of Fatherhood Initiative Program of the Mayor's Office of Community Services in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The organization supports and challenges Fathers to become strong positive forces within their families and encourages Fathers to become role models and willing to provide the loving leadership and the spiritual guidance necessary to nurture their children. The Mayor's Office of Community Service Fatherhood Initiative Program offers a myriad of services to Fathers that include fatherhood parenting workshops, case management services, prison aftercare services, job readiness, life skills and money management training. The Mayor's Office of Community Service Fatherhood Initiative Program is located at 990 Buttonwood Street, 7th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19123-2820 and can be reached by telephone at: 215-685-9731 or by facsimile at 215-685-9757.

National Center on Fathers and Families – Dr. Vivian Gadsden is the Executive Director of the National Center on Fathers and Families which is located at the University of Pennsylvania, 3440 Market Street, Suite 450, Philadelphia, PA 19104. The organization can be reached by telephone at 215-573-5500. Visit its website at www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu.

Pennsylvania Fathers & Children's Equality – Contact **Ms. Susan Wolfing**, Chair, Bucks County Chapter at Post Office Box 1788, Bensalem, PA 19020; Telephone: (215) FACE-464. Visit the organization's website at www.paface.org.

National Comprehensive Center for Fathers – 1315 Walnut St., Suite 600, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Website: www.phillyfathers.org. **Mr. Kofi Asante** serves as the organization's Director and **MR. JAMAL C. MACK** is its Career Advisory/Job Developer.

Philadelphia Fatherhood Practitioners Network (PFPN) -- PFPN is a collective of approximately 35 organizations and agencies that provide services to fathers and male caregivers that was organized by Resources for Children's Health's Focus On Fathers Program in 1999 and meets on a bimonthly basis. Through bi-monthly meetings PFPN, among other things, exchanges and provides information about services available for men and issues affecting men, engages in collaborative projects which build services for fathers and addresses legal, employment and parenting issues, acts as an advocate on behalf of fathers concerning policy issues, legal issues and program development. For further information about the Philadelphia Fatherhood Practitioners Network and becoming a member, please contact **Mr. Sulaiman Wood** via telephone at 267-765-2324 or via e-mail at swood@phmc.org.

Raising Awareness Immediately ("RAI") –RAI is a community based, non-profit organization founded by **Mrs. Carol Bangura** which addresses social issues that affect the family. RAI provides services to parents, caregivers and the general public on parenting and child custody issues and works to minimize the "drama" that is an outgrowth of parenting and child custody issues through education, community outreach, workshops, advocacy, voter registration and telephone information. For further information about RAI, you can send a note via "snail mail" to: Raising Awareness Immediately, P.O. Box 101, Wynnewood, PA 19096. RAI can be reached by telephone at 267-972-4581 or by e-mail at: info@raisingawareness.info. You can also visit the organization's website at www.raisingawareness.info.

IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®

TEXAS

Center for Successful Fathering, Inc. – 13740 Research Boulevard, Austin, TX 78750. Telephone: 512-335-0761. Its web site address is www.fathering.org.

Faithful Fathering Initiative In Texas – Post Office Box 1702, Sugarland, TX 77487. Telephone: 281-491-DADS. E-mail messages can be sent to peprw@worldnet.att.

Fathers for Equal Rights, Inc. –1525 Elm Street, 1600 Pacific Building, Suite 870, Dallas, TX 75201. Telephone: 214-953-2233.

The Fourteen Percenter is a newsletter for noncustodial parents. The newsletter's name is derived from the fact that most noncustodial parents only see their children two days out of every fourteen – or 14%. Contact Don Mathis, Editor of **The Fourteen Percenter** at fourteenpercenter@yahoo.com or see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NCP-TX-Grayson/message/150> for a recent issue.

VIRGINIA

Diabetes Education Programs/American Diabetes Association – 1701 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA 22311. Telephone: 1-800-DIABETES; 1-800-342-2383. E-mail messages can be sent to customerservice@diabetes.org.

Great Dads – Contact **Dr. Robert Hamrin**, Founder and President of Great Dads at Post Office Box 7537, Fairfax Station, VA 22039. Telephone: 703-830-7500. Visit Great Dads' website at www.greatdads.org. E-mail messages can be sent to grtdads@aol.com.

WASHINGTON

The National Fathers Network – 16120 N.E. Eighth Street, Bellevue, WA 98008-3937. Telephone: 425-747-4004 – Extension 218. Facsimile: 425-747-1069. E-mail messages can be sent to the organization's Executive Director at jmay@fathersnetwork.org.

URAGUAY

Paternidad Asumida Por Amor ("PAPA") - Luis Franco, Av. 18 De Julio, 1006, Ap. 701, Montevideo, Uruguay. Telephone: 011 005982 901 52 48. Facsimile: 011 005892 900 70 61.

* * *

FATHERHOOD NEWS BRIEF

HOUSE OF UMOJA, INC.'S "THINK GREEN PEACE" CAMPAIGN: A GLOBAL MODEL FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND PEACE

PHILADELPHIA, PA (USA) -- In celebration of 40 years of service to the world community, the **HOUSE OF UMOJA, INC.** -- an internationally acclaimed organization which since its founding in 1968 by **QUEEN MOTHER FALAKA FATTAH** and her husband **MR. DAVID FATTAH** has provided interventions in negative behavior and improved the quality of life for at least 3,000 urban adolescent males between the ages of 15 through 18 and was the organizer and leader of the 2007 Million Father March in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania -- which energized the public school system of the nation's sixth largest city, rekindled community spirit, and moved Fathers to reshape and redefine their parental roles and responsibilities --, has created the "*Think Green Peace Campaign*" which is being heralded as a model for self-sufficiency and peace that can be replicated in communities throughout our global village.

On Friday, 25 July 2008, at a press conference held in the Mayor's Reception Room in City Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Queen Mother Falaka Fattah and Mr. Hakim Starkey, a House of Umoja, Inc. staff member launched the "*Think Green Peace*" Campaign in the City of Philadelphia and discussed its multi-tiered components.

One of the components of the "*Think Green Peace*" Campaign, the First Philadelphia Collard Greens and Cultural Festival, for which Mr. Starkey served as its Coordinator, was held by the House Of Umoja, Inc. on Saturday, 26 July 2008 included a *Healing Ceremony* in *The Peace Garden* which was once a vacant lot that, through the collaborative work of children, youth and Elders in the community, now yields flowers and vegetables grown in the shape of the peace symbol. In the center of *The Peace Garden*, a hole exists and that is where grievances or "beefs" which were written on biodegradable napkins by community members were deposited.

And what is that all about?

"I want everyone to 'bury their beefs,' let go, and begin the healing process. The significance of *The Peace Garden* and the "*Think Green Peace Campaign*" is three-fold. First, is the healing and the process of letting go of harbored grievances against neighbors, friends, and/or family. Next, is the revitalization of a neighborhood through a community effort that bridges the generational divide between the youth and the elder citizens of a community. Third, is the promotion of urban farming and awareness of health and the environment. The lots would be used to grow collard greens, other vegetables and flowers. This will not only promote good health, but good financial management as the families would save money by growing their own vegetables and promote cultural understanding of collard greens which were a staple of enslaved African Americans' diets. Through our "*Think Green Peace Campaign*", a coalition has emerged consisting of our youth, the business community, social entrepreneurs, religious institutions, legislators, and grassroots community organizations that is working to beautify the communities in which we live and work, save our environment, and create options for self-sufficiency," Queen Mother Falaka Fattah stated.

For further information about the House of Umoja, Inc's "*Think Green Peace*" Campaign and the programs and services it offers, please visit the organization's website at www.houseofumoja.org.

To find out how you can become involved in the House of Umoja, Inc.'s "Think Green Peace" Campaign, contact Queen Mother Falaka Fattah by telephone at (215) 473-5893 or send an e-mail to: falakafattah@aol.com.

AKAMAI UNIVERSITY OFFERS INCARCERATED FATHERS ONLINE PARENTING EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING PROGRAM

HILO, HAWAII (USA) -- DOUGLASS CAPOGROSSI, PH.D., the *President* of **AKAMAI UNIVERSITY** recently announced that the academic institution has created an *Online Parenting Effectiveness Training Program for Incarcerated Fathers*. The Online Parenting Effectiveness Training Program For Incarcerated Fathers created and offered by Akamai University is viewed as a groundbreaking curriculum and a model for parenting education programs for Incarcerated Fathers worldwide. Akamai University (<http://www.akamaiuniversity.us>) also offers one of the most uniquely comprehensive Fatherhood and Men's Studies Program in academia.

"Our efforts to create an online multimedia and interactive course for inmate fathers has become a reality. After a full year of background research and development, we have experienced success at transforming portions of the successful classroom-based program for online delivery. The course will provide inmate fathers with information, abilities and attitudes important in building effective parenting skills for successful family life and enjoyment of fatherhood. Topics for this initial online course will emphasize the knowledge, actions and characteristics of the successful parent and encourage more active parenting from prison and thereafter. Participants are involved in activities that prepare their attitudes and strengthen their character to improve the likelihood for success as a parent. Instruction includes lecture by audio presentations, videos, assigned web readings, worksheets, journal writing, online class discussion forums, and individualized presentations by participants. Following each class session, participants complete journal entries related to the class activities and exchange confidential dialogue with the instructor," Dr. Capogrossi explained when reached for comment.

So, what does Akamai University's innovative parenting education program for Incarcerated Fathers offer?

Here a few notes taken from lesson introductions:

"WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL PARENT AND HOW CAN I BECOME ONE?"

We are not naturally born parents. Most of us just seem to fall into the role, sometimes by "accident". Learning to be a successful parent is a difficult matter that takes a continuing lifelong commitment and well thought out actions. Parents must understand that as adults we have both effective and ineffective character traits, some adding to our success and some leading to failures. We also have habits and behaviors that can help or harm our children -- physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It is our task as parents to unlearn bad habits from our younger years and make the needed changes toward effective parenting. We also need to recognize the fact that parents cannot raise their children in isolation. Parents should seek support and accept help and advisement in raising their children.

"THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION"

Nothing can be more helpful to children (or more damaging) than the words of their parents. Think back to your own childhood for a moment. Do you remember times when you were publicly embarrassed or ridiculed by an adult close to you? If you are anything like me, you can remember times when an adult's words harmed you. How did it make you feel at the time? Imagine a childhood filled with those types of episodes. What kind of adult would emerge from such maltreatment as a child?

“HELPING YOUR CHILD BUILD A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE WITH EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE”

Our kids may seem well adjusted within the safety of our home and family life, but they face many threats from their peer group and difficulties within the school and neighborhood environment. It is best to send them out into the world with a positive self-image and strong self-esteem. Your children’s emotional health is directly related to their happiness and social success, and their security. Their emotional well-being will have vital and long-lasting effects on all aspects of their lives. It is vital to their later success in the world-of-work, their family lives, and for most other endeavors throughout their lives. It also impacts your long term happiness as a parent.

“SUCCESSFULLY CHANGING YOUR CHILD’S BEHAVIOR”

Controlling our child’s behavior is an important part of parenting. As we try to change their negative behaviors, some children are disciplined and as a result fall into a state of poor self-image and low self-esteem. Those feeling abused often do poorly in school, have fewer friends, and are more at risk of becoming involved in drugs, rebellious behaviors and criminal activities. Let’s all try to use a firm, but fair and friendly style of discipline, using rewards and praise as the fundamental way to influence our kids.

“HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED AT SCHOOL“

Success at school is one element of your child’s upbringing that will absolutely impact upon their family, financial, and social success as an adult. How far they are able to progress in a career and their level of happiness in the world-of-work is in large part determined by their school experiences. As an adult, their happiness in many areas of adult life will be directly affected by how well they do in their early years at school. Your effectiveness as a parent can be a determining factor to your child’s success in school.

For further information about Akamai University’s *Online Parenting Effectiveness Training Program for Incarcerated Fathers*, contact: Douglass Capogrossi, Ph.D., President, Akamai University, 193 Kino`ole Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720 USA, Telephone: (808) 934-8793, Facsimile: (808) 443-0445, E-MAIL: dcapogrossi@akamaiuniversity.us.

* * *



ASSISTED LOVING: TRUE TALES OF DOUBLE DATING WITH MY DAD

AUTHOR: BOB MORRIS

WEBSITE: WWW.ASSISTEDLOVING.COM

PUBLISHER: HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS (WWW.HARPERCOLLINS.COM)

ISBN: 978-0-06-137412-8

He is an author, a frequent contributor to the *New York Times*’ Sunday *Styles* section where his *Age Of Dissonance* column was featured for eight years, a commentator on National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered*, a playwright, and an author of two picture books. His columns have also graced the pages of *The New Yorker*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. He is **BOB MORRIS**. Morris also happens to be a playwright who was recently tapped by HBO to create scripts set in New York for development as a series for airing Through ***Assisted Loving: True Tales Of Double Dating With*** IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®

My Dad, Morris creates a masterfully crafted Father-and-Son tale that is chock full of irreverent humor and unflinching honesty. Morris' father, a widower and retired judge, decides to re-enter the world of dating and asks for his son's assistance. Initially reluctant, Morris dons the mantle of "Cupid" and goes about the business of managing his Father's "Affairs Of The Heart". In the process, the bond between Father and Son deepens.

Assisted Loving: True Tales Of Double Dating With My Dad does more than engage the reader in a voyeuristic romp with an octogenarian who searches for love with the help of his Baby Boomer son. In a society which, for the most part is youth-oriented and has a penchant for discarding and shunning its elderly, Morris, through **Assisted Living: True Tales Of Double Dating With My Dad** reminds us that the 60-somethings, 70-somethings, 80-somethings and 90-somethings throughout our global village are vibrant, astute and virile. Love is possible whether you're 60, 70, 80, 90 or 100!. One's age is merely a number.

And, what does age have to do with it, anyway?

**HICKEYS, HICCUPS & HOMEWORK™: A TEENAGE GIRL'S GUIDE --
LIVING AND LOVING**

AUTHOR: KEYSHA WHITAKER

WEBSITE: WWW.HICCUPSANDHOMEWORK.COM

PUBLISHER: PUBLISH AMERICA (WWW.PUBLISHAMERICA.COM)

ISBN: 1-4241-8587-4

Our daughters.

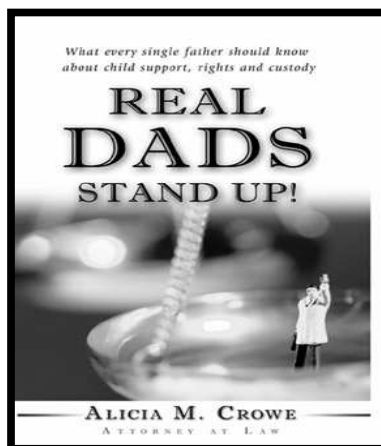
What do they think about ... dream about ... and worry about? When they look at themselves in the mirror, what image do they see staring back at them? Are they stressed out about homework assignments, getting good grades, fitting in with friends at school, trying out for sports or the school play, studying for their SATs, or being accepted into a top college or university after graduating from high school? What questions do they have about their future . . . about dating . . . about falling in love?

If you are a Father or Mother of a daughter who is either a pre-teen or a teenager, *Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living And Loving* will help you help your daughter understand and validate her emotions. And if you are a young woman who is a teenager or has just become a teenager, *Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living And Loving* will help you understand why your life seems to be just one big emotional rollercoaster ride.

Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living And Loving is the first in a series of books for pre-teen and teenaged young women created by award-winning journalist, author, public speaker and entrepreneur Ms. Keysha Whitaker. Through poetry, Ms. Whitaker delves into the hearts and souls of young women who are pre-teens and teenagers and assures them that as they embark upon the journey from childhood to womanhood, it is normal to experience a plethora of worries, fears and emotions. Ms. Whitaker also provides pre-teen and teenaged young women with a journal that accompanies her book which provides them with an opportunity to express their emotions, fears and worries through the written word.

Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide – Living And Loving is a masterfully crafted boundary-transcending literary work which is recommended reading for parents, educators and young women throughout our global village.

* * *



REAL DADS STAND UP!

AUTHOR: ALICIA M. CROWE, ESQUIRE

ISBN 0-9744772-0

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WEBSITE: WWW.REALDADSSTANDUP.COM

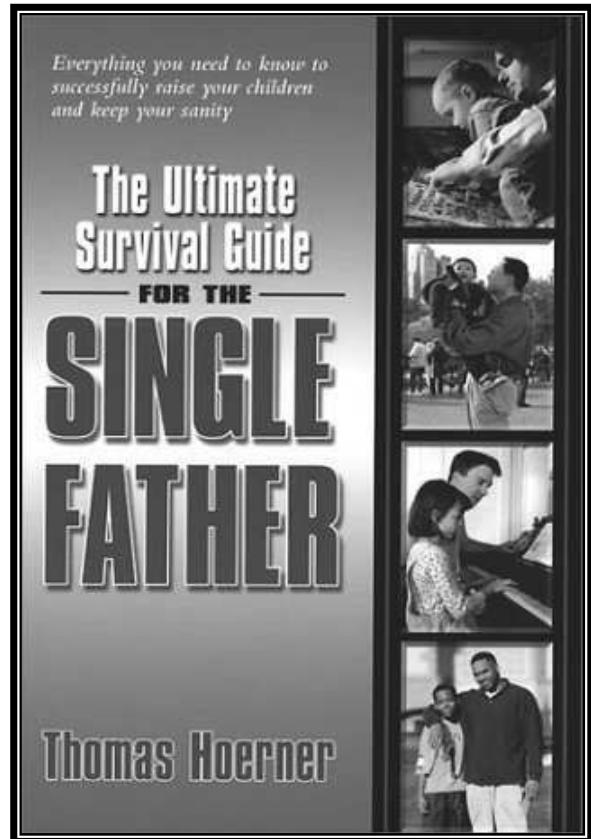
**IF YOU ARE A “DIVORCED” DAD, “NON-CUSTODIAL” DAD,
OR A
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WHO IS FACED WITH NAVIGATING THE LEGAL SYSTEM
IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN AN ACTIVE ROLE
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CHILD SUPPORT, CHILD CUSTODY
AND
YOUR RIGHTS AS A FATHER!**

**ARE YOU A SINGLE
FATHER?**

**IS WORKING FULL-TIME,
RUNNING A HOUSEHOLD
AND RAISING CHILDREN,
SOMEWHAT OF A CHALLENGE?**



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AUTHOR KEYSHA WHITAKER WEIGHS IN ON WHAT'S GOING ON WITH OUR DAUGHTERS

BY: D.A. SEARS

Keysha Whitaker is a multi-talented young woman who holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology. I wanted to know more about the young woman who is telling us what is going on with our daughters in her book *Hickeys, Hiccups & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide –Living and Loving* – the first in a series of books that deal with the issues facing pre-teen and teenage girls. Through her groundbreaking book, Whitaker is giving Fathers and Mothers the 4-1-1 on what our daughters think and feel and their perception of the world outside of their immediate environment and their place in it. In addition to being an author, poet, entrepreneur, and a former morning show personality on New York City's HOT 97 FM Radio, Whitaker is a member of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

Where did Ms. Whitaker grow up? Where was she educated?

"I grew up in Bridgeport, Connecticut. I was educated at Catholic schools my entire life - from grammar school through college. I think private schools can be beneficial to a child's potential success, especially in urban areas. In many of today's public school systems teacher burnout and desensitization to the needs of students, especially urban students, is a common and unfortunate reality. In private schools – where it's 'pay to play' – teachers are held to a higher level of accountability, which is passed on to students in the classroom," Ms. Whitaker responded.

I asked Ms. Whitaker to talk about the role models she had as she made the journey from childhood to adulthood.

"Honestly, I didn't have a 'role model' as a child. There isn't a singular person that I emulated for any significant amount of time. Probably because my interests changed -- and still do -- just as fast as my underwear – from taking the piano in third grade, to the flute in

fourth grade, to the trumpet in fifth grade, then back to the piano in sixth grade. Imagine me trying to model Elton John one year, flutist Julius Baker the next, then Miles Davis, then Elton! If I had to choose, I'd say creative expression in a multitude of forms was and continues to be my muse," she remarked.

So, who or what inspires her?

"People definitely inspire me. I am always intrigued by someone's life story. How did they get to be where they are? Where are they going next? If I find someone or something intriguing, I'm inspired to share that with people through my writing."

The discussion moved to *Living and Loving*, the first book in the *Hickeys, Hiccups, & Homework™: A Teenage Girl's Guide* series. What motivated her to write it?

"The book actually wrote itself. I started writing poetry in high school because of the new feelings I began to experience. Each time something would happen that would perplex or upset me -- which was most of the time--, I wrote a poem. The first poem in the book, CRUSHED, is actually the first poem that I wrote in high school. It was my freshman year and this dumb girl at my lunch table, who was in my crew of new friends, told my crush I liked him. *Flashback! Excuse me!* The experiences kept happening and the poetry kept coming until I was about 18 or 19. I kept all my high school poems in journals. In the beginning of 2007, I was flipping through my old journals and got the idea to put them together in a book for teenage girls. I thought, 'If I felt like this, I know girls today feel the same way.' I decided the book would be the first in a series to help girls deal with the experience of being a teen and let them know they are not alone."

What's going on with our daughters at school and at home that makes a book series such as Whitaker's necessary?

“What I’ve seen since I’ve been working with youth -- I did career counseling at an urban high school, and was a summer camp director -- is that at school teens are getting the truth -- or lack thereof -- as told by their peers, no holds barred. At home teens are getting the truth as told by their parents, which is most likely one-sided in parental love in an effort to keep their daughters as innocent for as long as possible. Between peers and parents, teen girls are left with a disconnect. *Hickeys, Hiccups, & Homework™* bridges the gap for teen girls by pinpointing common emotions girls experience and encourages teens to identify and work through their feelings by writing.”

Is being a teenager stressful? Why?

“Yes, I definitely think it can be. Being a teen is stressful because you’re trying to establish your independence, figure out who you are, who you want to be, or who you think society wants you to be. On top of all that, your body is going through hormonal changes that make you stinky, cranky, horny and hungry. For someone who was just watching Saturday morning cartoons the year before, yeah it’s stressful.”

What are some of the issues – for example, academic achievement, peer pressure, self-esteem, etc. -- that our pre-teen and teenaged daughters find themselves grappling with? How do these issues differ from the issues that pre-teen girls and teenaged girls grappled with 20, 30, or even 40 years ago?

“For the most part, I think that teens are grappling with the same issues that their parents and grandparents faced – academic achievement, peer pressure, self-esteem, dating and sexuality – except the pressure is more intense today. As a society, we have advanced socially, politically, and technologically. There are greater opportunities that were not available to previous generations. Greater opportunities mean increased pressure to make greater decisions. Increased pressure means more stress for teens who might then feel forced to turn to negative behaviors, such as drugs or alcohol, to cope. For example, forty years ago, higher educational opportunities for women were slim to none. The pressures of academic achievement were only relative to the limited range of socially accepted careers for women at

the time. Today, that’s not the case. College and beyond is very much an option for women, as well as many career fields that were once restricted to males.”

How does fatherlessness and the lack of a dominant male presence in the lives of pre-teen and teenaged girls affect their self-esteem, academic achievement, and whether or not they succumb to peer pressure?

“I believe there is a direct correlation between the presence of a father in the lives of pre-teen and teenaged girls and the dynamics of an intimate relationship she chooses to pursue. Though there are exceptions to this theory, I think for the most part, women who grow up without fathers fall into two categories. The first category of women find it hard to emotionally expose themselves enough in order to make a substantial connection in an intimate relationship; while the second are ‘chronic emotional flashers’ -- - showing their private emotions to any man that walks by, in hopes of making a lasting connection. In regards to self-esteem, academic achievement, and peer pressure, I think there are a variety of other factors that play a significant role. I was very successful academically and didn’t grow up with my father in the household.”

What messages are you conveying to pre-teen girls, teenaged girls and their parents through *Hickeys, Hiccups, & Homework™*?

“The main message of *Hickeys, Hiccups, & Homework™* is that being a teenager doesn’t change. The same feelings pre-teens and teens experience today, are the same feelings their parents felt, and are the same feelings their grandparents felt. Pre-teens and teens should realize they are not alone in their struggles. Parents should use the poems as points of reference to open a dialogue with their pre-teen or teen. They might be surprised to find that they are not as far removed from their daughter’s pre-teen or teen life as she might lead them to believe”.

What’s next for Ms. Whitaker ?

“What isn’t? ” Ms. Whitaker responded with a smile.

* * *

CHILDREN'S CORNER

What do our children see when they look at the world outside of their immediate environment?

Do our children see a place for themselves in that world?

What thoughts and images dance around in our children's minds when they think about the future – their future?

While we cannot speak for every child in our global village, we can tell you that one very creative, intelligent and talented young lady – **Ms. NICOLE S. DANTZLER** – is looking into the future – her future – and has decided that she wants to be a journalist and publisher when she becomes an adult. Ms. Dantzler, who is a **Contributing Editor** to **CHILDREN'S CORNER** and a **Publishing/Journalism Intern** for **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®'s International Fatherhood And Men's Issues Internship Program**, takes us on a journey into her world.

... Welcome to

NIKKI'S PLACE

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

Nice silky hair with stranded colorful beads,
the darkest brownish hair on 126 Mulberry Street.
I twirl in the wind with my bright sundress,
my hair flying against the breeze up high.
The large smile on my face,
the sun blinding my eyes,
I rise into the air trying to touch the sky.
Then I play hopscotch on the sidewalk.
My friends meet up with me,
and walk around the rest of the block.

My sandals *click-clack* against the rough cement.
Admiring the attractive rhinestones that outline it.
My glossy brown skin that glistens under the sun.
Because my attitude and image and talent mix into one.
The dust and dirt of the earth,
The moon and stars in the sky.
The birds and trees,
And the sun and clouds are all created by one God.
The one and only God that created the heavens and earth.
The only one that promises to never forsake me.
And I, this beautiful girl am created in His image.

* * *

GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS

PAUL M. CLEMENTS is the architect of the **GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS** and a Senior Contributing Editor to **IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®**. Mr. Clements is the Founder and President of *Dads Against Divorce Discrimination* (www.DADDNH.org). He first presented the idea of this nation's and the State of New Hampshire's first Commission On The Status Of Men to the New Hampshire Chapter of the National Congress for Fathers and Children and assisted in lobbying efforts which led to its establishment in 2003. Clements holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from Colorado State University (Pueblo) and a Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Guidance from Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. A member of the American Coalition For Fathers And Children; Children's Rights Council; and Coalition For The Preservation Of Fatherhood, Clements has been a Fathers' Rights activist for over approximately 20 years.

What is the **GLOBAL FORUM ON THE FATHERHOOD CRISIS** all about? It is about exploring and identifying the causes of the Fatherhood Crisis and creating and implementing key "pieces of the puzzle" to resolve it. It is about our children . . . our future . . . our bridge to the future and moving Fathers, who are the chief architects of that bridge to the future, back into the parenting equation.

And what are the causes of the Fatherhood Crisis? **PAUL M. CLEMENTS** pulls no punches as he shares his views on why a Fatherhood Crisis exists in the article that follows.

MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL

BY: **PAUL M. CLEMENTS**

[PUBLISHED WITH AUTHOR'S PERMISSION]

Money is the root of all evil, and no one knows this better than a divorced father. When a father is summoned to the divorce court, he quickly learns that money is all his wife and the court are interested in. There's another applicable old saying: "You get what you pay for." Because of changes in the divorce laws, such as the application of "no-fault" divorce, which makes a divorce easy to obtain, and government incentives to do so, our divorce rate has skyrocketed. Fueled by feminist angst against men in general, our government has instituted laws which make divorce attractive for women. For that reason, 88% of all divorces are filed by the wife. Although men are often blamed for abandoning their families, the truth is, they are the most reluctant of the couple to dissolve the marriage. This has always been true, but now, due to the profits to be made, men are being driven out of their children's lives at an astonishing rate.

In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 93-647, the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 451,

Title 4-D. This law authorized incentive monies to be paid to the states for collecting child support in AFDC cases. The rate was set originally at 10%–25% of all that could be collected, and mandated assignment of support rights to the states in all AFDC cases. This was the first shot in the War Against Fathers. It meant that if your wife filed for divorce, and applied for welfare, you would be ordered to pay child support. The reasoning was that the welfare rates were too high, and the taxpayers should be relieved from the burden of supporting those children of divorce. Because many judges were addled by archaic thinking, it was reasoned that the mother should have custody of the children, and it would be incumbent upon the father to support them. No fault on his part need be noted. The mother wanted out of the marriage, either because the father failed to make her happy, or because the family fell on hard times, and needed welfare to survive. All government welfare programs, most notably AFDC, required the absence of the family wage earner; almost always the father. So, the divorce court sent the father packing, and

provided welfare relief to the mother and children. To recover the cost, states were authorized to levy a tax on the father's income. Some wags soon began to label this the *DDT*, or *Divorced Daddy Tax*. From the beginning, child support had little to do with the actual cost of raising a child. It was intended to reduce the number of welfare cases, and reduce the burden on taxpayers. In actual fact, the welfare rolls of most states were not reduced more than three percent. Because the cost had shifted to the fathers, the welfare plans expanded the benefits to the divorced mother. Divorce had become even more attractive for mothers, for whom government had become a substitute husband and surrogate father.

In 1977, Congress passed PL 95-142, which provided incentives for reciprocal enforcement and collection of child support orders. This meant that each state was bound to uphold the support orders of all other states. A mother could now take the children and move to another state, and expect that state to assist her in enforcing the orders of the state where the divorce took place. What harsher punishment could a vindictive ex-wife inflict on the father, than to take his children to another state, making it difficult or impossible for him to maintain a relationship with them? Judges, unmindful of the host of research studies which showed that the father was an important asset to children, made moving away easy. They had become agents of the state, more interested in securing those child support payments, and the federal incentives that accrued to the state because of them, than in the best interests of the child.

In 1980, Congress passed PL 96-265, which provided, among other things, 90% reimbursement to the states for computer hardware, software, and operators. This was intended to make child support collections high tech and more efficient. Most onerously, this law also provided matching funds for court related collection expenses. In many, if not most states, an existing agency, such as the Department of Revenue (DOR) in Massachusetts, was charged with child support collections. This allowed the state to upgrade the administration of the agency by computerizing their systems. Computers could do double duty, assisting the original agency, while still being used to compile data for the child support collection department. It resulted in a tremendous savings for the states. Of

course, computerization of the child support collection system suffered the same fate as in other bureaucratic functions. There is an old saying in the world of computers: "Garbage in, garbage out". Computers don't think. Errors were rampant, some simple typos, others miscalculations of support amounts. Some experts admitted that the child support agencies were plagued by error rates of 20% or more. Fathers found that correcting those errors was a nightmare. Bureaucrats are not known to be terribly industrious, and can be downright callous.

The worst part of this bill was the provision of matching funds for courts involved in child support collections. State courts were now eligible for federal reimbursement for hearing child support cases. Up until this time, the operating expenses of the courts were a budgetary function of the legislatures. With payments from the federal government, the courts could expand their incomes at will. In documents obtained under the Freedom of Information laws, it was discovered in New Hampshire that marital masters were claiming excessive amounts of time spent on support cases. One such case showed the Master claiming that eight out of 17 cases comprised 95% of her work day, 2 out of ten cases = 50%, six out of 15 = 50%, three out of 14 cases amounted to 60% of her work day, and six out of twenty cases = 60%. This was just one marital master, in one month, in one state. The inflation of the figures is questionable, at least. At that rate, the federal incentives for that one master would add up to \$31,000 per year. Multiply that by the total number of Masters involved, and it makes for a neat little addition to the court's budget. In point of fact, the tiny state of New Hampshire is currently reaping over \$2.5 million a year in federal reimbursements to the courts. In Massachusetts, the payoff to the courts for hearing child support cases has risen to well over \$3.6 million a year. Worse yet, it is suspected that, in several states at least, that reimbursement money is not being directed to deferring court costs, but rather, is being diverted into secret slush funds or retirement funds for the judges and Masters. That creates a huge incentive for courts to place burdensome support obligations on fathers, thereby guaranteeing increased litigation. To maintain those burdensome, often unfair, obligations, courts frequently resort to violating the laws and constitutions they are sworn to uphold. For

fathers in our divorce courts, the denial of due process has become an expected routine. To offset any complaints about the propriety of the federal government making payments to the state courts, all the monies paid first go to the child support collection agency, who THEN pay the courts for their involvement. That, of course, creates a symbiotic relationship between the courts and the support collection agency, and insures the courts' cooperation with the agency. As a result, courts can be expected to turn a blind eye to the injustices in the collection system, and the fraudulent practices of the agency. The increase in re-litigation, as fathers attempt to right the wrongs being done to them, simply results in higher payments to the court, seldom, if ever, in an increase in justice for the father.

In 1980, Congress made the incentive program permanent, and extended it to ALL support collections, both AFDC and non-AFDC, as well as interstate collections. This was PL 96-272. Apparently, the Congress felt that not enough money was being collected, so this bill extended support collection efforts to the middle class, which, historically, was not dependent on government welfare programs. Welfare-recipient families are typically low income, with fathers who are locked into low paying jobs, and are frequently unemployed. Opening up collection incentives to the middle classes, where the wage earner was typically highly skilled or professional, meant that support obligations would be based on higher incomes, thereby producing higher support awards. Note that support awards were based on the income of the father, not on the actual cost of raising a child. In support of the feminist agenda, child support had suddenly morphed into a form of disguised alimony. The openly stated justification for this move was to insure that the child would continue in the lifestyle to which he or she had become accustomed. Of course, the money was paid to the mother, not the child, and there were no obligations to force the mother to account for how the money was spent. The support payments were calculated from the father's GROSS income, before taxes and expenses, but were not considered as taxable income for the mother. Neither was the lifestyle of the father considered. Courts typically accepted without question the published statements of author Lenore Weitzman, who claimed that mothers' income dropped by 73% following divorce, while fathers' incomes ROSE

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by 47%. Weitzman was eventually forced to admit that her statements were based on falsified data, that those figures were actually REVERSED, but not until seven years after her initial publication. During that interval, those figures were widely broadcast, and became "common knowledge", providing an excuse for courts and legislatures to increase the burden on non-custodial fathers. Even now, that now-debunked "common knowledge" still forms the rationale for the oppressive child support collection awards of the courts.

Congress, not satisfied with the amounts of money being raised for welfare recipients, in 1981, enacted PL 97-35, which authorized the inclusion of SPOUSAL support in the incentive scheme. Now, fathers were to be burdened with alimony in addition to child support, and the states would be able to increase their collections, and subsequent federal incentive payments. For divorced fathers, this solidified their belief that the courts were biased in favor of women. As it increased the living standard for mothers, it dramatically LOWERED the living standard for fathers. The law also authorized the states to impose "collection fees" on fathers. Not content with taking (on average) 35% -40% of their income, the states would now be able to impose an 18%-24% surcharge on support obligations in the form of "fees", "interest", and "penalties". Moreover, this law provided that support amounts would be protected from bankruptcy. In the event that the father became unemployed, incapacitated, or incarcerated, the support obligation would continue to accrue to the point where his social security retirement would be reduced to pay the debt. In Massachusetts, the Supreme Court, in its vigor to increase collections, ruled that support obligations would continue AFTER DEATH, to be paid by heirs from the estate of the deceased father. In the majority of cases, those added on "fees, interest, and penalties" had the effect of multiplying the father's arrearages dramatically. A study of "Deadbeat Dad" wanted posters in New Hampshire showed that the majority of fathers pilloried on the posters were being dunned for many times more than the actual arrearage. Arrearages were often inflated to five, ten, fifteen, or twenty TIMES the actual arrearage. Of course, those added fees accrued to the state, not the children, giving the states even more incentive to separate fathers from their children. Lastly, this law authorized states to

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withhold child support from unemployment benefits. Now, every one who has ever been laid off from their job knows that unemployment benefits are not sufficient to maintain a basic level of subsistence. So the disregard for the father's welfare becomes even more apparent. Karl Marx's "Transfer of Wealth" scheme has been converted from, "to the poor according to their need, from the rich according to their means", into, "to the women, regardless of need, from the men, regardless of means."

Public Law 97-248, in 1982, raised the profits to the state by increasing the reimbursement for collection costs to 70%. As seen, our courts are not loathe to fudge the costs in order to raise their incomes. Furthermore, this law authorizes reimbursements to the state for one month of AFDC welfare for INELIGIBLE families. This simply expands the welfare rolls, and consequently, the incentive payments states receive from the federal government. So much for the claim that child support was intended to REDUCE the welfare rolls.

In 1984, Congress passed a bill which was to become the backbone of the child support extortion racket. By means of PL 98-378, collection incentives were set at a variable rate of from 6 to 10 percent, depending on efficiency. That means that the more vigorous the state became in hounding fathers, the more money the state could collect from the federal government. Those incentive payments were offered to the states in spite of laws which made wage assignment mandatory. Child support is deducted from the fathers' wages automatically, and 70% of all collections are made without further expense to the state. Nevertheless, this provision has since been enhanced to include the stipulation that, in order to maintain the rate of payments, the state must DEMONSTRATE increased efforts to collect. That provision has resulted in horrible abuses of legal authority; wholesale denial of due process rights, outrageous legal decisions that defy all logic, and flagrant disregard for state law and the state and federal constitutions. Those incentive rates have proven a windfall to the several states, providing an income of \$17 million per year to the small state of New Hampshire, and over \$600 million to the much more populous state of Texas. To add to the taxpayers woes, those incentive payments were authorized to BOTH states involved in an interstate collection. Not

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only were both states offered equal collection incentive payments, but grants for interstate collection programs would now be offered. This double-dipping, of course, added to the burden of taxpayers. To add insult to injury, the Congress, by this law, authorized self-reimbursement of AFDC costs, in addition to the federal incentives already being paid, by the levy of fees against NON-AFDC payors. In other words, divorced dads who were supporting their own children, keeping them off the welfare rolls, were now being forced to subsidize welfare recipient mothers who did not have a father to hang a child support order on. And the War Against Fathers goes on! This law also authorized MEDICAL support awards against fathers, and also the extension of Medicaid payments beyond AFDC eligibility. The extension of Medicaid payments to divorced, but non-welfare eligible mothers, meant that the state could seek reimbursement from the father for benefits given to the mother. This had the effect of multiplying the amounts owed by the father, and, of course, the federal incentives paid to the state. Logically enough, the plethora of costs offset to the father made compliance difficult if not impossible. Many fathers were reduced to destitution and homelessness, but there are dreadfully few welfare programs for which fathers will qualify. Although shelters for women abound, the typical shelter for a homeless father is the county jail, which of course, is also subsidized by the child support collection agency. Arrears mounted, and in many cases rightfully appeared to be uncollectible. As a result, the federal government is now providing incentive payments to the states based on the amounts of uncollectible arrears. It's a win-win situation for the states. They get paid for collecting, and they get paid for NOT collecting. States are beginning to see that it can be more profitable to allow arrearages to accumulate, than to expend the funds for collection efforts. And the taxpayer gets the bill again.

Because the child support collection system has become so discriminatory, unfair, and oppressive, many fathers are questioning their paternity. In a good many cases, the mother isn't sure who the father is. Simple blood tests often prove inconclusive, and forestall the imposition of a child support order. To increase the number of support orders issued, most states have resorted to DNA testing to prove paternity. As a further

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inducement to the states, Congress passed PL 100-485 in 1988. This law provides 90% reimbursement to the states for DNA testing of potential child support debtors, further reducing the cost to the states, and insuring an indefensible order for support. It should be noted that fully 30% of men so tested have been found NOT to be the natural father. That fact, of course, holds little weight in our family courts. Most states have set time limits for contesting paternity, and will often hold a non-father liable for support payments in spite of DNA test results. The rationale is that the child has come to recognize the man accused as his father, and the father had previously acknowledged paternity by living with, and caring for, the child. Never mind that the mother did not admit her infidelity until after the time limitation had passed. Establishment of that support order, it seems, is more important to the court than the establishment of true paternity. Along with the 90% reimbursement for testing, the law also provides for another 90% reimbursement for computerized monitoring systems. Federal tax payers foot the bill for that, too.

Public Law 101-508 provides for IRS interception of tax refunds to fulfill support obligations. Originally, this applied only to obligations which were owed to the state; the interest, fees, and penalties levied by the state, and reimbursements for welfare given to the mother. It has since been expanded to include routine child support, and, more recently tax refunds being paid out to shore up the nation's economy.

Finally, to leave no doubt that the child support extortion racket is a FEDERALLY sponsored process, CSRA – 1992, provides for federal prosecution for failure to pay child support. Odd, isn't it, that when a father files suit in federal court alleging bias and corruption in the state's child support system, he's told that child support is a matter for state courts, and the federal court has no jurisdiction. But when his alleged arrears pass a certain dollar amount (\$5000?) he's subject to a felony non-support charge in federal court.

MINISTER RONALD E. SMITH is a religious leader, author, the Founder and President of *Children Need Both Parents, Inc.* (www.cnbpinc.org), one of the most proactive Fatherhood organizations in the United States which is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a Father. Minister Smith and his son **ARIEL D. SMITH** have co-authored a powerful book, *'Cheated: The Story Of A Father Who Would Not Give Up On His Children – A Documented Account Of Parental Alienation Syndrome*, which is a gripping exploration of parental alienation and is being hailed as a "must read" for Fatherhood advocates, activists

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As one reads the above, it should be noted that the federal government is paying out more in incentive payments than is being collected. Those incentive payments have to come from somewhere, and that somewhere is the pockets and earnings of taxpayers. Congress has no earning capacity of its own, and must rely on the earnings of citizens for its operational budget, and its largesse. So, although the taxpayers of individual states are made to think they are being gifted by the federal government with all those child support incentives, the money eventually comes from the federal taxes they pay. Granted, the states are conducting their child support collection programs at a profit-making pace. The federal incentives noted above, added to by known abuses of the system, far outweigh the state's expenditures. It is a lucrative scheme, and difficult for politicians and state government officials to give up. However, the hidden costs, such as providing alcohol and drug abuse programs, mental health counseling, medical care for unwed teen mothers, police services, and juvenile justice services and incarceration for those fatherless children of divorce are an offsetting expense. Add to that the unknown cost to society from the loss of productivity of children who drop out of school, or from fathers made homeless by the War Against Fathers.

Although the federal government has, of late, been paying lip-service to the importance of fathers, with fatherhood programs and agencies like the National Fatherhood Initiative ("NFI"), they continue to ignore their role in the creation of a fatherhood crisis. The NFI has alluded to the social ills created by fatherless children, and the ONE HUNDRED BILLION dollar cost to society of those children. But, until Congress learns to stop separating fathers from their children in order to separate them from their money, until the members of Congress stop pandering to special interests by providing incentives for divorce, those social ills and their associated costs, in money as well as detriment to society, will continue unabated.* * *

and practitioners. Minister Smith's tireless advocacy for Fathers is one of the reasons he is viewed as one of the key players in the Fatherhood Movement. On 4 January 2007, Minister Smith was one of the organizers of the highly successful National Fatherhood Summit in Grand Rapids, Michigan which attracted media attention as a result of his being interviewed on Michigan's WZZM-TV/Channel 13. And months later, on 18-19 August 2007, Minister Smith spearheaded the highly successful Family Preservation Rally which occurred in Washington, D.C. – an event that attracted Fathers, Fathers' Rights advocates, Fatherhood Practitioners, and families from virtually every state in the Union and featured an array of speakers that included nationally and internationally acclaimed Fathers' Rights advocates such as former *NFL star Tim McKyer who during his career played for 3 Super Bowl football teams*; *James Severad, Chairman of DADS of Michigan*; *Stephen Baskerville, Ph.D., the former President of the Washington, D.C.-based American Coalition of Fathers and Children*; and *Minister Carnell Smith, the Founder of Paternity Fraud.com*.

In the article which follows, Minister Smith explores the multi-tiered complexities of the Fatherhood Crisis in the African-American community.

AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHERHOOD AND MARRIAGE

By: *MINISTER Ronald E. Smith*

[PUBLISHED WITH AUTHOR'S PERMISSION]

While the epitome of the American thought pattern as it relates to the African American male role and his own view of fatherhood and marriage is disdain, ambivalence and a refusal to accept responsibility, we make these assumptions based on our inability to comprehend that the roles that most African American males are now taking were relegated and structured through policy and procedure enacted by a profit driven government with total disregard for the long term affect.

African American males are depicted as shuffling criminals dodging responsibility having a need for governmental intervention to assist them to do what they are supposed to do to be considered a responsible citizen in society. While the responsibility of repair and education of the absent father has been taken on by the establishment, it is the same establishment that perpetuates this situation. One of the reasons why the male has responded to responsibility in the manner that he currently does has a basis in the social programs enacted during previous administrations which outlined social welfare programs and its benefits with the stipulation that the male maintained a residence anywhere except within the household of his children.

Although many experts have researched and studied this population, and does relay them extremely close to accurate, we must ascertain that the validity of these claims have been nothing more than theory. Bill Cosby makes a valid argument of the state of African American

fathers and the family. However; his contention lacks the realization that his motivation and offered solutions does not approach the root of the problem.

We ask, what does the root of this problem consist of and why is the relationship between African American males, females and their children dictating a rise in single parenthood in America? Our answer begins with the ethnocentric values of mainstream America with goals and objectives which relegate legislation which undermines every subgroup which has in effect created a subculture that includes members from every walk of life. This being said, it brings us to the conclusion in this case, that the assumptions and expert opinions directed at the African American male is currently becoming the view that society holds for males in general. This however does not explain the root of the problem. It simply points out that the plight of the African American male is also becoming the problem of society as a whole.

The root problem is a destructive mechanism which has changed the thought pattern of African American men from breadwinners to victims. The root problem stems from America's treatment and assassination of the male role model, passing legislation directed at minorities which has stripped African American men of their ability to maintain relationships not only with the opposite sex but also with their offspring. Even today when an

African American male is stopped by a policeman for a minor traffic infraction, he runs the risk, especially if his wife or partner is with him, of humiliation, degradation and disparaging treatment. This is not to say that this is the norm, as I pointed out this is a distinct possibility. The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's and 60's had the overt illusion of the promotion of opportunity but failed to offer a mechanism to eradicate the mentality that had been garnered from centuries of destructive personal, physical and character assassinations of every African American male. Although opportunity afforded itself, the prerequisite to take full advantage of the opportunities were not present. Some members of this group, just as during the slavery era, were strong enough to take advantage of opportunity despite the lack of America's inability to transform its mentality. In other words, the rules changed but the players didn't.

Conversely, legislation which included stipulations such as, "The no man in the house rule," was instituted to assist the family only if the African American father "disappeared". Further legislation has made the male in general a profit bearing entity to state government based on his absence which has in turn harvested several institutions nationwide whose covert objective is the destruction of the male relationship with both his partner and his children.

Fatherlessness is perpetuated by the dollars generated from the federal level to state government consequently; state government utilizes the theme of "protection of the children" in its quest to retrieve federal dollars. It is profitable to the state for the father to be absent. The state continues to support and initiate programs that are profitable but destructive to fathers and the family.

Government's attempt to strengthen marriage is in actuality a band-aid on the elephant. Initiatives to promote healthy marriages appear to be government's attempt to rectify the situation; however in close view it is simply just another method for government to funnel dollars to its cronies. Robert Rector, Senior Research Fellow at The Heritage Foundation in his testimony before the Sub-Committee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means of the United States House of Representatives included the following points:

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- *President George W. Bush has proposed—as part of welfare reform reauthorization—the creation of a pilot program to promote healthy and stable marriages. Funding for the program would be small-scale: \$300 million per year. This sum represents one penny to promote healthy marriage for every five dollars government currently spends to subsidize single parenthood.*

The following are important points about the healthy marriage initiative:

- *The program would be focused on early intervention, helping young adult couples establish stable and healthy relationships before the conception and birth of a child.*

- *Participation in the program would be strictly voluntary.*

- *Although there is much chatter about an alleged shortage of marriageable males as a barrier to marriage, in reality, nearly half of unmarried mothers are living with the child's father at the time a child is born; another 23 percent are in a stable romantic relationship with the father. A shortage of "marriageable men" is not a major obstacle to marriage promotion.*

- *Over 95 percent of unmarried fathers worked during the year of the child's birth; their median annual earnings were \$17,500. (This is higher than the mothers' earnings.) Drug and alcohol abuse among these fathers is rare.*

- *Marriage can have a dramatic effect in reducing child poverty. If poor single mothers were married to the fathers of their children, nearly 70 percent would be immediately lifted out of poverty.*

- *Some argue that the key to increasing marriage in low income communities is to provide job training to increase the wages and employment of fathers. One problem with this approach is that government job training programs generally have a very limited impact on employment and earnings. More importantly, data from the Fragile Families survey show that increasing fathers' employment and earnings will have only a marginal effect in increasing marriage. Improving attitudes and relationship skills will have a far greater impact.*

The problem here is that most who offer an opinion as to what and how the problem of

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fatherlessness in the African American community can be corrected are neither a father nor African American. Most of the funding for the Healthy Marriage program did not go to minority organizations. This is synonymous with a dog teaching a cat how to be a cat.

The next problem is that government continues to spend more money promoting fatherlessness than it does to promote the involvement of the father. Current funding streams have not been targeted to assist in the restructuring of families but have been directed and labeled as welfare reform which has a net affect of suicide for the family structure.

African American men are generally extremely willing to be fathers to their offspring.

However, they are systematically removed by a system that holds profit margins through destructive methods more important than giving the assistance to keep the father and child relationships strong. The overall mentality among the African American population is that the mother will fare much better simply receiving monetary assistance absent a positive relationship with the male as opposed to the offering of assistance only when that father is involved.

While government claims that the benefits of marriage and family values in this community has a direct affect on the economic and moral standards, it thrives from removing children, ostracizing and penalizing fathers which drives a wedge between men and women and destroys the family structure. * * *

DEAN TONG is an internationally known family rights and forensic consultant on child abuse, domestic violence and child custody. He has been a media commentator for a number of high profile cases which include Elian Gonzalez, Jon Benet Ramsay, and Megan Kanka which led to the creation and enactment of "Megan's Law". Tong's expert opinion has been sought after by more than 2,000 radio talk shows over the past 13 years and numerous national and local TV programs such as *Dr. Phil*, *FOX News*, *COURT-TV*, *The Montel Williams Show*, and on *Crier Live*. He has been interviewed or quoted by *the Boston Globe*, *Washington Times*, *Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and *The Washington Post*. He is the author of three books – *Elusive Innocence* which was reviewed by the American Journal of Family Therapy; *Ashes to Ashes... Families To Dust*; and *Don't Blame ME Daddy*. In addition to his trial consultant work, Tong testifies as an expert in court on behalf of falsely accused Fathers. He is the creator of two video/audio series – *Sexual Allegations In the 90s--Tools You Can Use* and *In Fear Of Fathers and Defense Strategies for the Falsely Accused*. Mr. Tong also is an Affiliate member of *the Academy of Behavior Profiling's Forensic Section*, an *Advisory Board Member of the Coalition for the Preservation of Fatherhood*; a *member of the Children's Rights Council Section*; *the Coalition for the Preservation of Fatherhood*; and a *member of the Board of Directors of the National Fathers Resource Center*. In 2001, Tong's article, "Expert Tells It Like It Is" which detailed his own fight against false child abuse allegations was published in the Winter 2001 issue of *IN SEARCH OF FATHERHOOD®*. In the article which follows, Tong not only talks about the causes of the Fatherhood Crisis, but offers "Fifty Ways To Stay A Father" and a *Proposal for Change* which is designed to create a "father and family friendly system".

A TIME OF NIGHTMARE, DAYLIGHT AND REDEMPTION

By: DEAN TONG

[PUBLISHED WITH AUTHOR'S PERMISSION

ABSTRACT

Over the last forty years we have witnessed a fatherhood crisis as sociological, political, legal, and psychological minds joined forces to create the single largest threat to the American family; the evisceration of fathers from

the lives of their children and vice-versa. Within this time period well-meaning, well-intentioned, but misguided legislation such as No-Fault Divorce, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Violence Against Women Act incited an unfathomable increase in the number of child abuse and domestic violence reports. A large body of anecdotal data has shown that about two-thirds of these abuse

reports which were made within the dynamics of a hotly contested divorce, visitation dispute or custody battle were unfounded or false. More compelling, studies conducted between 1992 and 2008 by the National Crimes Against Children Laboratory that have been published in the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems publication *Child Maltreatment* depicted a striking decrease in the incidence of child sexual abuse of 53% and child physical abuse of 48%. Natural fathers were often blamed for these accounts of abuse, but stepfathers and paramours (boyfriends) were culpable in many cases of the same. Lack of education, lack of training, naiveté, unwittingness, and sheer laziness caused social workers, child protection personnel, and police officers to wrongly label scores of natural fathers as child abusers and wife beaters. Source misattribution errors committed by system professionals have poured gasoline onto an already incendiary situation. Now, only after an onslaught of public awareness both online and offline, fatherhood seems to be turning the corner, and there is light at the end of a once very dark tunnel.

MAKE ROOM FOR DADDY

Fatherhood in the 1950s usually meant a distant male who went to work, supported the family, but left child rearing to mother. Men of this era may not remember having much affection or physical contact from their dads. Fathers who were nurturant and supportive toward children were most evident in the late 1940s, early 1950s, and early and late 1990s. Back in the days fathers were seen as mentors of masculinity, not closeness. Today's fathers are part of the team and are more committed to fatherhood.

From 1953–1964 The Danny Thomas Show (a/k/a Make Room for Daddy) ran on ABC and CBS, and laid the foundation for The Andy Griffith Show. The Andy Griffith Show depicted father and son holding hands as they headed down to the lake to go fishing. Other shows such as Leave it to Beaver, Ozzie and Harriet, and My Three Sons stressed paternal significance and the necessity of family.

In the 1950s, clearly distinct masculinity and femininity were the desired goals within the fabric of the family unit. Dr. Michael Lamb, a psychologist, author and researcher at the National Institute for Child Health and Human

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Development and expert who has studied the importance of fathers in the lives of their children, found that paternal masculinity (as was seen in the 1950s and 1960s) was much less important than father-son nurturance and closeness (as is evidenced today). This feminine characteristic of father-son intimacy today, according to Dr. Lamb's attachment studies, is vital in well-adjusted sons.

There have been over 4,000 scientific studies or reports published that deal with the effect that fathers have on their children's development. But, it may have been one statement in 1956 offered by Dr. Margaret Meade, one of the twentieth century's most famous observers of family dynamics, which ignited changes in state and federal laws and the overall shaping of public policy as it concerned fathers, children, and families. Meade stated "Fathers are a biological necessity, not a social accident."

The issue here is not whether the conduct of fatherhood has shifted, but whether the culture of fatherhood has changed (LaRossa, 1988). Because of the long-term escalation in divorce, frequency of unfounded and false abuse allegations, and overall effects on children of parental alienation and unreliable and invalid therapies, many nonresidential fathers have only minimal contact with their sons and daughters. Fatherhood absence led to the plight of the American family and a nightmare was visited upon us.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT AND NO-FAULT DIVORCE

First proposed in 1923 and still not part of the United States Constitution, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), a well-intentioned legislative act that was supposed to guarantee equal rights under the law regardless of sex, has been introduced in Congress every term since 1982 without success. Last March, new resolutions of the ERA were referred to by name as the "Woman's Equality Amendment." Critics of the ERA like Phyllis Schlafly believed it would tear down the fabric of the family unit, especially Fatherhood. Even though these same critics believed the ERA would have mandated the recognition of same sex marriage, ironically, both Massachusetts and California have passed legislation allowing gay marriages anyway.

In 1969, a few years before the Woman's Liberation Movement burst onto the scene and lobbied states to ratify the ERA in 1972, California passed into law No Fault Divorce which would metastasize across America like cancer, and arguendo, become the most pivotal piece of legislation to hurt fathers over the past forty years. No Fault Divorce is a divorce in which the dissolution of a marriage requires neither a showing of proof by a preponderance of evidence nor any evidentiary proceedings at all. Simply put, the litigants are faultless. Irreconcilable differences replaced common law divorces. Prior to the enactment of No Fault Divorce one spouse had to prove the other had committed adultery, abandonment, cruelty, a felony, et al.

At a time when the social climate of this country is such that marriage is a taboo and divorce is a given, it's unconscionable that neither litigant in a dissolution proceeding has to prove via evidence the other party is abusive, suffering from an undiagnosed and untreated mental health disorder, culpable of mental cruelty, committed adultery, et al. 'She said—He said' works just fine in American divorce court and that is all that is needed for a good and loving father to be eviscerated from the lives of his children and vice-versa.

Mediation, a by-product of No Fault Divorce that not only became fashionable with American jurists but also women's groups, since it keeps cases out of court and away from the rules of evidence, is in my opinion nothing more than a "family court plea bargain." Call it conciliation, alternative dispute resolution, arbitration, or collaborative divorce, but mediation is, in my opinion, "nothing more than a legal tool used to induce an upstanding, non-abusive dad into acquiescing to legal blackmail once he signs his name on the dotted line." I'm all for going back to a fault-based system relative to divorce; one that will give weight to evidence, facts, proof, science, and data. Dr. Stephen Baskerville hit No Fault Divorce and mediation on the head in his article which can be found at http://www.profam.org/pub/fia/fia_1805.htm.

CAPTA

On January 31, 1974, former President Richard Nixon signed the infamous Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), a/k/a
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The Mondale Act, into law. It passed because there were unanswered questions from the recognition of battered child syndrome in 1961, the growing statistic that one of ten children brought to emergency rooms were victims of physical abuse, the growing concern that many cases were unreported, the lack of uniformity among each state's reporting/responding laws, the push for the federal government to be involved in child welfare, and polls claiming that child abuse was one of the three most pressing national problems in the early '70s. CAPTA resulted in effects more far-reaching and consequences more devastating than the sponsors of the Act could have ever imagined.

CAPTA, when first drafted, was a well-meaning and well-intentioned piece of legislation. It sought to increase the identification, reporting, and investigation of child maltreatment, thereby protecting children from harm. And it was designed to monitor research and compile and publish materials relative to child protection. After passing into law, it provided assistance to the states to develop child abuse and neglect prevention programs; augmented the role of the federal government to be proactive in child abuse and neglect detection, prevention and treatment; set forth a minimum definition of child abuse and neglect; created the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN); administered incentive grant programs for the states; created the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems (NCCANDS), and established grant programs for the training of personnel associated with the prevention and treatment of child maltreatment. CAPTA has survived throughout the years and most recently was amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003.

But, as nationally syndicated columnist Paul Roberts pointed out in compelling fashion, "the biggest danger Americans (most notably, fathers) face is not runaway taxes and spending, deficits, canceled medical insurance, foreign terrorists, crime, an outbreak of infectious diseases, or any other headline issue. The monster stalking Americans is CAPTA." CAPTA became big business as federal grant monies to the states were predicated upon the number of child abuse and neglect cases investigated and substantiated. The vision of shielding and saving children from abuse became a money propagating machine out of control.

The numbers of unfounded and false reports of child abuse and neglect mushroomed dramatically after the passage of CAPTA and have continued to do so through today. On the average, NCCAN typically reports there are about 3 million reports of alleged child abuse and neglect in America each year with over two-thirds of the same being classified as unfounded or false. CAPTA has caused many loving fathers to be ripped away from their children in the guise of protecting the same; fathers and children who have endured physical, psychological, financial, emotional, and spiritual devastation.

The late Dr. Richard Gardner, best known for coining the theory Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), proposed revisions to CAPTA in hopes that the same would be abrogated or repealed. Dr. Gardner recommended that state agencies and their child protective workers abate their absolute immunity status to that of a quasi-prosecutorial or qualified immunity; malicious false child abuse allegations should be criminalized and those wounded innocents should be remunerated their attorneys fees; mandated reporting should be abated to discretionary reporting; accused offenders should be offered the opportunity to be interviewed by police or child protection personnel; all investigatory and evaluative interviews should be videotaped; interviews that contain suggestive materials such as anatomical dolls or drawings should be banned from court; all states should afford accused offenders their right to due process; educational programs for child protection personnel should contain information that differentiates true from false accusations of child abuse, and public defenders' offices should contain special child sex abuse units. Dr. Gardner further opined that failure of the states to carry out these recommended provisions to revise CAPTA would deprive them of federal funding.

The late Dr. Ralph Underwager said that "if we take the profit out of child abuse investigations the solution will go a long way towards correcting itself." Sage advice, indeed! CAPTA still exists today as it did so 35 years ago. It may be lodged within other titled legislation like the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, but a skunk is a skunk. It still stinks!

FEMINISM FRENZY
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In 1964, Margaret Chase Smith, Senator from Maine, became the first woman to run for a major party's nomination for U.S. President. Of course, we witnessed a bold, but unsuccessful run for President this year by Hillary Clinton. Clinton authored a dozen years ago the much hailed book "It Takes A Village," which promoted government intervention in raising children. This is also known as *in loco parentis* or *parens patriae*. The common link here is feminism and the feminist revolution took root in the midst of No Fault Divorce, the Equal Rights Amendment, and CAPTA.

Radical feminism sought to overthrow patriarchy by opposing standard gender roles. Radical feminists saw what they called the male oppression of women. These individuals were also called militant feminists or feminazis and were seen as the most contemptuous of their kind. "I am woman hear me roar in numbers too big to ignore" became "Hell hath no fury like Ms. Smith or Ms. Jones scorned". Many of these feminists became activists or "professionals" in fields where their decisions would impact the lives of men and fathers – as social workers, domestic violence counselors, child protection team coordinators, pediatricians, sexual abuse nurse examiners, teachers, psychologists, prosecutors, law guardians, therapists, reporters, publishers, authors, et al.

The feminist movement grew in popularity and established a solid foundation between 1975 and 1995. Clinging to ideology, bureaucracy, money, power, and overwhelming support, the feminists capitalized on the vulnerable fathers and families of America and pounded home their views with tireless and reckless abandon. They detest patriarchy, promote the disenfranchisement of fathers and their mind set is anti-family. They believe that men accused of abuse are guilty as they suffer from extreme confirmation bias. And they don't believe in joint custody and in many cases are against shared parenting.

THE HYSTERIA OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The 1980s to the mid 1990s witnessed an explosion of reports of child sexual abuse; many of the same arose out of the context of bitter divorces and custody battles and were unfounded or false, and came to be known as Sexual Allegations In Divorce (SAID) cases,

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while several others were the product of a growing hysteria among child-run daycare centers. These latter witch hunts; e.g., Jordan, McMartin, Amirault (Fells Acres), Michaels (Wee Care), Kniffen, Ramona, Edenton (Little Rascals), Fuster (Country Walk), and Roberson (Wenatchee), almost all resulted in overturned court convictions. Source monitoring, reality monitoring, source misattribution errors, child suggestibility, recovered memory therapies, incompetent rape examinations, improper forensic interviews of children allegedly molested, and other pseudo-scientific therapies accounted for most of these unfounded and false child sex abuse case dispositions.

Sadly, America and Americans, with the help of books like *The Courage to Heal* and the mainstream media tapping the accused as presumed guilty, bought into the 'fact' that if father was accused of sexually abusing his 3 year-old daughter he must have done so. Developmental experts like Dr. Stephen Ceci didn't start publishing a large body of scientific studies on child suggestibility, memory and linguistic errors until 1988. Ceci's seminal book "Jeopardy in the Courtroom," originally published in 1995, will now be somewhat displaced by the brand new bible just authored by Lamb & Esplin, et al, and titled "Tell Me What Happened."

With the change in family court from the tender years doctrine to the child's best interest, and the standard of law being a preponderance of evidence, it became all too easy for child protection caseworkers, police officers, and ultimately judges in juvenile dependency and family courts across America to "err on the side of caution," on the side of the alleged child victim in alleged child sex abuse cases. Tragically, scores of non-abused children have been treated as genuine victims of abuse for 'abuses' they never incurred. Studies show (Mira, S., & Finley, G. E. 2004; Hickman & Reynolds, 1994) that the effects of unnecessary and deleterious therapies on non-abused children are neither benign nor innocuous.

Pseudo-scientific therapies such as anatomical dolls, puppets and drawings (collectively known as play therapies), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT - abuse focused and/or trauma focused), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) have emerged as quick positive reinforcements to a

child's outcry of sexual abuse, and have literally exacerbated this already incendiary situation.

It is incumbent upon us to re-examine our social, legal, and legislative policies relative to child sexual abuse across America. Recently, Dr. David Finkelhor of the Crimes Against Children Laboratory in Durham, New Hampshire, published a fifteen year study (1992-2007) depicting a huge decrease in the 'incidence' of child sexual abuse http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/Updated%20Trends%20in%20Child%20Maltreatment%20bulletin_FINAL_4-15-08.pdf. With over 3 million child abuse and neglect reports per year including about 300,000 child sexual abuse reports, of which about 70% of same are unfounded, that represents an enormous number of mainly fathers ripped from the lives of their non-abused children (emphasis added).

I do not profess to have all of the answers to repair this broken system. In my opinion, reparations must start from the top and work down. The legislature needs to consider a partial repeal of CAPTA and in doing so augment false and vexatious child abuse reports to third degree felony penalties and charge a national task force to critique the number of valid versus invalid child abuse reports, and mandate better education and training for system professionals and that includes mandatory curriculum reading of *Jeopardy in the Courtroom*, *Tell Me What Happened* and my future work *Children of the Lie*.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

The road to winning the war against child abuse was paved with good intentions in passing CAPTA in 1974. Twenty years later in 1994 former President Bill Clinton had the same vision when he signed into law the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as part of the National Crime Act. Intimate partner violence and more specifically domestic violence against women became a hot topic in America. Unfortunately, VAWA has created more problems than has provided solutions, and represents misguided legislation.

VAWA has triggered scores of women to file ex parte Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs), Orders For Protection (OFPs), Protection From Abuse orders (PFAs), Domestic Violence Injunctions (DVIs), 209As, et al, in civil

court, based solely on statements of fear of threatened bodily harm memorialized as total hearsay within their sworn affidavits. The accused, who typically must respond in court within 15 days of being served with a copy of the same, could be military or a hunter, and if he possesses guns he's perceived as being nefarious and thus a threat to the accuser and his children. Many of these false restraining orders are extended by judges for at least a year; one time a Massachusetts man was hit with a lifetime restraining order, and fortunately for him after his case was heard on National Public Radio, a judge modified it in his favor.

Since the legislature has made domestic violence a top priority, municipal court judges are instructed to grant TROs, (medically speaking, now)! "Throw him out on the street", said New Jersey Judge Richard Russell at a seminar in 1994, "give him the clothes on his back and say see ya around." Ironically, Judge Kessler said that wholesale approval of TROs can be used by litigants as a club, and while she could not provide exact statistics she said the number of TROs later dismissed by the family court were significant. More compellingly, just a few weeks ago, a New Jersey Judge ruled that a key element of the New Jersey Domestic Violence Act was unconstitutional. The same judge ruled that the legal standard of proof in Anibal Crespo's case should not have been a preponderance of evidence but clear and convincing evidence.

A criminal domestic violence complaint where 911 is called is much worse than a civil TRO and this writer experienced the same firsthand six months ago. On January 28, 2008, I was arrested for allegedly abusing and tampering with my soon-to-be ex-wife. The charges were a first degree misdemeanor and third degree felony carrying about 6 years in prison upon conviction. In fact, I was formally charged by Information by the State of Florida Tampa's State Attorney Office on March 12, 2008. However, when my defense team became aggressive and subpoenaed the 911 tapes and files and readied my accusers for depositions, everything changed to my behest. The evidence showed my accuser placed a false call to 911, never spoke to the 911 operators, and in the process taped me against my permission. As of this writing the State of Florida has filed a formal Nolle Prosequi on my behalf and dismissed all charges against me.

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The negative effects of false civil and criminal domestic violence complaints are enormous. Save the financial loss and damage to one's reputation, fathers wrongly accused and/or arrested are immediately eviscerated from the lives of their children and vice-versa. Consistent with No-Fault Divorce, VAWA, like CAPTA, renders the words evidence and proof meaningless. State courts must start recognizing their own constitutions and the U.S. Constitution, and require clear and convincing proof and due process at evidentiary hearings.

According to RADAR (www.mediaradar.org), there is no supporting evidence that VAWA has reduced intimate partner abuse. Dr. Murray Straus, author of the psychometric instrument the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS-2), and his research and findings point to the fact that men are as much victims of domestic abuse as women. The extraordinary number of false alarms and witch hunts since the passage of VAWA demeans women in harm's way and sends a chilling message to genuine victims of abuse:..."We may not have the time or resources to get to you".

PARENTAL ALIENATION

Parental alienation (www.childcustodycoach.com/pas.html) is an emotional and psychological form of child abuse where a parent or guardian denigrates or disparages another parent or guardian and does so in front of a child. While parental alienation is not recognized as a mental health disorder by the American Psychiatric Association that publishes the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM-IV-TR), there are many professionals, including this writer, who aspire to see it published in the DSM-V.

While experts such as Douglas Darnall, Michael Bone, and Richard Warshak have studied and published on parental alienation, consultants like myself deal with it firsthand on a lot of cases. Much of my caseload entails intake, research, and strategies involving protracted child custody battles. "About eighty-five percent to ninety percent of my cases deal with some form of parental alienation, albeit, slight, moderate, or severe. I refer to parental alienation as the scourge of child custody." And while Florida law and many other states' laws require a custodial parent to foster and nurture the children's relationship with the non-custodial

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parent, and while most judges now memorialize in their temporary/final orders that neither parent is to disrupt the children's relationship with the other parent, I find the opposite being executed.

Dr. Michael Bone and attorney Michael Walsh, in an article published in the Florida Bar Journal in 1999, broke down the general category of parental alienation into specific criteria. The first criterion involves the active blocking of access or contact between the absent or targeted parent and his children. The second criterion is unfounded abuse allegations against the targeted parent. The third and perhaps most important criterion is the deterioration in the father/children relationship since their separation. And the last criterion consists of intense fear reaction by the children since the father/children separation. According to the aforementioned co-authors of the article if all four criteria are present and genuine abuse has been ruled out, parental alienation has taken place. Any of the criteria can be found independent of each other in high-conflict court cases, but that doesn't necessitate the presence of parental alienation.

I have found that reintegration and reunification therapy works pretty well in family law cases that demonstrate the presence of moderate to severe alienation. In severe cases, I suggest counsel consider the services of the Rachel Foundation (www.rachelfoundation.org) out of Texas. I have found the court appointment of parenting coordinators, Ph.D. level psychologists who are familiar with parental alienation, to be a blessing in these cases. States where I am aware that parenting coordinators can be used are Florida, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, Colorado, and California. In long distance alienation cases involving children at the age of reason (7 or older). I've found that virtual visitation (www.internetvisitation.org) helps to abate the paternal alienation and attachment loss process.

AN ERA OF ERRORS

Perhaps the most important section of this article is this one, An Era Of Errors. Since the child sex abuse craze and epidemic hit America about twenty five years ago, we have seen an extraordinary increase in the number of unfounded and unsubstantiated cases. A major

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study spanning 15 years (1992–2007) by Dr. David Finkelhor from the Crimes Against Children Laboratory in Durham, New Hampshire found the actual incidence of child sexual abuse has decreased by over 50% during that time frame. Couple that with the fact that each year we are witnessing about 3 million reports of child abuse and neglect (about 250,000 child sex abuse reports) and that of the same over 2 million reports (>67%) are unfounded (National Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems), and that represents a significant false positive error rate. Can you say fishing expedition?

Since these mistakes or errors of judgment, or lack of evidence result in unfounded dispositions by child protective services, it is essential to first define the word "false" in the world of child sexual abuse. False is defined as made in bad faith with malice and forethought. Only 2%-5% of all child sex reports are false (Thoennes & Tjaden, 1990). But, an additional approximate two-thirds represent unfounded cases. "Unfounded" is defined as without foundation or merit or substance.

Psychologists and psychiatrists refer to judgmental errors in child sex cases by child protection personnel, police officers, and other mandated reporters as source misattribution errors. In other words, the alleged child victim was molested but you've pointed the finger at the wrong suspect and it's a mistake in identity, or it is something else besides child sexual abuse. There are other explanations or alternative hypotheses for why the child made an outcry, implicating father. Most probably, the child and/or the professional have misattributed the source of the abuse allegations. Besides the fact that the child may be a pawn or tool in a SAID – Parental Alienation case coached by mother to oust father from the family, the child may be highly suggestible, have memory or linguistic problems, or the system may have employed faulty interview techniques; scripting the child (exposing the child to repetitive interviews), or worse, forcing the child to demonstrate "abuse" using anatomically detailed dolls, puppets, or drawings that have no bases in a forensic setting before or during trial.

Experts have conducted numerous studies and published peer reviewed studies on their findings relative to the significance of source misattribution errors in child sex cases (Ceci & Bruck, 1993, 1995; McBrien & Dagenbach,

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1998, and Lamb, et al. 2008). Whether it be a child who said her “daddy put his pee pee on her pee pee” but did not imply sexual abuse (she meant her daddy urinated on her urine in the commode) yet the system arrested him for alleged genital-to-genital contact, or a sexual abuse nurse examiner who opined a four year-old girl’s lack of visible hymen meant her father raped her (he was indicted and spent over a year in jail and was later cleared) only to have her opinion impeached by a defense pediatrician who found the child’s hymen was present but masked by labial adhesions, the lack of education and training of our so-called experts is frighteningly woeful. If we better educate and train our system professionals less mistakes will be made and more families will remain intact.

A PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

Looking back over the past almost twenty-four years (1984) since I first became intimately acquainted with our 3-ring circus (family, juvenile and criminal courts), and serving as an activist, author, speaker, trial consultant, and expert witness on contested abuse and custody issues, I propose the following changes to our system to make it more father and family friendly:

- Bring back fault-based divorce
- Repeal, in part, CAPTA, renaming same the Family Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (FAPTA). Mandate that all malicious false child abuse allegations be prosecutable via a third degree felony. In addition, FAPTA should mandate increased education and training for all child protection personnel including police and sex crimes detectives. Said course curricula should include the books *Jeopardy in the Courtroom* and *Tell Me What Happened*.
- Repeal, in part, VAWA, renaming same the Violence Against Families Act (VAFA). Mandate that all malicious false domestic violence allegations be prosecutable via a third degree felony
- Augment the legal standard of a preponderance of evidence (51%) in family and juvenile courts to clear and convincing evidence (75%)
- Change the legal standard of a child’s best interest to that of a family’s best interest

- If a petitioner or respondent (plaintiff or defendant) in family court is found to be indigent or insolvent, family court judges must appoint counsel for same and also consider granting motions for expert’s fees
- Judges reading/hearing restraining order cases must require clear and convincing evidence in order to grant the same
- The police must stop using precept, electronically taped phone calls made by alleged child sex abuse victims at their department headquarters -- an unconstitutional practice of entrapment
- Legislate, federally, joint physical custody
- All law schools should be required to mandate a course in litigating/trying false abuse cases for all aspiring family, juvenile, and/or criminal court attorneys
- The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) should be repealed in part and allow families facing Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) at least 24 months before a juvenile court judge rules on their fate
- Megan’s Law should be repealed in part so that all criminal defendants who plead out in child sex cases are afforded the opportunity to first pass a battery of psychosexual tests that includes the AASI-2 (www.abelscreen.com) before they are subjected to life long sex offender registration

FIFTY WAYS TO STAY A FATHER

- Keep a timeline (journal or log by dates and events)
- Purchase audio/video mini-cams at www.x10.com
- Don’t give up your house to your spouse or significant other, especially if you have kids
- Secure all of your financial and banking accounts in your name, only
- Stay on the good side of all mandated reporters (teachers, doctors, et al) who hover around your kids and obtain their contact information
- If questioned by Child Protective Services (CPS) or the police, do not talk to them without legal counsel present

- Never submit to a police polygraph or Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA)
- Unless out of resources to fight back, never “consent” to dependency in juvenile court
- In any criminal case, unless it’s in your legal best interest to do so, never waive your right to speedy trial
- Always be cool, calm, collected, and congenial when talking to CPS, police, law guardian (Guardian-Ad-Litem), psychologists, therapists, et al
- Have an army of family and friends by your side
- Consider becoming an activist for men’s and father’s rights, but only after you complete litigation of your own cases
- Make friends with the local media and obtain their contact information
- Consider reading the book *Father and Child Reunion*
- Consider reading the book *Divorced Dads*
- Consider reading the book *Divorce Poison*
- Consider reaching out for help from the American Coalition for *Fathers and Children* (ACFC) (www.acfc.org), and/or the Children’s Rights Council (www.crckids.org)
- If you’re involved in a SAID and/or Parental Alienation case, consider retaining an expert who is familiar with the same
- If you can first file for divorce and become the petitioner, do so
- If you’re served with an ex parte restraining order consider obtaining same against her
- If hit with a restraining order (no contact) do not e-mail, snail mail, phone, or in any other way contact your adversary
- Do treat all abuse accusations against you very seriously
- Retain competent legal counsel and preferably counsel who is board certified and AV-rated in Martindale Hubbell
- Find the necessary resources ahead of time to properly defend your court cases
- Consider suing your false, delusional, or mistaken (negligent) accusers for damages in state or federal court
- Consider joining the American Family Rights Association (AFRA), once litigation of your CPS case concludes
- Suppress treatment of your non-abused child in any false child sex case
- Try not to allow more than three (3) interviews of your child in any child sex case
- In any child sex case try to require electronic taping of all forensic interviews of alleged child victims
- Obtain Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of all professionals in any contested child abuse and/or custody case
- Try to goad your attorney to compel production of all CPS records including dummy notes
- Try to goad your attorney to compel production of all therapist’s progress notes of your kids
- In any child sex case where a rape exam has been conducted try to obtain the state’s ‘expert’s’ colposcopic photographs
- Keep current on your child support payments
- Challenge “in limine” all scientific reports that lack reliability and validity
- Challenge paternity results and obtain a second lab’s opinion if you think you’re not the father of a child-at-issue
- Obtain the policy and training manuals of CPS, Child Protection Team (CPT), and sex crimes detectives who interview your child
- Require an Independent Medical or Psychological Evaluation in any contested child sex abuse or custody case
- Find objective family members to supervise your visits with your kids
- Be proactive and not reactive in any contested abuse or custody case
- Consider virtual visitation in any severe case of parental alienation, especially one of long distance parenting
- If involved in a case of unilateral child abduction, consider retaining counsel in the state the child has been taken to and have that lawyer file a Notice of Special Appearance to litigate home state jurisdiction
- If you are so, steadfastly maintain your innocence
- Retain counsel, if possible, who knows the judges sitting on your cases
- Cases are usually won or lost at pre-trial so don’t wait until trial to get going

- Goad your attorney into challenging possible inadmissible science at a Daubert or Frye pre-trial hearing in court
- If involved in a criminal child sex case make certain your attorney knows how to impeach any “expert” who says you groomed the victim
- Realize that not all attorneys are created equal
- Realize that not all experts are created equal
- Don’t underestimate the significance of admitting learned treatises into evidence on the record at trial
- Expect the unexpected and the worst, but do not give up the fight

CONCLUSION

This article attempted to address the plight of Fatherhood along with information that empowers the same. Several issues were

looked at – from the Equal Rights Amendment and No Fault Divorce to CAPTA, to the surge of feminism, to the hysteria of child sexual abuse in the 80’s and early 90’s and the errors that led to the same, to VAWA, and finally to potential system reform and strategies on how dads can remain in their children’s lives. While I only scratched the surface in spanning forty years of time, it is essential we understand first what caused the untimely Fatherhood Crisis and ways in which we can fix it. Half of the first marriages in the U.S. result in divorce. We are victimized by over one million divorces that affect one million children. Parental alienation and unfounded and false allegations of abuse are still piercing the hearts of non-abusive, fit fathers and their families. We must end this cycle of fatherhood destruction and set our sights on resurrecting the fabric of the American family.

* * *

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FATHERHOOD ROUNDTABLE

AUTHOR, PLAYWRIGHT, POET, AND ARTIST GEOFFREY D. HOLMAN: STEPPING OUT ON FAITH AND LIVING HIS DREAM

By: D.A. Sears

He made his debut in the world of the performing arts at the tender age of four when he performed with the legendary and internationally acclaimed singing group *Gladys Knights And The Pips*. He is an author, poet, artist, founder of The Back Stage Theater Company, Founder and Director of The Nue Liberation Theatre – a Theater for Social Change. A playwright, he has created numerous stage plays which include – *The Life & Death Of Jessie Myers, Love Intentions – A Comedy ... Seriously*, and *Something Bout Rondie*. His poetry and illustrated works include: *Songs Of Brick & Stell Giants; Walking Through The House Naked, Ghettoetry, The Beautiful Ghetto* (formerly *Red Boots*), and a *Song For Gil* created for singer, writer and performer Gil Scott Heron. He is **GEOFFREY D. HOLMAN**, the father of nineteen year old Schuyler D. Holman and the stepfather of eleven year old Olivia Grace Murphy.

His talents and level of creativity are extraordinary. But there is so much more to Geoffrey D. Holman. He is a man who is stepping out on faith and living his dream. Yet, he has both feet planted firmly on the ground. He does not dwell on his long list of creative accomplishments. Although many view him as a phenomenally talented individual, he sees himself as “just an ordinary guy”. With great agility, he balances the demands of the worlds of art, literature and the theatre which places him in the position, at times, of being “all things to all people”, with the demands of being a Father. And he makes it look easy!

So, who is Geoffrey D. Holman? Where did he grow up? Where was he educated?

“I was born Jeffrey D. Holman in Brooklyn, New York in 1964 and raised in Deer Park, Long Island, New York as a foster child for seventeen years in the Little Flower Children’s Services. I first began performing when I was four years old with Gladys Knight and The Pips. I attended the Suffolk County Public School System and in 1985, I graduated from Deer Park High School.

While attending Deer Park High School, I majored in Art/Illustration, Film/Photography and Creative Writing. After graduating from high school, I attended State University Of New York in Farmingdale, Long Island where I enrolled in its Advertising Art and Design/Early Childhood curriculum. While still a student at State University Of New York, I founded the Back Stage Theater and acted as its Vice President and Director and also performed in several of the company’s productions. I am the Founder and Director of a Theater for Social Change – The Nue Liberation Theatre – which is creating original theatrical productions, spoken word, multi-disciplinary productions as well as original works,” Mr. Holman said.

When we asked Mr. Holman to talk about who or what inspired and influenced him, he offered the following:

“As a young adult growing up, the influences in my life were primarily from my foster father and mother, though often abused as a child coming up, I was taught the importance of being self reliant and accepting the responsibility of one’s own actions. I was taught to be respectful of the needs of others and to carry myself with a sense of purpose and dignity. I was endowed with the God-given talents that I have through my natural father whom I had the opportunity of getting close to at a later age -- Luther Cupid Holman. He was a fine artist, jazz musician – trumpeter – and writer. Both my foster parents and natural father played a big part in my life growing up. My foster mother, Carrie Louise Carter, made me aware of my culture as an African American, Black Foot Indian and Haitian American. She taught me the importance of our race and the many contributions that we had made to this country, the struggles of the African slave and the ongoing battle for civil rights and human rights. Jesus Christ has always been an important factor in my life -- always an influence as to what I say and write or illustrate through words or art. I wouldn’t call myself a saint, but I do

believe in utilizing my talents for the good of those around me. Most of the people that have made an impact on me as an individual are Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Chuck Berry, Ray Charles, Prince, Alex Haley, Ben Vereen, Gregory Hines, Samuel L. Jackson, Laurence Fishbourne, Angela Davis, Nikki Giovanni, Langston Hughes, Tina Turner, Chaka Khan, Gil Scott Heron, The Last Poets, Amiri Baraka, James Baldwin, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, former United States President Jimmy Carter, Clint Eastwood, Lawanda Page, Esther Rolle, Isabelle Sandford, Red Foxx, Richard Pryor, Gladys Knight, Nelson Mandela, Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross, Bill Cosby, Morgan Freeman, Sidney Poitier, Billy Dee Williams, Miles Davis, Quincy Jones, Francis Ford Coppola, Spike Lee, Sherman Helmsley, Beatrice Arthur, Flip Wilson, Whitman Mayo, John Travolta, Sylvester Stallone, Harry Belafonte, and George Carlin.”

Noting that Holman is the father of two, I asked him to talk about the challenges and rewards of being a Father in the Millennium.

“The best thing about being a father is to be able to look at your children and be able to say that you have made a difference in their lives. That they’ve taken it upon themselves to follow whatever advice that you can provide them as a parent and to do what is right. To know that they love you as their father for your successes, your faults...to know that your love for them is unconditional. The down side of being a father is when children don’t achieve their goals and follow the wrong paths or traps that have been lain by the enemy – and as an African American male in our society -- knowing that there is a great level of disparity in our culture that is set up to destroy and/or detain them from obtaining their aspirations.”

How can we assist our children in becoming productive and well-adjusted, nurturing and productive members of society? Is this a responsibility which lies solely with parents? Or is it a responsibility that should be shared among parents, academic institutions, religious institutions, the business community and concerned citizens?

“The first thing that a parent should do before they do ANYTHING for their children, is to teach them the importance of having a sense of purpose and a belief in God or a higher power. As a result, no matter what road they find

themselves on, at some point they will always have a sense of purpose and belonging. Every one plays an important aspect in the growth of our children. One person's child directly affects another person's child and so on. If we offer our children opportunities and we teach them pride and self worth, respect for themselves and family, we would have a stronger sense of community. Our families are divided – yes, we all know it's due to the inherent teachings of William Lynch, who proposed a psycho-physiological plan to dissimilate the Black race. However it is up to us as individuals, teachers and artists, etc. to make a difference in our communities.....most importantly in the lives of each child. The Nue Liberation Theatre provides a percentage of every performance for non-profit entities which focus on the cultivation and the preservation of our children.”

The discussion moved to Mr. Holman's creative endeavors. What is his latest project?

“Well, I am currently on an original spoken word, multi disciplinary project based upon collection of poetry and illustration entitled *Ghettoetry*, which I am producing and which is being directed by Emmit Thrower as a collaborative project – See *More Productions Presents Geoffrey D. Holman's Ghettoetry*. The production, which I produced and directed, first opened at The Bowery Poetry Club in New York City earlier this year. It will open again at The Nuyorican Poetry Café in August 2008 and will be produced as an off Broadway production and an independent film.”

What is the production's message?

“The production deals with the issues facing people of color living in urban America, displaying the prism of life in the ghetto through spoken word, visual art, music and dance.”

What's next for Geoffrey D. Holman?

“The next step for The Nue Liberation Theatre is to produce my original stage play *Loves Intention (A Comedy ... Seriously)* while producing '*Ghettoetry*' as an off-Broadway production.”

And how can interested individuals purchase Mr. Holman's original art or literary works?

“If anyone is interested in purchasing my original art or literary works, they can call me at

732-688-8691 or send me an e-mail to:
Blackrhythmpublishing07@yahoo.com. I can
also be reached on MY SPACE at

www.myspace.com/thenueliberationtheatre1.”

* * *

GROWING OUT OF PAIN

By: CARRY GREAVES

[PUBLISHED WITH AUTHOR'S PERMISSION]

Our inability to nurture ourselves within our relationships is causing us to be in continuous emotional pain. When we fail to protect our emotional and spiritual health we begin to create further problems for our future. It is quite evident that we live in a time that is beset with unprecedented problems. And such problems seem to be compounded by our unawareness of the direction that the world is going in. We are immersed in a crisis spanning from recession, environmental exigency, HIV/AIDS, health care extremities, and so on.

And as a country, a community, a family, and as individuals, we have every right to be upset. But *who* are we upset with? *And for what reasons?* Our anger or being upset has to be the motivating factor that will push us closer to solving the problems that our afflicting our country. Although our anger should be our inspiration, our anger should also be constructive so that we do not destroy ourselves in the process. When we probe deeper into our respective lives, we will see that many of society's problems began right at home. We are a microcosm to the world at large (macrocosm) in which we are the catalyst of so many of the problems we find ourselves confronted with.

It's much easier for us to throw the blame on someone else when we refuse to look critically at our individual lives. So we have to ask ourselves some serious questions, i.e., *Can we be partially to blame for our faltering educational, economic, and ecological system?* When we look closer we will see that most of our progression has been through technology and the material world, while most of our pain and suffering comes from our personal relationship with ourselves.

We put so much emphasis on the outer world and neglect ourselves. When we put more emphasis and effort into the things that

have no real value, and neglect our emotional and spiritual health, then we are headed nowhere fast! We need to set up the right paradigm that will allow us to come together as a nation and put aside our ideological differences to find common ground and solutions that can heal our pain in this ever changing world. There can never be a total healing of a deep emotional and spiritual wound if we continue to only patch it up and/or give it over to the material system.

Four out of five people in America have reported that they feel “stressed out” almost every day which has affected their personal relationships, job performance and their family and home life. When we place more on ourselves than we can handle, then it will inevitably produce more stress and frustration. The problem is not whether we cannot handle it or not. The problem lies in the fact that we don't exercise discipline, organization and patience in our lives. We must take mental note that everything has its limits. And when we cross that threshold or push ourselves beyond that which we can handle or control, then problems begin to emerge.

We have to prioritize what is important to us before we begin to move forward. And the first thing that should be on all of our lists is our physical and mental health. If our health is not in great shape then perhaps we need to take time out to upgrade it, whether it is through relaxation, exercise, diet, etc. So when we go overboard and become distressed, we should not blame anyone else. The blame is on the pressure that we placed on ourselves. Boundaries have to be set in order to fulfill our personal goals.

When we set boundaries in our lives, the boundaries define a limit to our performance for a specific task at hand. It's like putting a 100

watt light bulb in a 25 watt socket. Eventually, if not immediately, it is going to overheat and blow out. So there are boundaries to everything that we can do. But we have to recognize what they are before we begin. And if we are to stick within the realm of those boundaries then we can be much more successful in our undertakings. Going beyond the threshold of what we can do can have different, and in some cases permanent negative effects on our well being. Some will experience an anxiety attack, panic disorder, nervous breakdown, depression, anger, and migraines. Anxiety attacks can last every day for almost 4-6 months. And the symptoms can include worrying, restlessness, lack of concentration, and irritability. Panic disorders can best be described as having dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, rapid heart beat, profusely sweating, discomfort and

shakiness. And this can last anywhere between 15 to 30 minutes.

So when our well being can no longer handle the pressure then it has no other choice but to shut down. This is why it's very essential that we take our time and exercise discipline and patience in our line of work. There is no such thing as a stress-free life. But we can definitely lessen the pain that comes along with it by knowing our limits and not overworking ourselves just to satisfy someone else's standards. And once we're able to do so, we will be able to finish the said task without frustration. And more importantly, our health will be in better shape.

* * *

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HELPLESS NO MORE

BY: CARLOS MOORE

[PUBLISHED WITH AUTHOR'S PERMISSION]

HELPLESS: adjective; lacking protection or support, lacking strength or effectiveness; powerless.

Helpless: A word nobody likes when applied to them. Now, apply it to a divorced man, a father who does not have custody of his children. Add to it; to be unable to have frequent visits, sometimes none. We like it even less. Now, apply it to a father who is incarcerated, and EVERYBODY else holds all the cards. It's a word that drives you nuts.

Calling me helpless when my child is in need eats at the very core of my fatherhood. To tell me I am powerless to help, to come for, to effect in any way, shape, or form at all. I can not even BEGIN to tell you just how maddening that is, but I'm sure a few, far too many, reading this don't need to be told. They know for themselves.

Just last month, a counselor told me I was powerless, and that I could do nothing to help my son, who had been the victim of domestic

assault by his mother's boyfriend. I was beside myself with rage. That statement spawned this little note.

A few years prior to this, my ex-wife and I were told that my son had Bipolar Disorder. Now what? On top of everything else this poor kid had to contend with: an absent father, a Mom, who was always there now had to go to work, and was no longer there all the time. Three siblings where once he was the only one. Other men in and out of his life, leaving him with many unanswered questions, his growth unguided.

"HELPLESS" . . . "POWERLESS": are words I refused to understand. "Your sons (I have four) are out there, and you are in here. You can do nothing for them. When you accept that fact, your time will be easier. You have no control over his life, or the events in it." I do not speak with this person any more, as their version of "accept" is "give up." The only thing she got right is: "I have no "control", but I can

always affect him. Even by doing nothing, there will be an affect.

For everything else, she was wrong. First, when my son's mother and I decided to divorce, it went well, for the break up of a family. We didn't fight; she was willing to grant me joint legal custody right away. And, upon my release, I will be given joint physical custody.

And I do know full well how very blessed I am. Far too many parents are lucky if they get out of the courtroom with the shirts on their backs and a snapshot of their children more than once a year. I was lucky to have married someone who put our children's welfare, happiness, and needs above our discontent with each other. Far too rare an event, and that's sad.

Next, during my stay in prison, I make sure I send notes, draw pictures, and create cards. I make giant word-finds or crosswords for them based on subjects they enjoy. We here at the prison can, at times, record books onto tape, so our children can read a book with Daddy. Sometimes, I write my own stories about, or for, my sons; incorporating them into the story, and record those for them. I also play guitar and write songs to share with them, and so they get to "know" their father. I get to speak to them on the phone once every other week for a half-hour, and I get visits at least once a month.

In those letters, calls, stories, cards, songs, I always let them know they are loved and missed. I always, without fail, tell them how proud of them I am. It doesn't matter if they haven't done anything grand or big. That doesn't matter. "Hey, Mom said you were helping out with your new sister." "Yeah, a little." "Cool, thanks for being good to Mom and helping her out. We're really proud of you." They always seem to blush, which is really cute, but this super-short and easy exchange helps them so very much. It gives them the sunlight they need to grow.

I'm not there with them, and it kills me so much. I'm the type of father who needs to hold, and be with, and play with them, as they need all of that from me. It's a Father/Child symbiotic relationship. In the stories and songs, they are the heroes. Even if it's only underlying, the characters are them. Somehow, they always know who's who. There is always going

to be a problem, it's important for them to know that, but there is always going to be a solution, and it's never found in a bottle or a drug. If they doubt that, just ask them, "Where's Dad?"

You can still guide them. Maybe not in the way you wish with all your heart you could. Instead of stone and razor wire and miles (since parents don't always reside in the same state) separating you from your children, you can stay in touch with letters you write (or type, in this computer age), cards YOU make, songs you write and sing. A connection! That's what they need. They need to feel you love them. Contact of any type affects their ever-growing world. And the more often, the better.

I also get periodicals. When I'm done reading them, I send them to the boys, and write a letter about some of the articles I liked, leaving room for them to write back if they wish. Sometimes they respond, "Thanks for the magazine Dad. Yeah, looks like fishing for Arctic Grayling would be fun. We can plan a trip when you get home." Sometimes, they don't write back, but that will never stop me from continuing to keep in contact with them - to affect their beautiful lives.

Next, this son has Bipolar Disorder. "You can't do anything to help, Mr. Moore." Says YOU! I read, and I read, then I read some more. My son has something. I may not be able to cure it, but I'll read up about it until there is nothing his doctor can say that will confuse me. Bipolar children can't always be dealt with as a "normal" child of the same age. By reading, learning, and understanding what he's going through, I learn to be a better guide. I learn more about my son, and how to be the best I can before him. I read, so when my son speaks to me, I will understand his words, body language, or the million other things children do that no one but a parent who's listening can understand.

This also helps him at home. One book I felt was wonderful and helpful was, "The Explosive Child", by Dr. Green. My son's mother read it, and I studied it like a text book. I've read many other books that were very good, and some I didn't care for. But for me, my son, and his mother, that was the one we got the most out of. It's not just about Bipolar Disorder, or ADHD, it's also about learning and growing together. When you grow and share with your child, they grow tenfold.

Learn things that interest your child so you can interact with them. I am not a baseball fan, I'm more into football. But when one of my sons joined a Little League team, I read "Baseball For Dummies" and watched a game a week. That way, when my son came for a visit, or we talked on the phone, if he chose to go into baseball mode, I'm not looking like a Dad caught in the headlights. I can keep up with his conversation. Show your child that HIS/HER interests ARE important to you, even if it's one you don't like. Learn their music so you at least know who (or what) they're talking about. One of my sons loves "Eminem" (the dark side has him now). Not my cup of tea, but when he talks about him, I at least know who he is.

The point is, we may not be able to "control" all or even part of our children's daily lives or events, but we can, we MUST be part of

it. Even a small part can make such a large impact. We may not be able to "fix" all of their problems, and in fact, we need to let them learn how to "fix" problems for themselves. Behind-the-scenes guidance is a help, but we can also simply listen to their problems, hear their concerns, and let them know we share them and care about them. We can't cure them from any of the plagues they face in our world today, but we can learn about it so we can understand what they're going through. We can read about what affects their lives so we can help them grow, adjust, and feel better about themselves; making them secure, not just about who they are, but their relationship with you.

I refuse to listen to counselors who tell me I can't help my son. I refuse, and will be helpless no more.

* * *

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POETS-IN-RESIDENCE

BRAND NEW

A NEW BEGINNING
CAN CREATE A
HAPPY ENDING
BUT WHEN LIFE SEEMS
BURDENSOME
ONLY YOU CAN
MAKE IT BETTER.

SOME WORRY ABOUT
THE BIGGER THINGS IN LIFE,
WHEN IT'S THE SMALLER
THINGS
THAT TRULY COUNT.

SO WHEN LIFE SEEMS
LIKE IT'S GOING NO WHERE,
REMEMBER IT'S YOU AND ONLY
YOU
THAT DETERMINES THAT LIFE
WILL GO FORWARD AND NOT
TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENED YESTERYEAR.

■ Carry Greaves ■

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