

## Promoting Responsible Fatherhood

### **PAS published opinion, good or bad? You be the judge**

I came across an article under "FAMILY WARS" by Peggie Ward, Ph.D. The article is 23 pages long, you can find it at: <http://www.vev.ch/en/lit/alienati.htm>

If you have trouble locating article, e-mail me and I'll send you a copy.

She talks about her version of PAS, the varying levels/degrees and includes a composite case from actual examples.

She has come up with another category since the publication of the Parental Alienation Syndrome by R. Gardner, MD.

In the "extreme case" as Dr. Gardner would call it, Ward has split that category into two parts: Overt and Severe.

As a person that has been through every stage of PAS, I can see no cause to entertain another category. I believe that as certain things are said or not said to a child, the alienation that occurs could eventually lead to the severe stage.

Examples from Peggie Ward, Ph.D. on Overt:

- 1) Statements about the target parent are delusional or false:
  - a. "Your Mom doesn't pay support" when there is evidence to that effect.
  - b. "Your Father went out and got the meanest lawyer in town."
- 2) Inclusion of the children as victims of the target parent's bad behavior:
  - a. "Your Mom abandoned us"
  - b. "Your Dad doesn't love us (or you) anymore"
- 3) Overt criticism of the target parent:
  - a. "What's wrong with your Dad; he never/always does..."
- 4) The children are required to keep secrets from the target parent:
  - a. "Don't tell your Mom where you've been/who you've seen/where you are going/etc."
- 5) Threat of withdrawal of love: "I won't love you if you ...(see your Dad, etc...)"
- 6) Extreme lack of courtesy to the target parent.

She concludes the overt stage by stating: "At this stage of alienation, conscious motivation is always present, and the internal, interactional and external systems are fully

engaged in supporting the alienation process.

Peggie Ward, Ph.D. on Severe:

" The alienating parent will do anything to keep the children away from the target parent."

"At this stage the child is so enmeshed with the alienating parent that he or she agrees totally that the target parent is a villain and the scum of the earth. The child takes on the alienating parent's desires, emotions and hatreds and verbalizes them to all as his own. The child too sees the history of the target parent and family as all negative and is able to neither remember nor express any positive feeling for the target parent."

I'm sure we can all relate to many of the above examples.

My point is this, throughout the whole process of alienating a parent, the types of examples in the "overt" category will originate in the mild category and carry through to the extreme case.

The hold the alienating parent has on the child is enormous. The innuendo's from young on crescendo into a title wave over the course of time, destroying the child's ability to think for himself.

As I've stated before in another issue, the alienating parent totally takes over the child.

For example, when my son was in 4th grade, his dream car was a "Windstar". "You don't want a Porsche or some hot race car?," I replied. "No, Dad says the windstar is the best thing around!"

When my kids were in 2nd and 3rd grade they knew what middle and high school they'd be attending. Because those schools were the best, and that the district that I lived in (that didn't include my ex's school district) had inferior schools and the kids didn't learn anything there.

I was mortified! The kicker to those statements, were statements about college. " I don't need to go to college, Dad will teach me everything I need to know." "He knows more than anyone that ever went to college." "They don't teach you anything in college" "College is a waste of time." "Dad makes more money than anyone that ever went to college." And my children were young, probably around age seven and eight when I started hearing those statements.

Because I went to College, my ex does not want my children to be like me and thus has been successfully brainwashing them to believe my life style is inferior to his.

My children are now 9 and 11 and they still believe College is only for people that can't take care of themselves.

Back to my point, this is a process. PAS does not only affect the child and his relationship

with the target parent (us), his/her whole thought processes are affected.

And this is what I want researchers and the courts to understand. Not only are you fighting to see your kids, your fighting to give them a whole, healthy complete life.

I believe (and maybe I'm wrong), but the target parent has to be a healthy, loving parent. Because if we were as manipulative and controlling as the alienating parent our children would just bounce back and forth, taking sides with one parent one week and the other parent the next week. So give yourselves a pat on the back. You care enough about your child to not play the games.

One issue that really disturbed me about Peggie Ward's article was her resultant explanation of what to do with a child found to be in the "severe" category. Her solution which sounds like it was drawn upon the following case which stated: from *Webb v. Knudson*, 133 NH 665, 673 (1990) "Children are not chargeable with the misconduct of their parents and should not be uprooted from their home in order to discipline a recalcitrant parent." In other words award the child to the alienating parent because it would be less traumatic on the child than placing him/her with the parent the child hates. The article went on to describe how the child would probably runaway if placed with the target parent or get into other destructive patterns such as drug abuse, suicide and/or non-participatory in school.

My mouth dropped! This section prompted me to write the author a letter.

If the alienating parent died tomorrow who would get the child?

Picture this scenario, Judge at the conclusion of your custody hearing:

"You have done such a good job brainwashing your children that they want nothing to do with your ex-spouse, we don't believe you should be awarded the kids but you did such a good job that if we turn the kids over to your ex-spouse, your child would be devastated and we can't have that happen."

Has our elite set of "intelligent thinkers" lost their marbles?

I don't ever want to come across another published paper with this type of sentiment.

If you agree with me, please read her full article and then send her a note, her address is at the end of the publication.

I like Gardner's idea better; if necessary, a third, neutral party would be appointed to care for the child while he/she was being deprogrammed. And also, it may be necessary to curb visitation altogether from the alienating parent while the deprogramming was occurring.

To throw in the towel and say this child can not be saved, that this child does not need to be brought up in a healthy environment has to be some violation that the United Nations

has on file for third world countries why not here?

Now I don't want to sound like, the " bad guy" shouldn't get the kids, (which he/she shouldn't), but the researcher, missed a vital point in PAS. PAS affects the whole child not just one part.

If a child can be brainwashed, his own thought process's are not allowed to work like that of a normal, healthy child.

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