

### **Parental alienation**

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**306920**

**When evaluators get it wrong: false positive IDs and parental alienation / WARSHAK, R. A.; In: Psychology, Public Policy, and Law 26(1), 2020, pp.54-68**

*Describes how allegations that a parent has manipulated a child to turn against the other parent raise complex issues challenging child custody evaluators, expert witnesses, and courts. Explores the key issue that relates to false positive identifications of parental alienation - concluding that parental alienation exists in cases where it really does not, and argues that such mistaken conclusions fuel concerns about the application of parental alienation in family law cases and contribute to scepticism about the concept. Discusses mistaken conclusions that a child is alienated and that a parent has engaged in a campaign of alienating behaviour. Emphasises that evaluators should thoroughly investigate reasonable alternative explanations of the children's and parents' behaviours, including attention to seven criteria that distinguish irrationally alienated children from children whose negative or rejecting behaviours do not constitute parental alienation. Argues also that evaluators should also investigate various reasons for a child's preference for one parent. Discusses how alienating behaviour - seen in different degrees of intensity, frequency, and duration - can reflect different motivations. Claims that evaluators, experts, and judges who do not attend to the nuances of alienating behaviours are likely to reach false conclusions about the significance of the behaviours and make recommendations that do not serve children's best interests. Concludes that evaluators should attend to their overt and covert judgment biases and to the complexity of parental alienation issues in order to reduce the likelihood of faulty opinions that a child is alienated, or that a parent has engaged in alienating behaviours.*

**306922**

**When children reject contact with a parent: response to Lubit, 2019 / CHESTER, Suzanne; In: Journal of Family Trauma, Child Custody and Child Development Early View, 2021, pp.1-4**

*Responds to a 2019 article in which the author (Lubit) critiqued forensic child custody evaluators who interpreted the facts of the custody case through the lens of 'parental alienation' and then concluded that 'parental alienation' was the reason for the child's rejection of contact with a parent. Describes how the article showed that children reject contact for many different and legitimate reasons. Draws on this author's experience as a child's attorney in family court, this commentary endorses Lubit's argument and expands it to conclude that the appointment of a child's attorney charged with listening to what children have to say is key to understanding, and addressing, the actual reasons why children resist or reject contact with a parent.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1080/26904586.2020.1866734](https://doi.org/10.1080/26904586.2020.1866734)**

**306855**

**Obey the justice system or protect children? The moral dilemma posed by false parental alienation syndrome / CLEMENTE, Miguel; PADILLA-RACERO, Dolores; In: Children and Youth Services Review 120; January 2021, pp.105728**

*Focuses on the ethical dilemma involving whether to defend children and obey the law when a judge determines that a parent should deliver the child to the other parent although the*

*parent is aware that the child is being abused by the other parent, which could not be determined by the justice system. Presents results from a study conducted based on the Milgram Experiment regarding obedience to authority. Uses a sample comprised of 480 adult mothers who had not experienced having had custody of their children revoked by the justice system, with an ad hoc questionnaire being created to gather socio-demographic data to present a fictitious situation extracted from real legal cases in which a mother's custody of her daughter was revoked, and the SCL-90-R scale. Results demonstrate how women who are separated from their children display the same behaviour that would be displayed by any mother defending her children. Finds that Milgram's paradigm of Obedience to Authority (OTA) would not work, and the results are more consistent with the so-called Relationship Condition. Concludes that taking children away from their mothers causes serious psychological damage and unscientific theories should not be used to address child abuse.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105728](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105728)

**306173**

**A changing tide in change of residence? / ARMSTRONG, Kate;**

**In: Family Law 50(9), September 2020, pp.1214-1218**

*Describes a shift in the mood in private law proceedings away from 'last resort' approach to change of residence, arguably bringing jurisprudence in line with the available psychological research, with the courts choosing to refocus on the welfare needs of the child and how these can best be met, with a consequent renewed emphasis on allowing and promoting a relationship with both parents. Outlines the 2019 judgments of Re L (A Child) [2019] EWHC 867 (Fam) and Re H (Parental Alienation) [2019] EWHC 2723 (Fam), and looks at where one might turn for further expertise regarding how best to address the psychological impact on the child of an 'alienation'-type scenario. Discusses the importance of the professional evidence in both cases, and the obvious importance of an independent view in high conflict cases. Mentions the Cafcass Child Impact Assessment framework as a useful first port of call when considering whether analysis is robust enough to be relied upon, or whether further expert opinion should be sought.*

**306767**

**Empirical research on parental alienation: a descriptive literature review / MARQUES, T. M.; NARCISO, I.; FERREIRA, L. C.;**

**In: Children and Youth Services Review 119; December 2020, pp.105572**

*Seeks to characterize the research methodologies and provide a summary of the main research themes on parental alienation using a descriptive literature review of empirical research on parental alienation in peer-reviewed scientific journals between January 2000 and December 2018. Includes 43 studies, the majority of them following a quantitative, retrospective and cross-sectional design. Finds that parental alienation was mainly associated with divorce and child custody dispute contexts. Reveals the main themes targeted by empirical research: development and use of assessment measures for parental alienation; parental alienation patterns; validation of the parental alienation syndrome construct; parental alienation impact; parental alienation viewed as child abuse; professionals' voices and maps on parental alienation. Discusses limitations and recommendations for future research on parental alienation and highlights common themes and research gaps.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105572](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105572)

**306146**

**Enforcement of child arrangements order with contact conditions / BURROWS, David;**

**In: Family Law 50(7), July 2020, pp.813-814**

*Looks at a recent case concerning the enforcement of a child arrangement order amidst parental alienation and a parent's involvement in a cult. Explores the conditions that child arrangement orders may be subject to, and how such orders can provide a way forward for the weaker parent in parental alienation cases. Mentions that in this specific case however the modest measures taken by the judge to mitigate the harm he found were unlikely to be effective.*

**Targeted parents surviving parental alienation: Consequences of the alienation and coping strategies.**

**Lee-Maturana, Saulyn; Matthewson, Mandy L; Dwan, Corinna.**

**In: Journal of Child and Family Studies. Vol.29(8), 2020, pp. 2268-2280.**

*The aim of this study was to describe the consequences of being alienated from a child and to identify the coping strategies used by targeted parents to deal with the alienation. Using a qualitative descriptive design, 54 self-referred targeted parents alienated from their children participated in an in-depth interview. Narratives were analyzed through thematic analysis and commonalities in targeted parents' consequences and coping strategies were identified. Six subthemes emerged describing different consequences experienced by targeted parents due to parental alienation: emotional, behavioral, finances-work, cognitive, physical, and social. Also, eight different types of coping strategies were identified and classified according to the activities reported by the targeted parents. Parental alienation has serious consequences for targeted parents affecting various aspects of their lives. Targeted parents need more understanding, support and orientation to cope with their experience.*

**Psychological adaptation and beliefs in targeted parents: A study in the context of parental alienation**

**Tavares, Ana; Crespo, Carla; Ribeiro, Maria Teresa.**

**In: Journal of Child and Family Studies. Vol.29(8), 2020, pp. 2281-2289.**

*The main aim of the present study was to examine the psychological adaptation and beliefs of parents who identified themselves as experiencing a situation of parental alienation (targeted parents). Firstly, we compared psychological adaptation (depression, satisfaction with life) and belief in an unjust world in targeted parents and parents from the community. Secondly, we examined the associations between individual (depression, belief in an unjust world) and family (child behavior related to parental alienation, other parent's alienating behavior and triangulation) factors and satisfaction with life in targeted parents. A cross-sectional study was conducted with two sub-samples (N = 106) who completed self-report questionnaires assessing depression symptoms, belief in an unjust world, and satisfaction with life. Targeted parents additionally reported on parental alienation and triangulation measures. Results showed that targeted parents presented higher scores of depression symptoms and of beliefs in an unjust world and lower scores in satisfaction with life, compared to parents in the community. Standard multiple regression analysis showed a significant contribution of depression, belief in an unjust world and child behavior related to parental alienation for the satisfaction with life of targeted parents. Targeted parents reported higher depression symptoms and stronger beliefs in an unjust world than parents in a community sample. Individual and family factors contributed negatively for targeted parents' satisfaction with life. Identified modifiable factors can be useful for clinical interventions with parents living this adverse experience.*

**305495**

**The role of memory in parental alienation / SQUIRES, Sarah;**

**In: Seen and Heard Volume 30, Issue 2 - June 2020, pp.49-58**

*Analyses the role that memory plays in parental alienation, looking at the existence of false memories and how easy it is to 'implant' memories. Looks at what memory is, how memory is stored, and how false memories can be created. Introduces the implications of memory for parental alienation and how the susceptibility of children to their parents' influence can lead to the creation of false memories, which are then used as evidence for the purpose of parental alienation. Aims to provide some practical advice for practitioners looking to gather evidence.*

**305350**

**Concepts, controversies and conundrums of "alienation": lessons learned in a decade and reflections on challenges ahead / FIDLER, Barbara Jo; BALA, Nicholas;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.576-603**

*There have been significant advances in understandings and practice related parent-child contact problems (PCCPs), with a growing consensus about some issues and continuing controversy about others. It is widely acknowledged that PCCP cases are most fruitfully understood from a multi-factorial perspective. While some cases may be totally the "fault" of one parent (a parent perpetrating violence or abuse, or a parent exhibiting alienating behavior), in many situations both parents bear some responsibility: focusing on a single cause is rarely helpful. Most professionals and researchers agree that the challenge in practice is to distinguish between false positives and false negatives for both alienation (or unjustified rejection) and realistic estrangement (justified rejection). There is continuing controversy over whether the concept of "alienation" should be used, especially in court proceedings, and a related disagreement about the extent to which family courts are now failing to respond adequately to cases of intimate partner violence (IPV) or child abuse when alienation is also raised. Continuing education, intentional exploration of alternative hypotheses, and active perspective-taking will contribute to effective professional involvement. Increased parent education and prevention can play an important role, although for the more severe PCCP cases the family courts system will continue to play a critical role. While more research must be done, given the complexity of issues, conclusive findings are unlikely in the near future. Legislators and family justice professionals must make decisions based on a thorough analysis of each family's circumstances in the context of our present knowledge, taking account of the limits of the law. They will often face the conundrum of making decisions in the face of uncertainty.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1111/fcre.12488](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12488)**

**304957**

**Children: parental alienation and the role of Cafcass (England) / JARRETT, Tim;**

**London : House of Commons Library, 2020. 14p**

*This House of Commons Library briefing considers how Cafcass deals with the issue of parental alienation when it arises, which can affect contact and residence cases before the courts. It outlines Cafcass' recognition of parental alienation, and its role of talking to the children involved and to convey to the court their wishes and feelings, making sure that they have not been influenced by a parent. The briefing also looks at Cafcass' Child Impact Assessment Framework (CIAF), which was issued in October 2018 to help identify when parental alienation has occurred.*

**Click here to view resource: [Children: parental alienation and the role of Cafcass \(England\)](#)**

**305346**

**Responding to severe parent-child rejection cases without a parentectomy: a blended sequential intervention model and the role of the courts / POLAK, Shely; ALTOBELLI, Tom; POPIELARCZYK, Linda;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.507-524**

*There have been significant developments over the past two decades that have expanded our understanding of the dynamics of parent–child contact problems post-separation, which have resulted in some changes in judicial processes to respond to these cases. One significant advancement is a more sophisticated differentiation of the nature and severity of contact problems, which better assists legal and mental health professionals to provide more suitable legal and clinical interventions. However, the issue of innovative court processes has received limited attention. The authors describe a subgroup of families within the “severe” category, for whom an expanded intervention model, referred to as a Blended Sequential Intervention is proposed. This approach involves a reversal of care with court mandated therapeutic support for the rejected parent and child, but also involves the favored parent in the therapeutic plan from the outset, and is intended to avoid a permanent “parentectomy” of the child from either parent. The authors discuss how the courts should respond to these cases, and posit that until all therapeutic treatments are exhausted, interim orders should be preferred to final determinations, and judges should maintain oversight. The authors discuss the critical role of judicial leadership in working with lawyers and mental health professionals to manage and address the issues in these high conflict cases.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12496](https://10.1111/fcre.12496)

**305345**

**Trauma-informed interventions in parent-child contact cases / DEUTSCH, Robin; DROZD, Leslie; AJOKU, Chioma;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.470-487**

*Parent–child contact problems may arise in the context of high conflict separation/divorce dynamics between parents. In cases where there are parent–child contact problems and children resist or refuse contact with one of their parents, there may also be incidents of child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, or compromised parenting that can be experienced by a parent or child as traumatic. The circumstances around separation and/or post-divorce often result in intense stress for families. In this paper we distinguish between the stressful circumstances that may arise as a result of high interparental conflict and pulls for alignment from a parent, and the real or perceived trauma as a factor which contributes to resistance or refusal of a child to have contact with a parent. Interventions to address both trauma responses and the resist-refuse dynamics are differentiated and discussed. After screening and assessment, the intent is to treat trauma responses with short-term, evidence-based therapy, either before or concurrent with co-parent and family intervention.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12483](https://10.1111/fcre.12483)

**305344**

**Children resisting contact with a parent due to abuse, alienation, or other causes: can a proactive role for lawyers contribute to better outcomes? / CAMPBELL, Jacqueline;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.456-469**

*Lawyers have a significant role to play in cases where children are resisting contact with a parent, or the family appears to be going down that path, in the context of parental alienation, family violence or other factors. These cases pose great challenges for lawyers dealing with parents, as their clients are often anxiety-ridden, angry, scared, and may have difficulty focussing on the long-term interests of their children or themselves. A lawyer may be one of the first professionals encountered by the parents; lawyers for parents are advocates, but they are also in a position to provide wise counsel, to help triage the situation, provide practical advice, and early, helpful solutions. This article sets out practical suggestions for lawyers acting for parents. What can and should lawyers do to ensure they are part of the solution, not part of the problem? Lawyers need to be able to identify the*

*potential problems and provide practical help to the family – whether they are acting for the “preferred” parent, the “rejected” parent, or the involved children.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12482](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12482)

**305343**

**Risks and realities of working with alienated children / WARSHAK, Richard A.;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.432-455**

*Involvement in custody cases that include accusations of parental alienation—whether as an evaluator, expert witness, lawyer, judge, therapist, provider of a specialized intervention, or researcher—incurs both professional and personal risks. Some risks relate to false negative or false positive identifications of parental alienation that can lead to regulatory agency complaints and public condemnation by the parent who feels wronged by the case outcome. Other risks stem from providing services in an emerging area of practice and working with children who overtly oppose repairing the relationship with their rejected parent. These risks include: unfounded accusations of mistreating children; negatively biased commentary and sensationalist attacks in the media and in social media, professional conferences and journals, and in courtroom testimony; harassment, vilification, and invasion of privacy; threats of violence and public humiliation; shunning and rumor spreading by colleagues; and complaints to regulatory agencies. This article examines circumstances, beliefs, and dynamics that give rise to these risks, suggests precautions to reduce the risk of false accusations against professionals, and offers recommendations for dealing with regulatory agencies. Criticisms that a court or service provider has mistreated a child merit careful scrutiny in the context of the case evidence and empirical data. While some interventions for alienated children raise legitimate concerns, others have been maligned by anecdotal complaints that studies show do not represent the experience of most participants.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12481](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12481)

**305342**

**Gatekeeping by allegations: an examination of verified, unfounded, and fabricated allegations of child maltreatment within the context of resist and refusal dynamics / SAINI, Michael; LAAJASALO, Taina; PLATT, Stacey;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.417-431**

*Allegations of child maltreatment and neglect, including child sexual abuse, in the context of child custody disputes pose particular challenges for child protection services, family law professionals and the courts to identify children at risk of harm, as well as children impacted and exposed to other risk factors. Accurately identifying child maltreatment requires assessing the background, the history and the context of the allegations in order to differentiate confirmed, unfounded, and fabricated allegations. The paper provides a review of the history and current understanding of allegations within the context of child custody disputes by considering the connections of fabricated allegations to the theory of alienation and the role of gatekeeping. The paper then examines the social science literature regarding allegations within child protection investigations (the prevalence, types of maltreatment, reporter of allegations, and case outcomes) and explores the factors that have contributed to the challenges faced by child protection services to investigate and make determinations regarding allegations within the context of child custody disputes. We argue for early assessment protocols for child protection services to screen child custody cases, to differentiate allegations of alienation from other types of harm, to enhance role clarity in these volatile situations, to refrain from “taking sides” and to work collaboratively with the family law community. Lastly, we offer legal implications to improve collaboration between child protection services and the family law field to better respond to these complex cases.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12480](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12480)



**305341**

**Manipulation and domestic abuse in contested contact: threats to children's participation rights / MORRISON, Fiona; TISDALL, E Kay M; CALLAGHAN, Jane E. M.;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.403-416**

*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has catalysed numerous jurisdictions to introduce new legal provisions to support children's participation rights when child contact is contested. Despite this, children's participation is frequently limited in practice, especially in contexts where children are perceived as vulnerable to a parent's manipulation, even if there are allegations of domestic abuse. While "resist and refusal dynamics" have yet to become mainstream terms in Scottish family law, "manipulation" has become a common concern in cases of contested contact. Drawing on a Scottish empirical study on contested child contact in circumstances of domestic abuse, we interrogate the implications that the concept of manipulation has for children's participation rights. The study involved separate in-depth interviews with 18 children and their 16 mothers. Findings point to concerns about upholding children's participation rights, particularly in cases where children were depicted as "influenced" or "manipulated." Through our analysis, we disentangle the problems professionals have when concerns about child manipulation and domestic abuse intersect. We argue that, when combined, allegations of manipulation and domestic abuse present a significant and serious risk to children's participation rights. We find the legal construction of the child's views as separate from the parental dispute to have unintended and serious consequences for children's participation rights. We offer ways in which law and practice may evolve to ensure children's participation rights in these contexts are both implemented and upheld.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12479](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12479)

**305336**

**Parental alienation: in search of common ground for a more differentiated theory /**

**JOHNSTON, Janet R.; SULLIVAN, Matthew J.;**

**In: Family Court Review 58(2), April 2020, pp.270-292**

*The concept of parental alienation (PA) has expanded in popular usage at the same time that it remains mired in controversy about its scientific integrity and its use as a legal strategy in response to an increasing range of issues in family court. In this paper we describe how competing advocacy movements (for mothers, fathers and children) in the family justice field have, over time, helped shape the shifting definitions and widening focal concerns of PA- from children who make false allegations of abuse, to those who resist or refuse contact with a parent, to parent relocation, and to the emotional abuse wrecked upon children who are victims of a manipulative parent. In search of common ground for a sound approach to using PA concepts, we argue that the Single Factor model of PA (asserting that an alienating preferred parent is primarily the source of the problem) is inadequate, overly simplistic and misleading. A Single Factor model rests on the fallacy that abuse or poor parenting on the part of either parent have been, or are able to be, ruled out as sufficient reason for the child's rejecting stance. By contrast, multi-factor models of PA make more useful, valid, differentiated clinical predictions of children's rejection of a parent, informed by basic and applied research on children and families. However, multi-factor models are complex and difficult to argue in court and to use in assessment and interventions. Suggestions are made for developing intervention-focused prediction models that reduce the number of factors involved and are applicable across different types of interventions.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1111/fcre.12472](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12472)

**305133**

**'It's not OK', but 'it' never happened: parental alienation accusations undermine children's safety in the New Zealand family court / MACKENZIE, Deborah; HERBERT, Ruth; ROBERTSON, Neville;**

**In: Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law 42(1), 2020, pp.106-117**

*While the public campaign slogan in New Zealand when referring to family violence, is 'It's Not OK', many women in New Zealand report that the Family Court prefers the catchphrase 'It never happened'. When women and children escaping violence and abuse reach out to the New Zealand Family Court for protection believing the justice system will help them, they often enter an alternative reality where they are not believed and are subsequently made less safe. This is particularly so for those women whose well-founded fears for their children's safety get reinterpreted as evidence of a deliberate attempt to alienate the children from their fathers. The Backbone Collective, an independent organisation, surveyed New Zealand women about their experiences in the Family Court, finding that many women reported being accused of parental alienation. This paper investigates the sources of these allegations of parental alienation and how they impact mothers and their children. We argue that the use of parental alienation in the New Zealand Family Court is undermining the international rights of children.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1080/09649069.2020.1701942](https://doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2020.1701942)**

**305132**

**U.S. child custody outcomes in cases involving parental alienation and abuse allegations: what do the data show? / MEIER, Joan S.;**

**In: Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law 42(1), 2020, pp.92-105**

*Family court and abuse professionals have long been polarized over the use of parental alienation claims to discredit a mother alleging that the father has been abusive or is unsafe for the children. This paper reports the findings from an empirical study of ten years of U.S. cases involving abuse and alienation claims. The findings confirm that mothers' claims of abuse, especially child physical or sexual abuse, increase their risk of losing custody, and that fathers' cross-claims of alienation virtually double that risk. Alienation's impact is gender-specific; fathers alleging mothers are abusive are not similarly undermined when mothers cross-claim alienation. In non-abuse cases, however, the data suggest that alienation has a more gender-neutral impact. These nuanced findings may help abuse and alienation professionals find some common ground.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1080/09649069.2020.1701941](https://doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2020.1701941)**

**305130**

**Professional responses to 'parental alienation': research informing practice / DOUGHTY, Julie; MAXWELL, Nina; SLATER, Tom;**

**In: Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law 42(1), 2020, pp.68-79**

*Parental alienation was historically a term rejected by courts in England and Wales, but lawyers and social workers have noted an increase in the incidence of its use, possibly driven by campaign groups and media narratives. The two statutory services that provide independent social work advice to courts in England and Wales, respectively, on children's best interests in parenting disputes, have taken different approaches to developing practice guidance in response to concerns about the recent use of alienation terminology. A review of international research and domestic case law was undertaken as part of the development of guidance in Wales. This review revealed a dearth of reliable evidence on the concept of parental alienation, its prevalence, effects and measures for intervention. This article builds on that review and recent developments to discuss the progress being made in practice to*



*counter myths about alienation and considers how best to support practitioners in resisting pressures to conform to these powerful narratives.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1080/09649069.2020.1701938](https://doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2020.1701938)

**305107**

**Parental alienation: whose judgment? / WELSTEAD, Mary;**

**In: Family Law 50(3), March 2020, pp.375-381**

*This legal update looks at a recent case concerning parental alienation, Re H (parental alienation) PA v TT and another [2019] EWHC 2723 (Fam). In this case, the judge ordered the immediate removal of a child from his mother's home to that of his father to take the end of the court hearing. The judgment raises questions about the concept of parental alienation as well as the involvement of psychological experts, which, in effect, determine the outcome for parents and children where there are disputes about contact.*

**305089**

**Tips and tactics in parental alienation and intractable hostility / WHITELEY, Ginny L.;**

**In: Family Law 50(2), February 2020, pp.242-249**

*This article provides some tips and tactics in tackling cases involving parental alienation and intractable hostility. It gives some definitions, advice in recognising the problematic cases, and highlights the risks to children. It also provides information on dealing with parental alienation and intractable hostility; looking at allegations, interim arrangements, the appointment of a children's guardian, the involvement of the local authority, final orders, and enforcement.*

**304766**

**A genealogy of hostility: parental alienation in England and Wales / BARNETT, Adrienne;**

**In: Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law Early View, 2020, pp.1-13**

*This article explores the emergence and development of parental alienation (PA) in England and Wales. It considers the background into which PA first appeared in private law proceedings concerning children in England and Wales, and examines how it progressed in the case law through the changing political and discursive context of private family law from 2000 to the end of March 2019. A clear pattern emerged of, initially, parental alienation syndrome and subsequently PA being raised in family proceedings and in political and popular arenas in response to concerns about and measures to address domestic abuse. The case law revealed a high incidence of domestic abuse perpetrated by parents (principally fathers) who were claiming that the resident parents (principally mothers) had alienated the children against them, which raises questions about the purpose of PA. More recently, a PA 'industry' appears to have amassed comprising experts, therapists and lawyers, advocating transfers of children's care from 'alienating' mothers to non-resident fathers, as well as PA therapy for children and parents. While PA has had a chequered history and is not without its critics, it has become part of the discursive repertoire of current family law, with increasingly harsh consequences for women and children.*

**Click here to view resource:** [10.1080/09649069.2019.1701921](https://doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2019.1701921)

**304786**

**Assessing the narratives of abused and alienated children: important differences in understanding the child's experiences for the purposes of assessment and planning in court proceedings / YOUNG, Helen;**

**In: Seen and Heard Volume 30, Issue 1 - March 2020, pp.40-47**

*There are a number of fundamental differences in the narratives of children who have experienced different forms of abuse - such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, Fabricated*

*Induced Illness (FI), emotional abuse and neglect, acrimonious parental separation, or parental alienation - which can help professionals in understanding the nature of children's experiences. This article is an attempt to capture observations of these narratives into a structure that supports good quality assessment of the presenting issues. The focus of this article is to share these observations with other professionals tasked with assessing and understanding the needs of children within the court arena, and ultimately in supporting child-centred permanency planning.*

**When evaluators get it wrong: False positive IDs and parental alienation / Warshak, Richard A.**

**In: Psychology, Public Policy, and Law. Vol.26(1), 2020, pp. 54-68.**

*Allegations that a parent has manipulated a child to turn against the other parent raise complex issues challenging child custody evaluators, expert witnesses, and courts. A key issue relates to false positive identifications of parental alienation-concluding that parental alienation exists in cases where it really does not. Such mistaken conclusions fuel concerns about the application of parental alienation in family law cases and contribute to skepticism about the concept. This article discusses mistaken conclusions that a child is alienated and that a parent has engaged in a campaign of alienating behavior. The article emphasizes that evaluators should thoroughly investigate reasonable alternative explanations of the children's and parents' behaviors, including attention to seven criteria that distinguish irrationally alienated children from children whose negative or rejecting behaviors do not constitute parental alienation. Evaluators should also investigate various reasons for a child's preference for one parent. Further, alienating behavior-seen in different degrees of intensity, frequency, and duration-can reflect different motivations. Evaluators, experts, and judges who do not attend to the nuances of alienating behaviors are likely to reach false conclusions about the significance of the behaviors and make recommendations that do not serve children's best interests. Finally, evaluators should attend to their overt and covert judgment biases and to the complexity of parental alienation issues in order to reduce the likelihood of faulty opinions that a child is alienated, or that a parent has engaged in alienating behaviors.*

**304025**

**Reclaiming parent-child relationships: outcomes of family bridges with alienated children / WARSHAK, Richard;**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 60(8), 2019, pp.645-667**

*A sample of 83 severely alienated children and adolescents were enrolled with the parents whom they had rejected in a 4-day Family Bridges educational workshop. The program was conducted after court orders had placed the children in the custody of their rejected parent. The parents who participated with the children in the workshop, and the professional workshop leaders, reported large improvements in the children's alienated behavior, changes that reflected statistically significant and large effects. The children's contact refusal with the rejected parent dropped from a pre-workshop rate of 85% to a post-workshop rate of 6%. Depending on the outcome measure, between 75% and 96% of the children overcame their alienation. The parents and children credited the workshop with improving their relationships and teaching them better relationship skills. Despite the children's negative initial expectations, most children felt positively about their workshop experience, regarded the workshop more like education than counseling, and reported that the professionals who led the program treated them with kindness and respect. All the parent participants and two-thirds of the children rated the workshop as excellent or good, but 8% of children retained their initial negative attitudes about the workshop and rated the workshop as poor. In sum, a significant number of intractable and severely alienated children and adolescents who*

*participated in the Family Bridges workshop repaired their damaged relationship with a parent whom they had previously rejected for an average of 3–4 years.*

**303974**

**Parental alienation: where are we now? / WILEY, Francesca;**

**In: Family Law 49(10), October 2019, pp.1137-1144**

*This article looks at the changing landscape in cases of parental alienation in the family courts. It looks at recent developments such as the Cafcass Child Impact Assessment Framework, at recent cases where alienation has been specifically referred to in the courts. It looks at the issues that still occur such as delayed fact-finding hearings when alienation is alleged, and the wishes and feelings of children. The article concludes by stating that whilst there has been a significant shift in the approach of the courts to cases where alienation is ultimately identified, it remains however an arduous and oftentimes emotionally and financially exhausting endeavour for a parent to prove alienation and to obtain a remedy.*

**303883**

**Children's resistance or refusal to spend time with a parent: practice guidance / GREAT BRITAIN. CAFCASS CYMRU;**

**Cardiff : Cafcass Cymru, 2019. 29p**

*In the context of separated parents in dispute over child-related arrangements, children who resist and/or refuse to spend time with a parent will feature frequently in cases that Cafcass Cymru has involvement in. With this in mind, this practice guidance aims to provide practitioners with the most up to date thinking, research, legislation and legal context in order to ensure that children and their families receive a quality, evidenced based service focussed on achieving the child's best interests. This guidance is to aid and assist thinking around the impact on children who resist or refuse to spend time with a parent and consider how best to approach such cases in the best interests of the child. This guidance is not designed to be prescriptive and should be used as an aid to practice; it contains recommendations for further reading and practical application of organisational procedures. It covers reasons for resistance/refusal, indicators of abuse, pre and post separation parent/child relationships, alienation, and making recommendations in the child's best interest.*

**Click here to view resource:** [Children's resistance or refusal to spend time with a parent](#)

**303843**

**Examining parental alienation treatments: Problems of principles and practices / MERCER, Jean;**

**In: Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal 36(4), 2019, pp.351-363**

*When children of high-conflict divorced parents prefer one parent and resist or refuse visitation with the other parent, some authors have spoken of this situation as parental alienation (PA). PA refers to cases of avoidance of a parent in which the preferred parent is alleged to have manipulated the child's thinking and created antagonism toward the non-preferred parent, and in which neither abuse nor neglect has been substantiated. Advocates of the PA concept have offered treatment methods that entail court-ordered separation of the child from the preferred parent, followed by intensive treatment and aftercare through specialized counseling, with separation and treatment sometimes lasting years. This paper examines the published evidence and other material related to the safety and effectiveness of PA treatments, and concludes that the treatments have not been shown to be effective, but are in fact potentially harmful. Suggestions are made for research approaches that could help to explain avoidance of a parent and that could yield effective treatment for such avoidance.*

**303786**

**Are intensive parental alienation treatments effective and safe for children and adolescents? / MERCER, Jean;**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 16(1), 2019, pp.67-113**

*Strong claims have been made for the possibility of diagnostic discrimination between children who refuse contact with a nonpreferred divorced parent due to parental alienation (PA) created by the preferred parent and those who refuse for other reasons such as abuse. PA proponents have also argued that interventions, which include custody changes, can alter the alienated children's attitudes and create positive behavior toward the nonpreferred parent. This article examines the plausibility of PA diagnostic and treatment claims and relevant empirical evidence. It is concluded that PA advocates have failed to provide empirical support for the safety and effectiveness of their methods and that custody proceedings should take these facts into consideration. Future research directions based on established understanding of child development are suggested.*

**303813**

**Parental alienation: standardising the process / FROST-SMITH, Rachel; HANDS, Mark; TRIM, Hayley;**

**In: Family Law 49(9), September 2019, pp.981-984**

*This article looks at the reasons for an increase in parental alienation cases such as legal aid cuts causing resident parents to go down the route of allegations of domestic abuse against the non-resident parent; substantiated or not. It looks at the increased phenomenon of parental alienation due to the difficulty of non-resident parents of fighting allegations and the subsequent breakdown of the relationship between the child and the non-resident parent due to the deliberate or malicious actions of the resident parent. The article calls for an increased clarity and uniformity across courts in tackling this situation and asks who is best placed to make determinations as to what is going on within a family such as this – the judge or experts? The article mentions the Cafcass 'Child Impact Assessment Framework' but asks whether the court is bound by findings and argues for a practice direction similar to PD12J to set out the approach to be taken by the court in these cases.*

**303467**

**Abusers gaining custody in family courts: A case series of over turned decisions / SILBERG, Joyanna; DALLAM, Stephanie;**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 16(2), 2019, pp.140-169**

*This article presents findings and recommendations based on an in-depth examination of records from 27 custody cases from across the United States. The goal of this case series was to determine why family courts may place children with a parent that the child alleges abused them rather than with the nonoffending parent. We focused on "turned around cases" involving allegations of child abuse that were at first viewed as false and later judged to be valid. The average time a child spent in the court ordered custody of an abusive parent was 3.2 years. In all cases we uncovered the father was the abusive parent and the mother sought to protect their child. Results revealed that initially courts were highly suspicious of mothers' motives for being concerned with abuse. These mothers were often treated poorly and two-thirds of the mothers were pathologized by the court for advocating for the safety of their children. Judges who initially ordered children into custody or visitation with abusive parents relied mainly on reports by custody evaluators and guardians ad litem who mistakenly accused mothers of attempting to alienate their children from the father or having coached the child to falsely report abuse. As a result, 59% of perpetrators were given sole custody and the rest were given joint custody or unsupervised visitation. After failing to*

*be protected in the first custody determination, 88% of children reported new incidents of abuse. The abuse often became increasingly severe and the children's mental and physical health frequently deteriorated. The main reason that cases turned around was because protective parents were able to present compelling evidence of the abuse and back the evidence up with reports by mental health professionals who had specific expertise in child abuse rather than merely custody assessment.*

**303468**

**Parental denigration reports across parent-child dyads: divorced parents underreport denigration behaviors compared to children / ROWEN, Jenna; EMERY, Robert;**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 16(2), 2019, pp.197-208**

*Parental denigration is a phenomenon characterized by disparaging comments made by one parent about the other parent, in front of their children. It is an emerging area of research with implications that appear to follow from a conflict perspective, rather than a parental alienation perspective. In three prior studies of young adults, sibling pairs, and parents, denigration was*

*found to be (a) measured reliably and validly, (b) reciprocally occurring, (c) related to children feeling more distant from both parents, particularly the more frequent denigrator, (d) associated with various measures of maladjustment, and (e) underreported by divorced parents. These results held across marital status and parent gender, in group and individual analyses, across sibling reports, and across studies. In the current study, parent reports of co-parent denigration behaviors were similar to child reports in both married and divorced families. However, divorced parents consistently underreported their own denigration behaviors compared to child reports, and their reports of parent-child closeness and attachment was not associated with child reports. This is consistent with findings from previous work that divorced parents may be less aware of their harmful behaviors and view coparents in a globally more negative light than children perceive them.*

**303089**

**Strengthening coparenting relationships to improve strained parent-child relationships: A follow-up study of parents' experiences of attending the overcoming barriers program / SAINI, Michael;**

**In: Family Court Review 57(2), April 2019, pp.217-230**

*Several interventions have been developed to address children's resistance and/or refusal to have contact with a parent following separation and divorce. There remains little agreement about how best to evaluate the success of these approaches. To explore the experiences of parents in the Overcoming Barriers Program (OCB), an online survey was distributed to all previous participants. Of the 40 parents who completed the survey at least six months after attending OCB, findings suggest mixed results. Benefits of OCB were more pronounced when changes were made to the coparenting relationships. Improvements in the coparenting relationship were specifically related to children's spending more time with both parents and better parent-child outcomes postintervention. Findings suggest that both the quality of parent-child relationships and the time that the children spend with both parents are associated with reported improvements in the cooperative coparenting relationship as a result of attending OCB. Implications are discussed in terms of lessons learned for developing, delivering, and evaluating similar programs for strained parent-child relationships.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1111/fcre.12405](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12405)**

**302816**

**Parental alienation: A measurement tool / ROWLANDS, Gena;**



**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 60(4), 2019, pp.316-331**

*The Rowlands Parental Alienation Scale (RPAS) was administered to 592 parents along with measures of convergent and discriminant validity. The scale was designed to capture the eight domains of parental alienating behavior posited in the literature. Factor analysis extracted only six factors, one of which was not included in the original eight: (a) campaign of denigration towards the alienated parent, (b) the independent thinker phenomenon, (c) reflexive support, (d) presence of borrowed scenarios, (e) spread of animosity to extended family, and (f) lack of positive affect towards the alienated parent. Parents who reported either that a court evaluation or court findings had confirmed the presence of parental alienation scored significantly higher on all six RPAS factors as well as on the overall RPAS score.*

**302339**

**Parental alienation: the vital early stages of litigation / RICHARDSON, Matthew;**

**In: Family Law 49(3), March 2019, pp.278-285**

*This article focuses on the practical aspects involved in the early stages of the litigation of allegations of 'parental alienation', on the basis that the 'direction of travel' taken in such cases is often vital. These cases can extend for years and result in highly unsatisfactory outcomes, but early and proactive decision-making can help to reduce the risks of this happening. The two principal steps that are taken at the start of a lawyer's problem-solving process are the focal point of this article. First, understand and define the problem at hand – clarify what is meant when such allegations are made. Second, gather and consider the evidence that might prove or disprove such an allegation in order to establish the fact of the matter.*

**Are intensive parental alienation treatments effective and safe for children and adolescents? Mercer, Jean.**

**In: Journal of Child Custody: Research, Issues, and Practices. 2019, pp. No Pagination Specified.**

*Strong claims have been made for the possibility of diagnostic discrimination between children who refuse contact with a nonpreferred divorced parent due to parental alienation (PA) created by the preferred parent and those who refuse for other reasons such as abuse. PA proponents have also argued that interventions, which include custody changes, can alter the alienated children's attitudes and create positive behavior toward the nonpreferred parent. This article examines the plausibility of PA diagnostic and treatment claims and relevant empirical evidence. It is concluded that PA advocates have failed to provide empirical support for the safety and effectiveness of their methods and that custody proceedings should take these facts into consideration. Future research directions based on established understanding of child development are suggested.*

**Factitious disorder by proxy, parent alienation, and the argument for interrelated multidimensional diagnoses.**

**Butz, Michael R; Evans, F. Barton.**

**In: Professional Psychology: Research and Practice. Vol.50(6), 2019, pp. 364-375.**

*Butz, Evans, and Webber-Dereszynski (2009) proposed that disorders such as factitious disorder by proxy (FDBP) ". . . may collectively be a forerunner of the more sophisticated practice of wedding individual diagnoses and group, social, family, and legal dynamics together into an integrated, coded conceptualization" (p. 37). This article expands this recommendation, offering the term interrelated multidimensional diagnoses (IMDs) to better describe phenomenon such as FDBP and parental alienation (PA). In turn, this article articulates a definition for IMDs and makes the argument that FDBP and PA are examples of*

*more sophisticated next generation diagnoses, which integrate the characteristics, interactions, and symptoms of individuals and systems dimensionally with greater explanatory power than other diagnoses alone. Implications for clinical and forensic identification and practice are discussed.*

**When evaluators get it wrong: False positive IDs and parental alienation.**

**Warshak, Richard A.**

**In: Psychology, Public Policy, and Law. 2019, pp. No Pagination Specified.**

*Allegations that a parent has manipulated a child to turn against the other parent raise complex issues challenging child custody evaluators, expert witnesses, and courts. A key issue relates to false positive identifications of parental alienation-concluding that parental alienation exists in cases where it really does not. Such mistaken conclusions fuel concerns about the application of parental alienation in family law cases and contribute to skepticism about the concept. This article discusses mistaken conclusions that a child is alienated and that a parent has engaged in a campaign of alienating behavior. The article emphasizes that evaluators should thoroughly investigate reasonable alternative explanations of the children's and parents' behaviors, including attention to seven criteria that distinguish irrationally alienated children from children whose negative or rejecting behaviors do not constitute parental alienation. Evaluators should also investigate various reasons for a child's preference for one parent. Further, alienating behavior-seen in different degrees of intensity, frequency, and duration-can reflect different motivations. Evaluators, experts, and judges who do not attend to the nuances of alienating behaviors are likely to reach false conclusions about the significance of the behaviors and make recommendations that do not serve children's best interests. Finally, evaluators should attend to their overt and covert judgment biases and to the complexity of parental alienation issues in order to reduce the likelihood of faulty opinions that a child is alienated, or that a parent has engaged in alienating behaviors.*

**304142**

**Valid and invalid ways to assess the reason a child rejects a parent: the continued malignant role of "parental alienation syndrome" / LUBIT, Roy;**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 16(1), 2019, pp.42-66**

*Despite widespread rejection of Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), some custody evaluators use the presence of its components to invalidate abuse allegations and blame the preferred parent. Although PAS supporters claim that the elements of PAS are unique to Parental Alienation (PA) and can, therefore, be used to diagnose it, no scientific study has yet demonstrated this. Reanalysis of Gardner's data, and our current knowledge of children, indicate that the elements of PAS are not unique to PA. Many PA/PAS advocates approach custody cases assuming that when children reject parents, it is probably the result of a denigration campaign by the preferred parent. Confirmation bias then leads the evaluator to spin, value, and vet information so that it support their expected conclusion. Children's avoidance of significant visitation with a parent is often driven by a desire to remain with their primary attachment figure, rather than a rejection of the other parent. Forcing visitation and cutting the children's time with the primary attachment figure leads to rejection of that parent, rather than solving it. The article suggests a method of scientifically assessing if a child's rejection of a parent is due to PA, affinity, or justified rejection.*

**Misperceptions and misapplications of research in family law cases: Myths of "Parental Alienation Syndrome" and implanted false memories.**

**Shaw, Morgan.**

**In: Journal of Child Custody: Research, Issues, and Practices. Vol.16(1), 2019, pp. 1-6.**

*This introduction highlights the need for a special issue in the Journal of Child Custody on the misconceptions and misapplications of research within the family law arena. First, an examination of why these topic areas are relevant is conducted including an overview of the types of false assumptions and biases that are still very much present within the family legal system and child custody evaluations, and how they have an ongoing negative impact on the lives of children and families. Then, this introduction introduces and outlines the different ways that the articles included in this first of the double special issue address the misconceptions contributing to faulty practice, including false memories, and provide a critical examination of the different ways that parental alienation is assessed and treated. Both issues within this two-part special issue present articles that clearly identify better and more appropriate directions for future research in order to strengthen child custody evaluations and the family law system as a whole.*

**302894**

**Judgments regarding parental alienation when parental hostility or child sexual abuse is alleged / PRIOLO-FILHO, Sidnei; GOLDFARB, Deborah; SHESTOWSKY, Donna; SAMPANA, Janelle; WILLIAMS, Lucia; GOODMAN, Gail;**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 15(4), 2018, pp.302-329**

*Allegations of Parental Alienation (PA), the systematic disparaging of one parent by the other parent aimed at alienating their child's affections, as a basis for child custody decisions are highly controversial. Claims of parental hostility or allegations of child sexual abuse in custody cases may trigger concerns about PA. Family court professionals (N = 280) rated young children's accuracy of report (e.g., suggestibility, honesty) in general and also read three custody scenarios varying as to whether or not they included allegations of parental hostility or child sexual abuse, or no such allegations. For each scenario, the alleged alienating parent's gender was experimentally varied between subjects. Participants rated the likelihood that each case involved PA. For the scenario that included allegations of child sexual abuse, professionals who viewed young children as more inaccurate reporters or who read about the mother (rather than a father) as the alleged alienator were more likely to rate the scenario as involving PA. For the scenario that described parental hostility but no child sexual abuse allegations, professionals who were older or female were more likely to judge the scenario as involving parental alienation when a mother (rather than a father) was the alleged alienator, whereas there were no significant predictors of responses to the no-allegation scenarios. Findings are discussed in relation to the difficult task of evaluating custody cases for PA when parental hostility or child sexual abuse is alleged.*

**301866**

**Exploring parent-child relationships in alienated versus neglected/emotionally abused children using the Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test / BLAGG, Nigel; GODFREY, Eva;**  
**In: Child Abuse Review 27(6), November/December 2018, pp.486-496**

*Children subject to parental alienation dynamics often present with psychological splitting and lack the ambivalence towards their parents which can be observed in other groups of children, even those who are emotionally abused and neglected. This paper used the Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test to explore differences between alienated and neglected/emotionally abused children's views and feelings towards their mothers and fathers. Results confirmed that alienated children engaged in splitting, idealising their preferred parent and demonising their target parent without legitimate justification. Conversely, neglected/emotionally abused children presented with greater ambivalence, sending both positive and negative messages to their mothers and fathers; although overall in this study, they displayed a tendency to idealise their parents despite the maltreatment that they had suffered. The results highlight the importance of not taking children's*

*expressed wishes at face value and the need for in-depth multimodal psychological assessments to establish children's ascertainable rather than expressed wishes.*

Click here to view resource: [10.1002/car.2537](https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/libraries/court-orders/10.1002/car.2537)

**301182**

**Fathers, children and the struggle to become a recognised parent: using court processes to recalibrate skewed relationships / BARNES, Gill Gorell;**

**In: Seen and Heard Volume 28, Issue 4 - December 2018, pp.54-65**

*This article looks at how the traditional model of fatherhood is changing, and looks at possible ways to work with fathers in the court process who may not have been offered opportunities in their own childhood to learn emotional warmth and expression; in particular this article aims to address men who are good in their intention to be parents, but unclear about what a commitment to children involves. The author argues that fatherhood itself is very diverse and this diversity needs further recognition and naming by all involved, so that one can think about the differences and implications. The article looks at a variety of examples where the court process has brought idiosyncratic fatherhoods to the fore, each of which have their own characteristics which will affect how the mother and the child may think about 'dad'. It describes some ways in which families (and in particular fathers) can be helped to navigate the various pitfalls in the family courts that they may seem to be up against, such as alienating processes, through educative and empathic means.*

**302185**

**Parental alienating behaviors: an unacknowledged form of family violence / HARMAN, Jennifer J.; KRUK, Edward; HINES, Denise;**

**In: Psychological Bulletin 144(12), 2018, pp.1275-1299**

*Despite affecting millions of families around the world, parental alienation has been largely unacknowledged or denied by legal and health professionals as a form of family violence. This complex form of aggression entails a parental figure engaging in the long-term use of a variety of aggressive behaviors to harm the relationship between their child and another parental figure, and/or to hurt the other parental figure directly because of their relationship with their child. Like other forms of family violence, parental alienation has serious and negative consequences for family members, yet victims are often blamed for their experience. In order to be recognized as a form of family violence and to secure protection for victims under law and social policies, a formal review and comparison of parental alienating behaviors and outcomes to child abuse and intimate partner violence has been sorely needed. The result of this review highlights how the societal denial of parental alienation has been like the historical social and political denial of other forms of abuse in many parts of the world (e.g., child abuse a century ago). Reframing parental alienating behaviors as a form of family violence also serves as a desperate call to action for social scientists to focus more theoretical and empirical attention to this topic.*

**301052**

**Parental alienation: in search of evidence / DOUGHTY, Julie; MAXWELL, Nina; SLATER, Tom;**

**In: Family Law 48(10), October 2018, pp.1304-1307**

*As a result of intractable contact disputes in private law, especially those that involve allegations of domestic abuse or parental alienation, taking up a great deal of court time, efforts are being undertaken to emphasise the importance of early-fact finding hearings in cases where such allegations or disputes facts about abuse or alienation arise. There are myriad reasons why a child might be resistant to a contact arrangement. Assumptions of a lack of agency in a child (especially pre-teens and teenagers) and coercion by one parent are*

*not helpful to anyone, as each case is different. It is therefore important to try to unpack the concept of parental alienation. This article draws on a recent review of research surrounding intractable contact disputes and parental alienation, as well as recent case law, to briefly summarise the messages from historical and contemporary perspectives.*

**301331**

**Adult report of childhood exposure to parental alienation at different developmental time periods / VERROCCHIO, Maria Christina; BAKER, Amy J L; MARCHETTI, Daniela;**

**In: Journal of Family Therapy 40(4), 2018, pp.602-618**

*The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between exposure to Parental Alienation (PA) at different developmental time periods and psychological maltreatment. Three hundred and sixty-one adults in Chieti, Italy completed an anonymous and confidential paper and pencil survey regarding their childhood exposure to twenty PA behaviours across three developmental time periods as well as a measure of psychological maltreatment by each parent. Results revealed that exposure to PA at each time period was significantly associated with psychological maltreatment. Moreover, the number of time periods of exposure to PA (from 0 to 3) was associated with psychological maltreatment. This was true for PA by mothers and PA by fathers. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.*

**300752**

**Parental alienation - a systemic perspective / O'SULLIVAN, Brian;**

**In: Context 157; June 2018, pp.4-7**

*Practitioners are increasingly being faced with a phenomenon where children strongly align themselves with one parent while rejecting the relationship with the other, previously-loved parent. This occurs in the context of high-conflict relationship breakdowns often referred to as 'parental alienation'. This article provides a systemic theoretical perspective to enhance our understanding and conceptualisation of family patterns and dynamics that result in the globally-identified phenomenon of parental alienation.*

**300756**

**Alienation: A view from the bridge / CHILD, Nick;**

**In: Context 157; June 2018, pp.22-25**

*This article explores a systemic approach to working with alienated families.*

**300757**

**The challenges of working with parental alienation / ZIMMERMAN, Frankie; HILL, Finella;**

**In: Context 157; June 2018, pp.26-31**

*This article explores the challenges of working with alienation from a systemic psychotherapy perspective.*

**300701**

**New perspectives on the alienation of children following conflictual parental separation? / CANTWELL, Brian;**

**In: Seen and Heard Volume 28, Issue 3 - July 2018, pp.61-65**

*This article is written from the perspective of a social work trained practitioner with 30 years experience in the field of separation and divorce. This practice background includes working as a trainer in relation to high conflict separation work with Mediation Services and Cafcass, therapeutic work with children and families in CAMHS and a decade leading a multi-disciplinary group of practitioners producing assessments for Courts in 'intractable' private law disputes. Over the past 5 years I have worked in a variety of roles as a family consultant with collaborative lawyers within the Resolution organisation.*



**300810**

**Restoring confidence in family justice / MCFARLANE, Andrew;**

**In: Family Law 48(8), August 2018, pp.988-992**

*The transcript of an address to the Families Need Fathers conference in June 2018, this article looks at parental responsibility, domestic abuse allegations, and parental alienation.*

**300281**

**Review of research and case law on parental alienation / DOUGHTY, Julie; MAXWELL, Nina; SLATER, Thomas;**

**Cardiff : Cardiff University, 2018. 59p**

*This review of research, commissioned by Cafcass Cymru (Wales), is on the topic of parental alienation and looks at both research and case law. The report begins with setting out the relevant law and the context of the review, followed by a description of the methods used. The research literature is then presented, followed by a case law review. The report ends with some discussion, conclusions and key messages for practice.*

**Click here to view resource:** [Review of research and case law on parental alienation](#)

**300186**

**The parental alienation syndrome: A family therapy and collaborative systems approach to amelioration / GOTTLIEB, Linda;**

**Springfield, IL: Charles C.Thomas, 2018. 277p**

*In this book, the author attempts to resolve the controversies surrounding Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) by providing substantial empirical evidence from her treatment cases in support of the eight symptoms which child psychiatrist, Richard Gardner, had identified as occurring in the PAS child, and she further exemplifies the commonality of the alienating maneuvers among the alienating parents. The author redefines the typically-held characterization of the parents' relationship as portrayed in the pertinent literature and accepted by most PAS-aware professionals. Numerous case examples are explored: horrific tales of manufactured child abuse; referrals to child protective services (CPS) resulting in suspension of visits between targeted parents and their children; meritless reports to police alleging domestic violence in support of orders of protection which slander and stigmatize targeted parents; exclusionary tactics preventing targeted parents' involvement in their children's medical, educational, social lives and activities; and depletion of targeted parents' resources due to legal fees required to defend himself/herself and to obtain judicial enforcement of parental rights. Ms. Gottlieb methodically documents that PAS is a form of emotional child abuse of the severest kind. The author provides an unprecedented number of treatment summaries, which demonstrate the effectiveness of structural family therapy in treating the PAS family. To further elucidate the subject, the author interviewed several matrimonial attorneys, Law Guardians, and forensic evaluators regarding their experiences with PAS, and she incorporated their thoughts into her recommendations as to how the mental health and judicial communities should resolve this situation in the best interests of the child. "New Rules" are suggested which encourage a collaborative rather than an adversarial approach to child custody. This book will be an excellent resource for parents who are divorcing or are in conflict, for adult-child victims of PAS, for mature children of divorcing parents, for judges, for Law Guardians, for matrimonial attorneys, for therapists, for child protective personnel, for law enforcement----and for the professional rescuer who believes that a child must be saved from a parent.*

**206966**

**Parental denigration: a form of conflict that typically backfires / ROWEN, Jenna; EMERY, Robert;**

**In: Family Court Review 56(2), April 2018, pp.258-268**

*Parental denigration is a phenomenon characterized by disparaging comments made by one parent about the other parent in front of their children. It is an emerging area of research with implications that could either follow a parental alienation perspective or a conflict perspective. In two prior studies of 648 and 994 young adults, denigration was found to be (1) measured reliably and perhaps validly; (2) reciprocally occurring; (3) related to children feeling more distant from both parents, particularly the more frequent denigrator; and (4) associated with various measures of maladjustment. These results held in married and divorced families, for mothers and fathers, in group and individual analyses, across own and sibling reports, and across studies. In a new study, parents also showed agreement in reported denigration, with divorced (particularly litigating) parents appearing motivated to underreport their own denigration behaviors and overreport their co-parent's denigration behaviors. Across all three studies, results consistently aligned with a conflict perspective and indicated that denigrating one's co-parent appears to boomerang and hurt the parent's own relationship with the children rather than distance children from the co-parent.*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1111/fcre.12339](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12339)**

**206794**

**Better equipped? / ABRAHAMS, Joanna**

**In: Family Law Journal - 174, March 2018 pp.22-24**

*This article sets out Cafcass's plans to address obstructive parents with the High Conflict Practice Pathway (HCPP), and questions whether more needs to be done.*

**Does parental coaching affect children's false reports? Comparing verbal markers of deception / Talwar, Victoria; Hubbard, Kyle; Saykaly, Christine; Lee, Kang; Lindsay, R.C.L; Bala, Nicholas.**

**In: Behavioral Sciences & the Law. Vol.36(1), 2018, pp. 84-97.**

*The present study examined differences in children's true and false narratives as a function of parental coaching by comparing the verbal markers associated with deception. Children (N = 65, 4-7 years old) played the same game with an adult stranger over three consecutive days. Parents coached their children to falsely allege that they had played a second game and to generate details for the fabricated event. One week after the last play session, children were interviewed about their experiences. For children with the least amount of parental coaching, true and false reports could be distinguished by multiple verbal markers of deception (e.g., cognitive processes, temporal information, self-references). The fabricated reports of children who spent more time being coached by a parent resembled their truthful reports. These findings have implications for real-world forensic contexts when children have been coached to make false allegations and fabricate information at the behest of a parent.*

**Using R-PAS in family law cases: Child custody evaluations / Lee, S. Margaret**

**Chapter in: Mihura, Joni L [Ed]; Meyer, Gregory J [Ed]. (2018). Using the Rorschach Performance Assessment System (R-PAS). (pp. 246-281). xi, 416 pp. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press; US.**

*One area of forensic assessment involves conducting child custody evaluations (CCEs). These evaluations are complex, necessitating assessment and understanding of both individual and family dynamics. Divorcing families requiring evaluation are those with the greatest conflict*

*or most serious problems, as most parents are able to resolve their disputes through other mechanisms, such as mediation, attorney negotiation, or judicial hearings. Cases requiring evaluation involve parental behaviors that put the child's safety, well-being, or development at risk; these behaviors include problems such as substance abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, child abuse, enmeshed parent-child relationships, restrictive gate-keeping behaviors, alienation, poor parenting, and the allegation that one parent is generating the ongoing conflict. Child custody disputes are "high-stakes" situations that affect control of the children's lives and the nature of the possible parent-child relationships. The evaluation process itself is high stakes, as judges tend to follow the evaluators' recommendations, largely because these evaluations are performed by neutral court-appointed experts who have gathered a broad range of data. The evaluator's role involves investigating for the court and explaining the results to the court. In many jurisdictions, evaluators are protected by court-based quasi-judicial immunity from malpractice suits. These factors place enormous pressure on the evaluator to "get it right."*

**300310**

**Mapping gender: shedding empirical light on family courts' treatment of cases involving abuse and alienation / MEIER, Joan; DICKSON, Sean;**

**In: Law & Inequality 35(2), 2017, pp.311-334**

*This article provides an empirical view of family courts' treatment of custody cases involving abuse and/or alienation claims. After a brief literature survey, the article describes the co-authors' pilot study, which begins empirically mapping family courts' uses of parental alienation theory in abuse cases. The pilot results provide powerful preliminary empirical validation of the growing number of strong critiques of family court practice in abuse cases.*

**206051**

**Understanding parental alienation, learning to cope, helping to heal/ WOODALL, Karen; WOODALL, Nick. - Springfield, IL: Charles C.Thomas, 2017. - 231p. -ISBN 9780398091750**

*This book is intended for parents who are experiencing parental alienation, as well as for mental health professionals, social workers or legal professionals working with families in divorce. It aims to help the reader understand the unique dynamics of the child's rejection and provides practical advice on preparing for court including how to develop a chronology of events and how to prepare a written submission. Specific guidance is also provided on how to help alienated children heal through reunification.*

**205927**

**Parental alienation, targeted parent perspective/ BALMER, Sian; MATTHEWSON, Mandy; HAINES, Janet. - 2017. The version catalogued is the pre-publication original dissertation. In: Australian Journal of Psychology - Early view 1-94**

*The aims of the study were to determine targeted parent experiences of parental alienation post-separation from the alienating parent, and to investigate common targeted parent characteristics. The findings offered new insights into targeted parent appraisals of their parental alienation experience. The results signified the seriousness of the impact of exposure to parental alienation for targeted parents, and highlighted a need for empirical research into the effectiveness of interventions and support services to assist targeted parents.*

**204642**

**Parental alienation - is it time to get Parliament involved? / ABRAHAMS, Joanna**

**In: Family Law 47(11) November 2017 1252-1254**

*This piece looks at the issue of parental alienation and its increased prominence in family law cases. The author argues that there is still much work to be done to ensure it gets the recognition both lawyers and their clients need, and that the Children Act 1989, contrary to Parliament's views, does not contain adequate provision to protect against the effects of parental alienation or implacable hostility. The author goes on to ask whether parental alienation should be addressed directly with legislation, and whilst there has been some movement in regard to this, it is important that this topic is not lost or dismissed and that progress is made. This article includes mention of Cafcass's work in parental alienation, in particular its extensive library on the subject.*

**300230**

**A phenomenological study of parental estrangement: / BEEBE, Patrick C.; SAILOR, Joanni L.;**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 58(S), 2017, 347-357**

*In the United States, the divorce rate is 40% to 50%, according to National Marriage and Divorce Rate Trends (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Gaining an understanding of the lived experience of parental estrangement for a child during the parental divorce was the goal of this study. For the 9 adult participants who experienced parental estrangement as children, each reported themes including anger, disappointment, isolation, control, and impact. In this study, the predominantly alienating parent was the custodial parent. The results indicated that it did not matter if the noncustodial parent lived down the street or several states away; the estrangement that developed was the same for each of them.*

**204981**

**Adult report of childhood exposure to parental alienation at different developmental time periods/ VERROCHIO, Maria Christina; BAKER, Amy J. L.; MARCHETTI, Daniela**

**In: Journal of Family Therapy, 10 Oct. 2017**

*The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between exposure to Parental Alienation (PA) at different developmental time periods and psychological maltreatment. Three hundred and sixty-one adults in Chieti, Italy completed an anonymous and confidential paper and pencil survey regarding their childhood exposure to twenty PA behaviours across three developmental time periods as well as a measure of psychological maltreatment by each parent. Results revealed that exposure to PA at each time period was significantly associated with psychological maltreatment. Moreover, the number of time periods of exposure to PA (from 0 to 3) was associated with psychological maltreatment. This was true for PA by mothers and PA by fathers. Implications for policy and practice are discussed. Practitioner points Mental health professionals can use the results of this study to guide their intervention efforts Co-parenting educators can incorporate these results into their routine efforts to help parents be aware of PA and its effects Targeted parents can use these findings to make the case for timely legal and mental health interventions*

**204101**

**Parental alienation or justifiable estrangement? Assessing a child's resistance to a parent in the UK/ WHITCOMBE, Sue**

**In: Seen and Heard Volume 27, Issue 3 September 2017 31-47**

*This article looks at the issue of parental alienation in detail. It describes symptomatic behaviours in the child, normal child behaviours and child abuse, parental and contextual factors, alienating behaviours, estrangement, assessment, case management, and interventions.*

**300307**

**Powerless to protect: The experiences of alienated parents in the UK / WHITCOMBE, Sue;  
In: Maltrattamento e abuso all'infanzia 19(1), 2017, pp.47-66**

*Parental alienation is the unwarranted denigration or rejection of a parent where there was a previous loving relationship. Despite thirty years of study establishing its aetiology, prevalence, appropriate interventions and outcomes for children, parental alienation remains a highly contentious concept in the UK. Additionally, there has been minimal exploration of the experiences of alienated parents across the globe. A recent Q analysis uncovered the subjective and intersubjective experiences of British alienated parents. An unexpected consensus became apparent which merited further analysis of the data. Through this phenomenological exploration of the participants' narratives, a pervasive sense of "powerlessness" emerged. The source of this felt sense of powerlessness is considered and recommendations for policy and practice are suggested.*

**203850**

**Overcoming parent-child contact problems, family-based interventions for resistance, rejection and alienation/ JUDGE, Abigail M.; DEUTSCH, Robin. - New York, NY : Oxford University Press, 2017. - 334p. ISBN 9780190235208**

*In recent years there has been heightened interest in the clinical and legal management of families in which children resist contact with one parent and become aligned with the other following divorce. Families affected by these dynamics require disproportionate resources and time from mental health and legal professionals, and cases require a specialized clinical approach. Traditional models of individual and family therapy are not designed to address these issues, and strategies and resources for mental health and legal professionals have been extremely limited. Overcoming Parent-Child Contact Problems describes interventions for families experiencing a high conflict divorce impasse where a child is resisting contact with a parent. It examines in detail one such intervention, the Overcoming Barriers approach, involving the entire family and combining psycho-education and clinical intervention. The book is divided into two parts: Part I presents an overview of parental alienation, including clinical approaches and a critical analysis of the many challenges associated with traditional outpatient family-based interventions. Part II presents the Overcoming Barriers approach, describing core aspects of the intervention and ways to adapt its clinical techniques to outpatient practice. Overcoming Parent-Child Contact Problems is geared toward mental health clinicians and legal professionals who work with families in high conflict and where a child resists visitation with a parent.*

**201080**

**Recommendations for best practice in response to parental alienation: findings from a systematic review / TEMPLER, Kate; MATTHEWSON, Mandy; HAINES, Janet & COX, Georgina**

**In: Journal of Family Therapy 39(1), February 2017 pp. 103-122**

*This study aimed to systematically review the literature pertaining to parental alienation to determine best practice for therapists and legal practitioners. Medline, Embase, and PsycINFO academic databases, the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials and conference abstracts were searched. Included articles were peer reviewed journal articles or books published in English pertaining to a psychological or legal intervention for parental alienation. Ten articles were included in the review. It was found that changes in custodial or residential arrangements in favour of the targeted parent are effective in ameliorating parental alienation. Specialized family therapy addressing the alienation is effective in restoring family relationships and family functioning. A coordinated approach from therapists and legal practitioners is important in resolving parental alienation.*



**202296**

**Narratives of attachment and processes of alienation in post-divorce parenting disputes / BARNES, Gill Gorell**

**In: Narrative therapies with children and families: a practitioner's guide to concepts and approaches** ED: Vetere, Arlene & DOWLING, Emilia

**Abingdon: Routledge, 2017**

*This chapter looks at various narratives of attachment and processes of alienation in post-divorce parenting disputes.*

**205851**

**Prevalence of parental alienation drawn from a representative poll / HARMAN, Jennifer J.; LEDER-ELDER, Sadie; BIRINGEN, Zeynep;**

**In: Children and Youth Services Review** 66; July 2016, pp.62-66

*The current work is the first known representative poll of adults (N = 610) aimed at determining the prevalence of parental alienation. Parental alienation describes actions that a parent takes to intentionally, or unintentionally, distance a child (or children) from the other parent (Darnell, 1998). Results revealed that 13.4% of parents (or 9.03% of the entire sample) have been alienated from one or more of their children. Our findings suggest that tens of millions of adults and their children may be impacted by parental alienation, which is much higher than previous estimates. Furthermore, findings show evidence of parental alienation across all socio-economic and demographic indicators. However, when compared to Census estimates of different demographic groups in the U.S. population, targeted parents were over-represented among Blacks/African Americans and Native Americans, and those with only a high school diploma level education. The sheer magnitude of parental alienation uncovered in this study indicates the need for more attention to be paid to this important and pervasive problem.*

**Click here to view resource:** <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.04.021>

**199660**

**When courts accept what science rejects: custody issues concerning the alleged "parental alienation syndrome" / CLEMENTE, Miguel & PADILLA-RACERO, Dolores**

**In: Journal of Child Custody** 13(2-3), 2016 pp. 126-133

*"Parental alienation syndrome" (PAS) is unscientific and is an affront to children, women who hold the custody of children of separated couples, science, human rights, and the justice system itself. Justice, to be just, should be based on scientifically proven theories and evidence. This article describes investigations carried out to show that two of the principles that underpin PAS are false: That children lie when pressed (alienated in the terminology of PAS), and that the principle that should guide judges' actions for the good of the child should be that for the child to always be in contact with both parents. The results of these investigations show that these two principles are false and advocates the use of truly scientific proceedings for judges to grant custody in case of dispute between parents, as well as for determining the visitation for the noncustodial parent.*

**199661**

**Recommended treatments for "Parental alienation syndrome" (PAS) may cause children foreseeable and lasting psychological harm / DALLAM, Stephanie & SILBERG, Joyanna**

**In: Journal of Child Custody** 13(2-3), 2016 pp. 134-143

*The coercive and punitive "therapies" recommended for children diagnosed with parental alienation constitute an ethical minefield and are especially inappropriate when used on*

*children who have already been traumatized. Forced reunification against a child's will and without taking into consideration the child's point of view and emotional well-being, can be expected to reinforce a sense of helplessness and powerlessness in an already vulnerable child. Such "treatment" can be expected to do more harm than good, and rather than helping their well-being, could cause lasting psychological harm, particularly when imposed upon children who claim the parent they are being forced to reunify with is abusive.*

**199659**

**Examining the validity of parental alienation syndrome / O'DONOHUE, William; BENUTO, Lorraine & BENNETT, Natalie**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 13(2-3), 2016 pp. 113-125**

*"Parental alienation syndrome" (PAS) is a phrase first coined by Dr. Richard Gardner. Since its inception several scholars have reviewed and criticized this construct, and it has never been accepted by the scientific community as a legitimate scientific construct, as a syndrome or as a mental disorder. Despite its general rejection as unscientific, the construct of PAS at times continues to be used in legal settings as if it has an adequate foundation within science, clinical, or forensic practice. This commentary briefly reviews past critiques of PAS and describes several additional problems that have occurred with the use of this construct.*

**198780**

**When a child rejects a parent: working with the intractable resist/refuse dynamic / WALTERS, Marjorie Gans;**

**In: Family Court Review 54(3), July 2016, pp.424-445**

*A subgroup of intractable families, in which a child refuses postseparation contact with a parent, perplexes and frustrates professionals who work with them. This article discusses the underlying forces that drive the family's intractability, as well as guidelines for working with the family. The guidelines include specific court orders developed from the very beginning of the case that elaborate the court's stance about goals and expectations for the family, along with specialized individual and family therapies that are undertaken within a framework of planned collaboration with the court. The collaborative team of legal and mental health professionals works in an innovative and active way to structure, support, and monitor the family's progress in resolving the resist/refuse dynamic*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1111/fcre.12238](https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12238)**

**198227**

**Parental alienation: surely the time has come to effect change? / EATON, Deborah; JARMAIN, K Stephen & LUSTIGMAN, Lisa**

**In: Family Law 46(5), May 2016 pp. 581-585**

*Dealing with the causes and consequences of parental alienation is one of the most difficult tasks faced by the Family Court. The law reports are littered with cases in which parents have, through no fault of their own, been unable to maintain relationships with their children, even with the support of the family justice system behind them. Practitioners and judges sometimes feel powerless to assist, despite it being apparent that the child involved is suffering harm. This article discusses parental alienation syndrome, what can be done to improve outcomes for children and alienated parents, and the role of the court.*

**198087**

**Making contact happen in chronic litigation cases: a mentalising approach / ASEN, Eia & MORRIS, Emma**

**In: Family Law 46(4), April 2016 pp. 511-515**

*This paper describes an innovative approach to assist the outcome of entrenched private law contact and residence disputes where dependent children are caught up in their parents' 'chronic' acrimonious relationship. In these high conflict cases, children frequently side with their resident parent and refuse to have direct or indirect contact with the other parent. Sometimes the children's response to contact, or even the prospect of contact, is so extreme it can resemble what one might call a 'parent phobia'. Court-appointed experts are often asked to provide opinions about contact for such families. Here, we outline the first of a two-phase 'therapeutic assessment model' developed by a specialist team at the Anna Freud Centre in London. The model is designed to facilitate contact in such cases by enhancing all family members' ability to mentalise themselves and others, whilst simultaneously assessing the parents' and children's capacity to change.*

**198241**

**Risks to professionals who work with troubled and alienated parent-child relationships / WARSHAK, Richard**

**In: American Journal of Family Therapy 44(3), 2016 pp. 111-128**

*Working with children who have irrationally rejected a parent is an emerging area of practice with unique risks. The dynamics that drive false allegations about a parent also drive accusations against professionals who participate in a process to reunify the children with that parent. This article discusses protective measures to reduce risks of false accusations, character assassination, harassment, and violence. Recommendations are offered for organizations charged with investigating complaints. Agencies that do an inadequate job of handling such complaints may harm the public by driving innovators from the field and reducing the availability of programs that have helped many families.*

**204423**

**Parenting plan evaluations, applied research for the family court/ DROZD, Leslie; SAINI, Michael; OLESEN, Nancy. 2nd ed**

**New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016**

*Parenting Plan Evaluations has become the go-to source for the most current empirical evidence in the field of child custody disputes. Fully updated in this Second Edition, the volume continues its focus on translating and implementing research associated with the most important topics within the family court. It presents an organized and in-depth analysis of the latest research and offers specific recommendations for applying these findings to the issues in child custody disputes. Written by international experts in the field, chapters cover the most important and complex issues that arise in family court, such as attachment and overnight timesharing with very young children, co-parenting children with chronic medical conditions and developmental disorders, domestic violence during separation and divorce, alienation, gay and lesbian co-parents, and relocation, among others. This volume assists forensic mental health professionals to proffer empirically based opinions, conclusions, and recommendations and assists family law judges and attorneys in evaluating the reliability of the information provided to the courts by mental health professionals in their reports and testimony. Not just for forensic evaluators, Parenting Plan Evaluations is a must-read for legal practitioners, family law judges and attorneys, and other professionals seeking to understand more about the science behind parenting plan evaluations.*

**300005**

**Getting through my parents' divorce: A workbook for children coping with divorce, parental alienation, and loyalty conflicts / BAKER, Amy J L; ANDRE, Katherine; Oakland, CA: Instant Help Books, 2015. 114p**

*Is your child stuck in the middle of a high-conflict divorce? In Getting Through My Parents' Divorce, two psychologists and experts in parental alienation offer a fun and engaging workbook to help kids work through stressful or confusing emotions and feel safe and loved—no matter what. This workbook includes a number of helpful suggestions to guide children through a number of possible scenarios, such as what to do if one parent says mean and untrue things about the other parent; what to do if a parent asks them to keep secrets from another parent; or what to do if one parent attempts to replace the other parent with a new spouse.*

**302733**

**Ten parental alienation fallacies that compromise decisions in court and in therapy / WARSHAK, Richard;**

**In: Professional Psychology 46(4), August 2015, pp.235-249**

*False beliefs about the genesis of parental alienation and about appropriate remedies shape opinions and decisions that fail to meet children's needs. This article examines 10 mistaken assumptions: (a) children never unreasonably reject the parent with whom they spend the most time, (b) children never unreasonably reject mothers, (c) each parent contributes equally to a child's alienation, (d) alienation is a child's transient, short-lived response to the parents' separation, (e) rejecting a parent is a short-term healthy coping mechanism, (f) young children living with an alienating parent need no intervention, (g) alienated adolescents' stated preferences should dominate custody decisions, (h) children who appear to function well outside the family need no intervention, (i) severely alienated children are best treated with traditional therapy techniques while living primarily with their favored parent, and (j) separating children from an alienating parent is traumatic. Reliance on false beliefs compromises investigations and undermines adequate consideration of alternative explanations for the causes of a child's alienation. Most critical, fallacies about parental alienation shortchange children and parents by supporting outcomes that fail to provide effective relief to those who experience this problem.*

**201593**

**An attachment-based model of parental alienation/ CHILDRESS, C. A. Claremont, CA : Oaksong Press, 2015**

*The construct of "parental alienation" has a controversial history. An attachment based model of "parental alienation" brings the controversy to an end. An attachment-based model of "parental alienation" uses established constructs and principles of professional psychology to fully describe the psychological and interpersonal processes that create the symptom features of "parental alienation." By defining "parental alienation" within standard and established psychological principles and constructs, an attachment-based model identifies a set of specific diagnostic indicators that can reliably identify "parental alienation" while differentiating "parental alienation" from other sources of parent-child conflict. An attachment-based model for the construct of "parental alienation" also identifies specific domains of professional expertise and knowledge necessary for the professionally competent diagnosis and treatment of this special population of children and families. Children deserve a childhood free from the stress of their parents' conflict, and parents deserve to love and be loved by their children. An attachment-based model of "parental alienation" represents an important step in creating a solution to the family tragedy of "parental alienation" in highconflict divorce.*

**195774**

**Contrasting complex with highly complex contact disputes between parents / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 56(7), 2015 pp. 590-594**

*This article discusses the complexity of seeking a solution to problems associated at times with parental alienation. Two scenarios are presented. Both cases involve a child who does not wish to have contact with an absent parent after the separation of the parents due to implacable hostility between them. In the first case, the child had a good relationship with the now absent parent. In the second case the child never had a close relationship with the absent parent. Each case needs to be assessed on its own merits. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made as to how to deal with such issues.*

**197240**

**A qualitative study of child custody evaluators' beliefs and opinions / SANDER, Leslie et al.  
In: Journal of Child Custody 12(3-4), 2015 pp. 205-230**

*Practices in child custody evaluations have created controversy and debate among professionals. Semi-structured interviews of 10 highly experienced child custody evaluators were analyzed to gain an understanding of the evaluation process, changes in the field, and evaluators' opinions and beliefs, especially concerning intimate partner violence (IPV) and parental alienation. Although a small qualitative sample, multiple evaluators had extreme beliefs and opinions about the prevalence of IPV in child custody cases, the belief that there is no such thing as parental alienation syndrome (PAS), and the need to differentiate between alienation and estrangement. Evaluators continue to value the ability of parents to co-parent as a top variable for making custody recommendations, seemingly regardless of alleged or substantiated IPV. Other concerning themes were identified and theoretical problem areas are discussed.*

**202956**

**Family reflections, a promising therapeutic program designed to treat severely alienated children and their family system/ REAY, Kathleen**

**In: American Journal of Family Therapy 43(2), 2015 197-207**

*Parental alienation is a form of child psychological abuse and traditional therapeutic approaches do not work with these types of cases. This article provides explanation for the gross failure of traditional therapeutic approaches. The rest of the article discusses the Family Reflections Reunification Program (FRRP), specifically designed to treat severely alienated children and their family system. This program was piloted in 2012 with 22 children in 12 families. Evaluations at the end of the retreat and at 3-month, 6-month, 9-month, and 12-month follow-ups demonstrate a 95% success rate in re-establishing and maintaining a relationship between children and once-rejected parents.*

**302729**

**Parental bonding and parental alienation as correlates of psychological maltreatment in adults in intact and non-intact families / BAKER, Amy J L; VERROCCHIO, Maria Christina;  
In: Journal of Child and Family Studies 24(10), October 2015, pp.3047-3057**

*Seven hundred and thirty nine (739) Italian adults completed a survey about (A) the extent to which each parent engaged in parental alienation behaviors (B) the extent to which each parent engaged in psychological maltreatment and (C) a measure of parental bonding for each parent. Associations between these variables were examined for each parent and separately for participants whose parents remained married and those who divorced/separated. Results revealed that across the board, parental alienation was associated with psychological maltreatment over and above the effects of parental bonding. These data are understood in the context of a relationship-specific model of psychological maltreatment in which the child experiences parental acceptance of the self as distinct from parental acceptance of the child's relationship with the other parent.*

**196199**

**How can the process of parental alienation and the alienator be effectively treated? / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 56(8), 2015 pp. 657-662**

*This article discusses primarily approaches or methods in dealing with a parent who alienates a child against another parent due to the hostility developed following divorce and separation. The basic vision or aims for combating parents in conflict are delineated. This is followed by the importance of being aware of the problems resulting in parental alienation (PA). To overcome PA an orderly set of stages from soft options to severe strategies are presented, with reasons for the use of the more severe method being provided. Finally, there is an appeal to the family courts and its judges to consider seriously the conclusions reached by one expert witness in how to combat PA by considering first and foremost the short- and long-term needs of the child and secondarily the alienated parent.*

**194418**

**Are children susceptible to manipulation?: The best interest of children and their testimony / CLEMENTE, Miguel; PADILLA-RACERO, Dolores;**

**In: Children and Youth Services Review 51; April 2015, pp.101-107**

*In Richard Gardner's proposed parental alienation syndrome, children reject contact with the noncustodial parent due to manipulation from the custodial parent. We investigated whether children are, in fact, easily manipulated, and how. Half of a sample of children ages 6 to 12 witnessed an incident of verbal aggression, while the other half did not. All were asked to report what happened. Half were then subjected to high pressure, stating that the aggressor would be their future teacher. Subjects were furthermore told that the perpetrator was either a good person or a bad person. After these two manipulations they reported again what they had witnessed. The results indicate that children rarely lie, and that although 40% of those who witnessed nothing created a false memory of an aggressive incident, this outcome was not influenced by the degree of pressure or positive or negative manipulation. We found no significant differences based on gender or age. We conclude that Gardner's ideas about parental alienation syndrome, and in particular the ease of parental manipulation of children, were not empirically verified. We recommend that this concept not be used in the legal system*

**Click here to view resource: [10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.02.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.02.003)**

**190135**

**Understanding and working with the alienated child / WOODALL, Karen**

**In: Seen and Heard 24(2), June 2014 pp. 37-48**

*This article looks at how parental alienation can be dealt with. The author argues that deeper assessment, therapeutic support and robust judicial control are almost always necessary in cases of parental alienation, alongside child-focused interventions.*

**189669**

**Exploring the lived experiences of psychologists working with parental alienation syndrome / VILJOEN, Marile & VAN RENSBURG, Esme**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 55(4), 2014 pp. 253-275**

*Divorce is a common modern phenomenon. Changes in legislation to support the best-interest-of-the-child principle are argued to have escalated conflict between parents during custody disputes. Parental alienation syndrome (PAS) is a controversial concept in high-conflict divorces and has received both praise and criticism over the past 2 decades. This*

*study explores the experiences of psychologists working with PAS in private practice. A snowball sample (n = 8) of psychologists willingly participated in the study. Data collection took place by means of in-depth interviews. Transcribed data were analyzed by means of thematic analysis, and themes and subthemes were derived. The 2 main categories that emerged were the participants' general understanding of PAS and the operational and practical experiences working with PAS. The participants working with PAS referred to it as complex and destructive. The involvement of lawyers, parental pathology, and legislation all contribute to the complex task of intervening in cases where PAS is present. The impact of working with such a complex phenomenon has emotional effects like self-doubt, disappointment, and anxiety. In some cases, this resulted in an active decision on the part of the psychologist not to work with forensic cases any more.*

**189477**

**Parental alienation gradient: strategies for a syndrome / LOPEZ, Teresa Junco; IGLESIAS, Victoria & GARCIA, Paula Fern'ndez**

**In: American Journal of Family Therapy 42(3), 2014 pp. 217-231**

*Two factors were analyzed in 72 divorced couples: the fact of having custody of the children or not, and the sex of the parent granted the custody. These factors influence the use of 27 different alienation strategies selected for study by the authors. The results show that the fact of having custody or not affects the number and type of alienation strategies used, whereas sex of the parent with custody only appears to affect the kinds of strategies used. This marks a qualitative difference between custody-holding men and women in relation to the way they exercise alienation.*

**189183**

**The chameleon child: children as actors in the high conflict divorce drama / GARBER, Benjamin**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 11(1), 2014 pp. 25-40**

*Contemporary theory asserts that children become triangulated into their parents' conflicts due to alienation, estrangement, and enmeshment. These dynamics account for some children's alliance with one parent and rejection of the other. The present article suggests that the child's innate need to adapt and the caregivers' corresponding needs for confirmation together create an additional dynamic that must be considered as part of any family system evaluation. The "chameleon child" engages in necessary and natural short-term adaptive behaviors at unknown developmental costs. An observational protocol is described with which evaluators can begin to distinguish among these dynamics. Case illustrations are provided.*

**204632**

**Children held hostage, identifying brainwashed children, presenting a case, and crafting solutions/ CLAWAR, Stanley S.; RIVLIN, Brynne V. - 2nd ed. - Chicago, IL: American Bar Association, 2013. - 530p. ISBN 9781627221559**

*In this book, the authors use important new research involving over 1,000 families to demonstrate that children can and are being used by parents in the divorce battle. Their research shows how negative actions by parents toward their children show up in court proceedings where children testify or are questioned by mental health professionals. The major issue in confronting this problem of programmed and brainwashed children has been identification of a child alienated by one parent against the other; proving it in court; and then finding a solution that not only works, but that a court will buy into. This updated edition of Children Held Hostage explains these issues in detail, with practice-focused explanations on every step in the process. The authors offer further insights into gender*



*issues and differences. Other new material includes a social-psychological profile of programmers and brainwashers; identification of the most commonly asked questions by judges, target parents, lawyers and children; an expanded social explanation to the causes, impact, and interventions; development of an abductor profile; charts to visualize key findings and processes; and much more.*

**204643**

**Parental alienation, the handbook for mental health and legal professionals/ LORANDOS, Demosthenes; BERNET, William; SAUBER, S Richard. - Springfield, IL: Charles C.Thomas, 2013. - 535p; includes 1 CD-ROM. ISBN 9780398088811**

*This handbook acts as a reference guide to aid mental health and legal professionals in developing data sources to support their positions in reports and testimony regarding the important and ever increasing area of behavioural science and law, parental alienation. It provides ready access to state of province (United States specific) legal citations, and contains a supplemental reference guide on CD-ROM.*

**201392**

**Bala parental alienation study: Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia / BALA, Nicholas; HUNT, Suzanne; MCCARNEY, Carrie; ASHBOURNE, Christine; GWYNNE, Erin; Kingston, Ont : Queen's University, Canada, 2013. N/A**

*Using databases of judicial decisions from Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom, from 1984-2012, searching terms "parental alienation", "alienated child", "alienated", etc., cases were combed through to determine whether they represented cases where the court dealt with an issue of alienation. Those cases that were found to have dealt with parental alienation were studied and analyzed.*

**Click here to view resource:** [Bala parental alienation study](#)

**189939**

**Working with alienated children and families: a clinical guidebook / BAKER, Amy & SAUBER, S Richard  
New York, NY: Routledge, 2013**

*This edited volume is written by and for mental health professionals who work directly with alienated children and their parents. The chapters are written by leaders in the field, all of whom know how vexing parental alienation can be for mental health professionals. No matter how the professional intersects with families affected by alienation, be it through individual treatment, reunification therapy, a school setting, or support groups, he or she needs to consider how to make proper assessments, how to guard against bias, and when and how to involve the court system, among other challenges. The clinical interventions presented in this book will help professionals answer these questions and help them to help their clients. The authors present a range of clinical options such as parent education, psycho-educational programs for children, and reunification programs for children and parents.*

**187335**

**Is the concept of parental alienation a meaningful one? / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig  
In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 54(8), 2013 PP. 658-667**

*Many members of the judiciary do not yet accept the concept of parental alienation (PA) or parental alienation syndrome (PAS). It has not as yet been included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders–5 or International Classification of Diseases–11. This article discusses the concept of PA as meaningful and resulting from serious conflict before, during, and after separation of parents. It results in a child failing to have good contact with*

*the now absent parent, despite the fact that the child previously had a good relationship with that parent. The concept of PA is defined and is differentiated into types. The behavior of the alienator and the alienated parent is described. The incidence, symptoms, and diagnosis of PA is also delineated, as are the long-term effects and treatment of PA.*

**186487**

**Enforcing child contact orders: are the family courts getting it right? / TRINDER, Liz; MACLEOD, Alison, PEARCE, Julia; WOODWARD, Hilary & HUNT, Joan**  
**In: Family Law 43(9), September 2013 pp. 1145-1149**

*There are long-standing concerns that courts fail to enforce their own orders in child contact cases following parental separation. Part of the problem has been that the available sanctions - fines, imprisonment or change of the child's residence - may be impractical or contrary to the child's welfare. The Children and Adoption Act 2006 sought to address this by introducing a new sanction of unpaid work (community service) for a defaulting parent. This new sanction has been rarely used. The Coalition government is now considering other policy options. To date, however, there has been no research on enforcement to inform policy-makers about the nature of the cases or the approach of the family courts. This article summarises findings from the first ever empirical study of enforcement in England based on analysis of 215 enforcement cases. It finds that most enforcement cases are about mutual conflict, risk and child refusal of contact rather than implacable hostility of the resident parent. The courts generally take an appropriately problem-solving rather than a punitive approach to these cases. There is no evidence that further punitive sanctions would be more widely used or more appropriate or more effective*

**181311**

**Children who resist postseparation parental contact: a differential approach for legal and mental health professionals / FIDLER, Barbara Jo; BALA, Nicholas & SAINI, Michael**  
**New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013**

*Interest in the problem of children who resist contact with or become alienated from a parent after separation or divorce is growing, due in part to parents' increasing frustrations with the apparent ineffectiveness of the legal system in handling these unique cases. There is a need for legal and mental health professionals to improve their understanding of, and response to, this polarizing social dynamic. Children Who Resist Post-Separation Parental Contact is a critical, empirically based review of parental alienation that integrates the best research evidence with clinical insight from interviews with leading scholars and practitioners. The authors - Fidler, Bala, and Saini - a psychologist, a lawyer and a social worker, are an multidisciplinary team who draw upon the growing body of mental health and legal literature to summarize the historical development and controversies surrounding the concept of "alienation" and explain the causes, dynamics, and differentiation of various types of parent-child relationship issues. The authors review research on prevalence, risk factors, indicators, assessment, and measurement to form a conceptual integration of multiple factors relevant to the etiology and maintenance of the problem of strained parent-child relationships. A differential approach to assessment and intervention is provided. Children's rights, the role of their wishes and preferences in legal proceedings, and the short- and long-term impact of parental alienation are also discussed. Considering legal, clinical, prevention, and intervention strategies, and concluding with recommendations for practice, research, and policy, this book is a much-needed resource for mental health professionals, judges, family lawyers, child protection workers, mediators, and others who work with families dealing with divorce, separation, and child custody issues.*

**186939**

**The attitude of the Shari'a courts to parental alienation syndrome: understanding the dynamics of the syndrome in Arab society / GITH, Emad**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 54(7), 2013 pp. 537-549**

*In addition to the many factors leading to parental alienation syndrome (PAS), including the narcissistic injury felt by the abandoned parent, or the custodial parent's personal difficulty, there are further factors unique to Arab society—including strong influence by the extended family on the child. Although all the components of PAS exist and are well known to the shari'a courts, no parallel concept is found in the Arab legal lexicon. This article presents 1 case of a shari'a court hearing that illustrates this phenomenon. The conclusions indicate that the shari'a court considers this a serious phenomenon and sees coping with the situation as an essential and preliminary condition to the custody hearing.*

**300049**

**Differentiating alienated from not alienated children: A pilot study / BAKER, Amy J L; BURKHARD, Barbara; ALBERTSON-KELLY, Jane;**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 53(3), 2012, 178-193**

*The subjects of this study were 40 consecutive children in a child therapy and evaluation agency, half of whom were seen for reunification therapy and half for other reasons related to parent-child difficulties in the context of high-conflict divorce. Children completed a 28-item paper-and-pencil questionnaire regarding their thoughts and feelings about their parents to assess the degree to which their statements reflected unjustified alienation from one parent and alignment with the other. Responses to the questionnaires were coded by the first author as reflective of alienation or not. Case files were independently reviewed by agency staff for presence of indicated abuse, and clinicians independently rated the children's resistance to treatment services. Findings revealed that presence of alienation was found in all but one reunification therapy case and in only four of the nonreunification cases. In addition, the children who were coded as exhibiting alienation were rated by their clinicians as significantly more resistant to treatment. Only one alienated child had an indicated abuse or neglect finding in the file, as opposed to five in the not-alienated group. These data highlight the unique configuration of behaviors and attitudes of alienated children and contribute to the knowledge base about how to evaluate and identify them.*

**300224**

**The life paths and lived experiences of adults who have experienced parental alienation: a retrospective study / GODBOUT, Elisabeth; PARENT, Claudine;**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 35(1), 2012, 34-54**

*This qualitative study concerns the life paths and lived experiences of 6 adults who have been alienated from a parent in the past. The results suggest several hypotheses concerning the factors that might place children at risk of being alienated from a parent. The presence of postseparation conflict and, in some cases, domestic violence, as well as the triangulation of the child appear to be elements that favor the emergence of parental alienation. Moreover, this study supports a multifactorial explanation of parental alienation. In the scope of lived experience, respondents associated alienation with difficulties at school, internal and external behavior problems, and a search for identity after reaching adulthood. Finally, overcoming the state of alienation involves issues surrounding the establishment of boundaries with the alienating parent and the rebuilding of a relationship with the alienated parent.*

**180726**

**The experience of motherhood for alienated mothers / FINZI-DOTTAN, Ricky; GOLDBLATT, Hadass; COHEN-MASICA, Orlee;**

**In: Child and Family Social Work 17(3), August 2012, pp.316-325**

*The concept 'parental alienation syndrome' (PAS) refers to child visitation interference with the non-resident parent following divorce. The refusal of children to maintain contact with mothers may be particularly traumatic because of social expectations surrounding women's maternal responsibilities. This qualitative study sought to examine the experience of being an alienated mother, how it impacts her identity as a mother and a woman, as well as its impact on her life as a whole. Data were collected by in-depth semi-structured interviews with 10 women whose children refused any contact with them. Findings revealed a main theme, 'merging vs. detachment', referring to an ongoing struggle that the women had experienced throughout their lives. This consisted of 4 subthemes: marriage as an illusion of salvation from an abusive home; giving birth to a child as compensation for chaotic childhood experiences; husband exploiting and abusing their sense of failing motherhood; and the husband and mother-in-law expelling the mother. These findings were interpreted within the framework of Bowen's theory. The interpretation suggests that impairment in the mothers' and ex-husbands' differentiation of the self is manifest in the shattered mother-child relations and in the mothers' loss of their children in the struggle with their mothers-in-law. Implications for practice are included.*

**Click here to view resource:** <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2011.00782.x>

**202954**

**The long-term correlates of childhood exposure to parental alienation on adult self-sufficiency and well-being/ BENAMI, Naomi; BAKER, Amy J L**

**In: American Journal of Family Therapy 40(2), 2012 169-183**

*In this retrospective study, we examined several long-term psychological correlates of experiencing parental alienation (PA) as a child, defined as reporting that one parent tried to undermine the child's relationship with the other parent. Differences between those who did and did not endorse having this experience were measured on self-sufficiency and four aspects of well-being: alcohol abuse, depression, attachment, and self-esteem. Results indicated significant associations between perceived exposure to parental alienation as a child and lower self-sufficiency, higher rates of major depressive disorder, lower self-esteem, and insecure attachment styles as adults. This research suggests that there are significant long-term psychological associations in the lives of adults who experienced parental alienation as children, which created observable vulnerabilities that differ from normative divorce situations.*

**204063**

**Complex alienation dynamics and very young children/ LUDOLPH, Pamela; BOW, James**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 9(3), 2012 153-178**

*Infants and preschoolers living in families beset by alienation dynamics are widely thought to resist alienation because of their immature emotional and cognitive abilities. Most writers also agree, however, that these children remain at significant risk for later consolidated alienation if family circumstances are not expeditiously changed. We address the resiliency and risk of very young children in the face of alienation, drawing on the literatures of attachment theory, child development, family systems, cognition, memory, and high conflict divorce. We also explore issues important to a thorough evaluation in these families and make suggestions as to effective treatments.*

**180031**

**Child contact disputes between parents and allegations of sex abuse: what does the research say? / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 53(3), 2012 pp.194-203**

*This article is written by a psychologist practicing in the area of clinical and forensic psychology. He has written widely in the area of child sex abuse, including a book entitled Paedophilia. He has dealt with many cases of parental alienation where sex abuse by one parent has been alleged. The object of this article is to try to provide a way of clarifying whether or not sexual abuse has occurred between an adult and a child, especially when implacable hostility exists between the parents who have parted. It is at such times that many custodial parents make allegations of sexual abuse against a now-absent parent, usually the father, to prevent access. It is important to protect children from actual sex abuse when it has occurred and to prevent this from reoccurring. It is, however, equally important not to allow false sexual allegations against a former partner who might have done nothing wrong but carried out his role as a caring and loving parent. The appendices of the article consist of an inventory that can be used by practitioners to differentiate true from false sex abuse allegations especially in relation to parental alienation conflicts.*

**180432**

**The essentials of parental alienation syndrome (PAS): it's real, it's here and it hurts / EVANS, Robert & BONE, J Michael**

**Palm Harbor, FL: The Center for Human Potential of America, 2011**

*Looks at all aspects of Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), making the distinction between PAS and Parental Alienation.*

**197779**

**To turn a child against a parent is to turn a child against himself: the direct and indirect effects of exposure to parental alienation strategies on self-esteem and well-being / BAKER, Amy & BEN-AMI, Naomi**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 52(7), 2011 pp. 472-489**

*Direct and indirect effects of exposure to 19 parental alienation strategies in 118 adult children of divorce were examined via a confidential and anonymous computer survey. We investigated the nature and prevalence of alienation strategies to which this sample was exposed as well as associations between exposure and self-esteem and self-sufficiency. In turn, we examined and found associations between self-esteem and higher rates of depression and insecure attachment styles and a trend for an association with alcohol abuse. All effects were found even after controlling for histories of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological maltreatment. These findings add to the growing body of evidence regarding the long-term consequences of experiencing parental alienation and indicate that in general, exposure to more alienation behaviors leads to more negative outcomes in children of divorce, which can be seen across the life span.*

**183470**

**The psychosocial treatment of parental alienation / DARNALL, Douglas**

**In: Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America 20(3), 2011 pp. 479-494**

*Parental alienation occurs in divorces when one parent indoctrinates the child to dislike, fear, and avoid contact with the other parent. Mental health professionals who treat children and adolescents are likely to encounter victims of parental alienation in clinical practice, and it is important to identify and treat these youngsters earlier, when the condition is mild, rather than later, when the parental alienation is almost intractable. This article presents an overview of the treatment of parental alienation, which is called reunification therapy. All the parties involved in the case have a role in the prevention and treatment of parental alienation.*

**178889**

**What if the custodial parent refuses to cooperate with child contact decisions? / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Journal of Divorce & Remarriage 52(5), 2011 pp. 322-325**

*This article considers the failings at present of the judicial system in not being even handed in providing justice for the noncustodial parent, who has for whatever reason been ousted from the relationship and has poor, if any, contact with his or her children. The advice being provided by the current psychologist dealing with such cases is for the judiciary to adopt a much firmer approach. This will lead to the judiciary being respected rather than being considered unjust. The article is concerned with severe parental alienation and provides a solution to the situation to prevent further emotional abuse of children against an absent parent. The author encourages mediation to commence with and then continue when making decisions as to who should have custody of the children who have been emotionally abused via an alienating parent.*

**300993**

**Intractable contact disputes - the extreme unreliability of children's ascertainable wishes and feelings: (based on lectures given to the Judicial Studies Board 2010-11) / WEIR, Kirk;**

**In: Family Court Journal 2(1), 2011, pp.1-8**

*The purpose of this paper is to suggest that the current practice of routinely seeking to establish the wishes and feelings of children caught in high conflicts over contact and residence may be a potential harm to the child and of dubious value. The basis for this opinion is many years of providing expert reports in contested cases in the civil courts of England and Wales, and in particular on the author's experience of insisting that children should be seen with the non resident parent as an essential part of assessments in high conflict cases.*

**177731**

**High-conflict contact disputes: evidence of the extreme unreliability of some children's ascertainable wishes and feelings / WEIR, Kirk;**

**In: Family Court Review 49(4), October 2011, pp.788-800**

*This article challenges an increasing orthodoxy regarding the weight which courts might place upon the expressed views of children in a specific situation--high-conflict contact disputes. I am a child psychiatrist who acts as an expert witness within the family courts of England & Wales. I have conducted a statistical analysis of cases in which I have conducted assessments of children caught in such disputes between their separated parents. Fifty-eight children met the criteria for inclusion in the study--the child's consistent opposition to contact with the non resident parent (NRP), despite the court having determined that there was no good reason to constrain contact. My assessment routinely included attempted observation of the child at a visit with the NRP. Despite their stated views most children had a positive experience in those visits that took place, and despite the fact that most had not seen the NRP for a long time. Overall there was a statistical association between increased resistance to contact and the greater age of the child and the longer the time during which no contact had occurred. However, the responses of children and young people were unpredictable and it was impossible to conclude that apparent maturity or intelligence was a guide to the reliability of their expressed resistance. The possible reasons for this unreliability are discussed. I emphasize that my sample of children is unusual as many of the cases had involved serious, though unfounded, allegations of abuse. In addition most of the children showed indications of having become "alienated" from the NRP. I conclude that courts might exercise caution when evaluating the views of children and young people in this situation, and emphasises that assessors should consider including at least one observation of the child at a prolonged visit to the NRP. Because of the new orthodoxy some parents may be tempted*

*to misuse their child's right to a "voice" in court in order to achieve their own ends. Practitioners who advise courts may need to be more aware of these difficulties.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2011.01414.x>

**175408**

**Parental alienation and the dynamics of the enmeshed parent-child dyad: adultification, parentification, and infantilization / GARBER, Benjamin;**

**In: Family Court Review 49(2), April 2011, pp.322-335**

*When caregivers conflict, systemic alliances shift and healthy parent-child roles can be corrupted. The present paper describes three forms of role corruption which can occur within the enmeshed dyad and as the common complement of alienation and estrangement. These include the child who is prematurely promoted to serve as a parent's ally and partner, the child who is inducted into service as the parent's caregiver, and the child whose development is inhibited by a parent who needs to be needed. These dynamics—adultification, parentification and infantilization, respectively—are each illustrated with brief case material. Family law professionals and clinicians alike are encouraged to conceptualize these dynamics as they occur within an imbalanced family system and thereby to craft interventions which intend to re-establish healthy roles. Some such interventions are reviewed and presented as one part of the constellation of services necessary for the triangulated child.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2011.01374.x>

**201397**

**Toward the differentiation of high-conflict families: an analysis of the social science research and Canadian case law / BIRNBAUM, Rachel; BALA, Nicholas;**

**In: Family Court Review 48(3), July 2010, pp.403-416**

*Social science research and the courts have begun to recognize the special challenges posed by "high-conflict" separations for children and the justice system. The use of "high conflict" terminology by social science researchers and the courts has increased dramatically over the past decade. This is an important development, but the term is often used vaguely and to characterize very different types of cases. An analysis of Canadian case law reveals that some judges are starting to differentiate between various degrees and types of high conflict. Often this judicial differentiation is implicit and occurs without full articulation of the factors that are taken into account in applying different remedies. There is a need for the development of more refined, explicit analytical concepts for the identification and differentiation of various types of high conflict cases. Empirically driven social science research can assist mental health professionals, lawyers and the courts in better understanding these cases and providing the most appropriate interventions. As a tentative scheme for differentiating cases, we propose distinguishing between high conflict cases where there is: (1) poor communication; (2) domestic violence; and (3) alienation. Further, there must be a differentiation between cases where one parent is a primary instigator for the conflict or abuse, and those where both parents bear significant responsibility.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2010.01319.x>

**302090**

**Divorce poison: how to protect your family from bad-mouthing and brainwashing / WARSHAK, Richard;**

**New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010. Rev. ed, 315p**

*This book aims to give parents powerful strategies to preserve and rebuild loving relationships with their children-and provides practical advice from legal and mental-health professionals to help their clients and safeguard the welfare of children. Whether they are perpetrators of divorce poison, victims of it, or both, parents who heed the author's advice*



*will enable their children to maintain love and respect for their parents-even if their parents no longer love and respect each other. The book aims to offer an effective response for parents whose separated partner is portraying them in a negative light, and even trying to alienate.*

**178685**

**Parental alienation disorder: why label children with a mental diagnosis? / WALKER, Lenore & SHAPIRO, David**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 7(4), 2010 pp. 266-286**

*The proposal to include Parental Alienation Disorder (PAD) in the new proposed Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-V) creates a host of problems. The first major problem is the labeling of children with a mental disorder who may simply be reacting with anger to the changes in their lives from the separation and divorce of their parents by rejecting one parent and aligning with the other. Diagnosis may bring with it shame and have a chilling impact on parents report of domestic violence. Although proponents of PAD are aware that it is inappropriate to diagnose children who have been exposed to child abuse and/or domestic violence with PAD, they do not clarify how to make such differential diagnoses. It is suggested that there are insufficient empirical data to differentiate abused and traumatized children from those who are alienated or estranged from the rejected parent. Nor are there sufficient scientific data to account for other child vulnerabilities such as neurological immaturity, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), other anxiety and mood disorders, or oppositional defiant disorder. There are too few comparisons between the risks and benefits of adding a new diagnosis of childhood disorders to justify its inclusion in the DSM-V. Appropriate intervention strategies recommended for PAD children include contact with the rejected parent, which differ widely from trauma victim/survivors who need assurance of safety and healing before contact is re-established. Ethical standards that may be impacted by this new diagnosis and admissibility issues raised by its predecessor, Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), are also discussed by the authors.*

**171894**

**Attachment theory and parental alienation / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Journal of Divorce and Remarriage 51(3), 2010 pp. 157-168**

*Following an acrimonious divorce or separation, arguments are frequently presented as to why a child should not be with a nonresident parent. The custodial parent, whether a father or a mother, uses the concept of a child being attached to himself or herself and therefore this should prevent the child from having actual or reasonable contact with the absent parent. This view is based on antagonism between the former partners rather than the importance of the attachment theory being relevant. The attachment theory is also used to discredit the intentions of the noncustodial parent. This is especially the case for the younger child. With older children this is not likely to be as relevant. The history of the development of the attachment theory commencing with Bowlby and Ainsworth is presented, and the counterarguments are also presented. Attachment to the mother is obviously important initially but attachment to the father is equally important to the child and such bonding is likely to lead to positive emotional and behavioral development. It is therefore argued that both fathers and mothers have an important role to play and are, or should be, responsible for the rearing of children. The acrimony between the couple should not be considered as relevant as it is, in fact, the real reason why attachment theory is used against a nonresident parent.*

**177076**

**Children resisting postseparation contact with a parent: concepts, controversies, and conundrums / FIDLER, Barbara-Jo; BALA, Nicholas;**

**In: Family Court Review 48(1), January 2010, pp.10-47**

*This article provides an overview of the key concepts, themes, issues, and possible mental health and legal interventions related to children's postseparation resistance to having contact with one parent. We maintain that the too often strongly gendered polemic on alienation and abuse is polarizing and needs to be replaced with a more nuanced and balanced discussion that recognizes the complexity of the issues so that the needs of children and families can be better met. This article reviews the historical development of the concept of alienation; discusses the causes, dynamics, and differentiation of various types of parent child contact problems; and summarizes the literature on the impact of alienation on children. These are complex cases. A significant portion of the cases in which alienation is alleged are not in fact alienation cases; for those where alienation is present, interventions will vary depending on the degree of the alienation. More severe alienation cases are unlikely to be responsive to therapeutic or psycho-educational interventions in the absence of either a temporary interruption of contact between the child and the alienating parent or a more permanent custody reversal. We conclude with a summary of recommendations for practice and policy, including the need for early identification and intervention to prevent the development of severe cases, interdisciplinary collaboration and further development and research of interventions.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01287.x>

**185253**

**Early identification and prevention of parent-child alienation: a framework for balancing risks and benefits of intervention / JAFFE, Peter; ASHBOURNE, Dan; MAMO, Alfred;**

**In: Family Court Review 48(1), January 2010, pp.136-152**

*This article looks at current thinking on parental alienation and offers a framework for prevention and early intervention.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01294.x>

**197781**

**Intervention strategies for parent coordinators in parental alienation cases / ELLIS, Elizabeth & BOYAN, Susan**

**In: American Journal of Family Therapy 38(3), 2010 pp. 218-236**

*Families characterized by parental alienation present problems that are extremely difficult to resolve through conventional methods of family therapy. Court appointed parenting coordinators (P.C.) are in the very best position to make effective interventions in these cases. The authors use genograms to illustrate the difficulties of establishing normal visitation and re-negotiating binuclear families in five different cases: (1) Divorced family, minimal conflict, (2) Divorced family, conflicted relationship, (3) Divorced family, child in alignment with mother, (4) Divorced family, child estranged from father, and (5) Divorced family, parental alienation. The authors then use the genograms to suggest interventions for PC's in five areas: (1) Creating a buffer zone to facilitate crossing the co-parental boundary, (2) Helping the child separate from the enmeshment with the alienating parent, (3) Blocking intrusions from the alienating parent, (4) Strengthening the bond with the targeted parent, and (5) Weakening the coalition around the alienating parent-child dyad.*

**204476**

**Finding a tenable middle space, understanding the role of clinical interventions when a child refuses contact with a parent/ WALTERS, Marjorie Gans; FRIEDLANDER, Steven**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 7(4), 2010 287-328**

*This article provides a detailed explanation of the use of clinical interventions, such as the Multi-Modal Family Intervention (MMFI), in situations where a child resists or refuses contact with a parent. Geared toward a multidisciplinary audience of judicial officers, family law attorneys, and mental health practitioners, the authors guide the reader through the conceptual formulations of the ways these interventions can be helpful and then offer three case examples that demonstrate the practical application of the concepts. The authors believe that effective clinical intervention is essential in resolving the resistance/refusal dynamic, and it also enables the child to experience and maintain a tenable space where having relationships with both parents is possible.*

**197787**

**A historical perspective on parental alienation syndrome and parental alienation / MEIER, Joan**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 6(3-4), 2009 pp. 232-257**

*Claims of parental alienation syndrome (PAS) and parental alienation (PA) have come to dominate custody litigation, especially where abuse is alleged. Although much psychological and legal literature has critiqued PAS, and leading researchers as well as most professional institutions have renounced the syndrome concept, alienation as a parental behavior or child's condition continues to be extensively investigated and credited in research and forensic contexts. This article reviews the history of PAS, both as posited by its inventor, Richard Gardner, and as used and applied in courts, suggesting that it not only lacks empirical basis or objective merit, but that it derives from its author's troubling beliefs about adult and child sexual interaction. It then examines the more recent explorations of non-syndrome "alienation" as proffered by Janet Johnston and others, noting both its more balanced and grounded nature and its more modest remedial implications. However, the article concludes that PA is too closely tied to PAS to be an adequate improvement. It, too, is used crudely in courts to defeat abuse allegations, it continues to rely on speculations about mothers' purported unconscious desires and their effects on children, and, more subtly than PAS, it minimizes abuse and its effects on mothers and children. At root, although even PA researchers have found it to be a real issue in only a small minority of contested custody cases, courts' and evaluators' extensive focus on it in response to mothers' abuse allegations continues to privilege false or exaggerated alienation concerns over valid concerns about abuse*

**202909**

**A guide to the "Parental Alienation Syndrome" / WEIR, Kirk;  
Edinburgh : Families Need Fathers Scotland, 2009. 10p**

*This guide looks at Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS). It covers its definition, causes, and symptoms, as well as providing some case examples.*

**Click here to view resource: [A guide to the "Parental Alienation Syndrome"](#)**

**169128**

**Reducing the hostility / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig**

**In: Justice of the Peace 17/5/2008 pp. 322-324**

*The author provides twenty four strategies for reducing the destructive effects of parental alienation and parental alienation syndrome. There is emphasis on seeking to provide good mediation and good contact between the non custodial parent and his/her child/children.*

**202840**

**Understanding child alienation and its impact on families/ FIDLER, Barbara Jo; BALA, Nicholas; BIRNBAUM, Rachel; KAVASSALIS, Katherine. - Toronto, Ontario : Thomson, 2008. - 203-229**

**In: 190961 - Challenging issues in child custody disputes**

*This chapter looks at child alienation and its impact on families.*

**184064**

**A stepwise approach to evaluating for Parental Alienation Syndrome / ELLIS, Elizabeth**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 4(1-2), 2008 pp. 55-78**

*Parental alienation syndrome continues to be a term that is widely used in child custody conflicts but which is also controversial. Previous authors have defined the term but have not established a standardized assessment process for PAS. The author emphasizes the importance of focusing on the child's behavior, then proceeding through a three step process: (1) determining if the refusal of contact with the parent is extreme and the alienation is severe, (2) determining if there is no basis for the extreme fear and anger toward the parent, (3) then determining if the child meets at least 10 of the 15 criteria that are proposed. The assessment process for each of the 15 criteria is outlined in detail with examples of each. Novel strategies and interview questions are suggested. The author includes a supplemental section for interview techniques that might be used with the alienating parent.*

**164541**

**Confusion and controversy in parental alienation / CLARKSON, Hugh; CLARKSON, Dale. - 2007**

**In: Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law 29(3 - 4), 2007 265-275**

*There is considerable confusion and debate about the best way to describe those cases where a child refuses to have further contact with one parent following parental separation. There are advocates for a syndromal approach and advocates for a continuum approach. Moreover, there is also confusion between descriptions and explanations in the relevant literature. Such confusion has caused problems for the courts when evaluating expert evidence. This article reviews the available descriptions and explanatory formulations that have been proposed.*

**191314**

**Parental alienation syndrome: breaking the ties that bind / BAKER, Amy**

**New York, NY: W W Norton, 2007**

*Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) occurs when divorcing parents use children as pawns, trying to turn the child against the other parent. This book examines the impact of PAS on adults and offers strategies and hope for dealing with the long-term effects*

**193656**

**Conceptualizing visitation resistance and refusal in the context of parental conflict, separation, and divorce / GARBER, Benjamin;**

**In: Family Court Review 45(4), October 2007, pp.588-599**

*A child's visitation resistance and refusal (VRR) in the context of parental separation, divorce, and post-divorce litigation must not prematurely be interpreted as evidence of alienation, a conclusion which can be as detrimental to the family system as it is ill founded. The present article proposes a child-centered, developmentally informed heuristic with which forensic evaluators might begin to more uniformly approach the potential causes of and remedies for VRR. An attachment-based, step-wise decision tree is described together with an overview of the remedies presently believed most appropriate to each. Recommendations for empirical*

*study of the multiple convergent dynamics which determine VRR and establishment of corresponding interventions follow.*

Click here to view resource: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2007.00173.x>

**159377**

**Parental alienation, how to understand and address parental alienation resulting from acrimonious divorce or separation / LOWENSTEIN, Ludwig. - Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing, 2007. 208p. ISBN 978-1905541102**

*Drawing on international research, this book discusses the problems and suffering encountered by parents and their children when parental alienation occurs and identifies the signs of Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS).*

**202730**

**Is it abuse, alienation and/or estrangement? A decision tree/ DROZD, Leslie; OLESEN, Nancy**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 1(3), 2004 65-106**

*Allegations of family violence, child abuse, and alienation often occur in the same contested child custody case. Custody evaluators often are poorly trained in forensic assessment of allegations of domestic violence and allegations of alienation. The authors of this article suggest language that is designed to differentiate between cases in which the term alienation is appropriate, as in non-abuse cases, and when it is best to use other language such as estrangement, sabotaging, and counter-productive protective parenting in cases where there is abuse. This article describes a decision tree that is designed to assist evaluators in identifying the causes of multiple allegations of maltreatment and abuse.*

**199900**

**Parental alienation in light of attachment theory / GARBER, Benjamin**

**In: Journal of Child Custody 1(4), 2004 pp. 49-76**

*Few ideas have captured the attention and charged the emotions of the public, of mental health and legal professionals as thoroughly as the concept of parental alienation and Gardner's (1987) Parental Alienation Syndrome. For all of this controversy, the alienation concept stands outside developmental theory and without firm empirical support. The present paper explores alienation and its conceptual counterpart, alignment, as the necessary and natural tools of child-caregiver attachment (Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969; Bowlby, 1969) and of family system cohesion. This conceptual foundation offers developmentalists, clinicians, and family law professionals alike a common language and valuable instruments with which to understand those relatively infrequent but highly charged circumstances in which these tools are used as weapons, particularly in the context of contested custody litigation. The need to establish baseline measures, child-centered interventions, and legal remedies anchored in the attachment model is discussed.*