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Speaking of Family

Connecticut Task Force hears accounts of victimization by family court

Life Family

by **Anne Stevenson** - Mar 1, 2014

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CONNECTICUT, March 1, 2014 — More than 80 parents testified before the Connecticut legislature on January 9, 2014, providing heart-wrenching details of victimization by the family court.

The hearing, called by Connecticut's [Legislative Task Force on Family Courts](#) was an effort to uncover the truth about the atrocities by the Court.

READ ALSO: [Connecticut Family Court: Are Guardian Ad Litem harming children?](#)

Some have argued that the actions of the Connecticut family courts resemble human trafficking.

Article 3, paragraph (a) of the [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons](#) defines Trafficking in Persons as"

"the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of

force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."

A small group of judges and mental health professionals in Connecticut appear to have manipulated the fact that fit parents will do almost anything to rescue their children to hold those families hostage. These individuals warped the law so that victimized families could not object or refuse to participate, or risk losing their children forever.



These families are literally dying for custody, but who would believe divorcing parents over the opinions of such highly regarded professionals?

The energy in the legislative hearing room that day was not stuffy, cold or formal. As victimized parents gathered in greater numbers, the room became charged with tension that felt more like a gladiatorial arena preparing for a fight between David and Goliath.

The ten member panel sat divided in half on a stage. Some task force members seemed adversarial to the prospect of meaningful systemic reform, perhaps due to their own conflicting financial stake in maintaining the status quo.

Several mental health and legal professionals affiliated with the **Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC)** seated on the top tier, while a Judicial Branch manager and a female State representative sat between two task force members affiliated with the National Parents Organization, a father's rights group formerly known as Fathers and Families. A few legislators sat in the fringes, listening with their jaws on the ground as the horrors unfolded.

Parents nervously paced the hallways, clutching and memorizing statements many had to wait 15 hours to give. Although the parents came from all different walks of life, they all had the same story about how they had been fleeced by officers of the courts and falsely discredited.

READ ALSO: Connecticut family destroyed by immunity granted to Guardian Ad Litem

Although the majority of attendees were men and fathers, there was a consensus that this was not about gender as much as about making sure the legislative branch of government understood how the judicial branch **had failed them**.

Parents explained how they lost everything in the scams, and put their billing records on the legislative record to prove it. Many privately admitted that after going through the courts, they no longer believed in God, but today they had placed their faith in the legislature and the press to renew it.

Perhaps the AFCC professionals who had ruled the courts for decades with their cronies expected that that they would dominate the legislative hearing, but this was not their property and so there was no pretense of respect or formality when attempts to abscond were made. At times, parents and members of the panel exploded with anger at each other for dragging things out, hurling accusations of fraud and corruption at each other. Afterwards, they retreated to their corners to lick their wounds, get a drink of water, and rest until the imaginary bell would ring, letting them know it was time to get back in the ring.

During the 14 hour hearing, drama was at a premium. Grown men and women cried with sadness and frustration as they spoke of the loss of their children and their life's work. The halls were littered with devastated parents and professionals who sobbed after telling their stories, comforting one another over the loss of a murdered child or a childhood home. Childless mothers said lives no longer had meaning and they would kill themselves but for the fear of leaving their children alone in the hell the courts had taken them to.

At one point, an industry professional normally kept tucked safely away from such tragedies at a nonprofit legal clinic asked, "Is it really this bad?"

"Yes," I said. "It's actually far worse when you think of all the fearful litigants who are not here."

It was literally do or die time for these families. It had become clear that the consequences of not speaking out were more catastrophic than any potential retribution a litigating parent might experience in return for their testimony. With the sale of the BrooklynBridge pending before the task force, these parents had no time to waste. On that day, they placed their faith on our Constitution's **separation of powers doctrine** with the hope that legislators would impose justice reforms that the judicial branch had refused to consider while Connecticut families were destroyed in their courtrooms.

The consensus was that Connecticut's family courts have evolved into an unregulated multi-billion dollar industry that represents a real threat to public safety.

KIDS FOR CASH OR ASYLUM RULES?

When you go to a court hearing, there is one judge who controls all communication in the room to ensure

only one person is speaking at a time. This can be torture for a parent who is not on the stand and filled with anxiety while listening to corrupt professionals testimony in ways that might result in harm to their families. Yet judges can fine, arrest, and jail you for speaking out of turn in court, a scenario unlikely to play out in the legislature.

For a year, I reviewed hundreds of cases and watched in horror while Connecticut family court judges allowed bogus testimony intended to make violent offenders, even **pedophiles** look like model parents, while fit parents without criminal records who tried to rescue their kids from dangerous situations were made to appear mentally ill.

READ ALSO: [Dying for custody \(Part 1\): DOJ announces investigation into Connecticut court program](#)

Covering the story of court corruption for over a year, I had listened to numerous accounts of children who had been raped and brutalized under the careful watch of the family court industry. I had held my breath in court hearings while judges whose **questionable financials** I had reviewed called themselves impartial fact finders, then allowed **outrageous miscarriages of justice** to occur. These findings terrified me so much that I wrote the first **two articles** of the exposé under a pseudonym to protect my own identity from the predators I exposed. But I quickly found support from professionals and parents shunned by local media who said release of **this type of information** was long overdue.

This type of brazen **misuse of mental healthcare assessments** and *ex parte* hearings were the main vehicles used by predatory family court industry professionals to justify custody switches placing children in the care of violent offenders (like **Joshua Komisarjevsky**), then opening up the floodgates to years of profitable extortion based litigation services. It didn't seem to matter if the parents wanted or needed the services or whether they could even afford them because the parents couldn't object or take their business elsewhere. The families were never the intended beneficiaries, the professionals billing them were.

In these types of cases, the fit parent always vowed they would never stop fighting for their child, but in the end they would always be bankrupted out of their parenting rights by court ordered therapists and evaluators who didn't take their insurance, visitation supervisors who knew their services wouldn't be needed if they wrote reports favorable to children, and GAL's who had barely met the kids they represented and billed parents they barely knew hundreds of thousands of dollars for services no one could verify. If parents didn't pay up or complained, the professionals often testified in court in ways that made them look unfit and their kids were taken away. The parents themselves had nothing to show for their money except a path of devastation and a child whose life still hung helplessly in the balance.

Often I'd seen cases where judges acted more like collection agencies for unethical and greedy GAL's engaged in outrageous misconduct who filed **outrageous billing statements** and motions to place liens on the parent's homes, wages, pensions, even the kid's college funds. Many times, parents I had spoken to were thrown in jail for nonpayment at the be haste of a GAL or judge who argued it was in the children's best interests. As if the kids needed these bogus professionals more than they needed survival necessities like

access to their parents, a home, or a few bags of groceries.

When the parents ran out of money, the **Public Defender's office** and family **court industry nonprofits** funded by the taxpayers would pick up the tab. At one point last spring, I'd tried to obtain some of the **payment records** from the Public Defender under the State's open records laws. When the agency refused, a hearing was held before the State's Freedom of Information Commission in Hartford. The Attorney General's office represented the Public Defender's Office and I was alone and *pro se*. The Attorney General must have thought this was important because he called the Public Defender's top 5 administrators (all attorneys) to take time off from their work defending the litigation embroiled poor to serve as witnesses. I'm sure some of these victimized childless parents would have appreciated the same type of zealous advocacy when it came to all the failed opportunities the state has had to rescue their kids, but chose not to.



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Anne Stevenson