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A Fathers Rights Revolution

By Sierra Stephenson

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Fathers Rights Revolution
- 1 Father's Rights Manifesto
- 3 Idea's Dealing with Father's Rights

Consider the political "face" that Americans have when it comes to father's rights groups and how they organize and identify these groups in this image. Their political personality is emotionally charged while comparing their fight for family law reform of the courts with woman's civil rights, their character also echo's the international in scoop of grievances of the family in crisis. Father's rights movement in this country of course is informed by their own national culture, values and the incorporated notion of what constitutes a "Good Father." How do father's advocate for reform and on what issues do they focus their attention. Father's Rights groups are very different in their goals than other groups or organizations in the fact that they have fatherhood at the core of their agenda, unlike other modern-based movements. Father's rights activists are not asking for more state intervention to fix their particular situation, they are asking for less.

Please see *Fathers Rights Revolution*
on page 2

Father's Rights "Manifesto" for Change

By Sierra Stephenson

What lies ahead for Father's Rights groups and their ineffective political action? Beyond self-examination, father's rights groups also need to decide how they want to handle forms of antifeminism and overt negativity toward women in contemporary society. Of course these types of hostile proclamations about women should instantaneously ring serious alarms among those interested in pursuing a fully egalitarian society. In addition to the folding and redirection of avocation that put single mother's interest at the core of their concerns increases significant public tension.

This tension around weather America should be a country that promotes equality of opportunity or equality of outcomes. Meaning there are those who believe and espouse equality of opportunity, principles should be for men and women being treated equally in every permissible are of their

Please see *Manifesto for Change*
on page 3

"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."

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This meaning that family law court should be gender blind in making child support and custody decisions and aim for 50-50 decisions being the ground rule. On the other hand there are those who argue men-women for a variety of reasons are differentially situated in terms of their economic and social standing. With this statement, father's rights groups need to work for certain preconditions that promote equality of outcomes for women in order to advance their own political agenda. Two areas need their fundamental attention;

1. The economic sphere.
2. The child care sphere.

Economically father's rights groups should join forces with national women's groups to improve the economic fortunes so that equal pay for equal work is the norm rather than the exception. In the Child care sphere father's rights groups must encourage men to become fully equal caretakers of their children, both when their relationships with their partners are solid and when they are less stable.

How do they affect this type of change? They can lobby employers to provide flexible schedules, which would allow men to share jobs, work from home and more generally be available to their children as needed. Noted that fathers on average take less than one week off when they have a new child. Clearly fathers should do much more child care sharing with mothers in the early stages of their "babies" lives which would then serve as the foundation for equal care giving down the road. Ironically the time is there; up to three month unpaid leave from the Family Leave act, which is public policy and we as father's need to take when it is offered. Father's rights groups represent the only channel for many men to obtain interpersonal assistance after all those men unable to afford the services of an attorney. The group setting might be the only

Please see *Manifesto for Change*
on page 4

Fathers Rights Revolution
from page 1

Father's have started coming together as groups when they have nowhere else to turn, exhausting legal remedies. These respondents turned to the groups with a source of home in their seemingly hopeless cases. In a variety of ways these fathers feel the "system" has failed them in their pursuit of equal justice and fairness in the court of law.

Most of the father's rights groups distrust state action in the area of child custody, due to distrust and unnecessary interference in the "natural state" of family affairs. Family life in other words is private and should not be micromanaged by the government. On a more abstract level some father's rights group's activists assert that some custody decisions are simply unconstitutional.

"Grief can take care of itself, but to get the full value of a joy you must have somebody to divide it with."



Ideas Dealing with Father's Rights

By Sierra Stephenson

1. Detail the reasons why legislation should be passed to protect parental rights under the law.
2. Detail the pros and cons of current laws that are on the books, use federal and local/state laws for referencing.
3. What reforms do fathers' want in terms of child support and child custody?
4. What constitutes a "good father" into the stress of the current legal infrastructure that prevents them from doing that?
5. What types of similar information specifically to men in need to crating programs that are not bound to any other competing constituencies (i.e. women)?
6. What as parents can we do to stop the system from using rules that stem back to the Victorian era? In other words, they are over two hundred years out of date and our laws reflect the morals, senses and circumstances that often do not apply to this time and culture.

There must be equilibrium in the system, state as well as federal, to protect the parent and children.



Fathers Rights Revolution
continued from page 2

lives.

The constitution is articulated in the following way:

The US constitution allows every parent the right to Parent [His or Her] child. The judges, legislators and other groups have decided to go against the constitution. Now there are trails about who's fit and unfit [as a parent]. No one has the right to take your father away from you and I mean "no one." I am very passionate about this as everyone should be!!!

The bottom line is that I believe it's a constitutional right for one to pursue life, liberty and happiness. When this is not being followed and adhered to, then our own constitutional rights are being trampled upon with extreme malice.

"Always acknowledge a fault. This will throw those in authority off their guard and give you an opportunity to commit more."

Manifesto for change from
page 2

opportunity that they have to acquire the information about the judicial process and for those that do not have the luxury of visiting a counselor or more formal resources of emotional help in relation to their children.

Father's rights groups might be their only resource for obtaining the practical tools necessary for their eventual emotional wellness and recovery. These groups need enhanced professionalization of services offered. Even groups that have a strong emphasis on the provisions of both legal and interpersonal information, the resources tend to be dispensed quite informally. The introduction of consistent, professionally run sessions, would help to fill in the blanks on a new issues faced by the people facing an ever changing legal and social environment.

Without question, these are ambitious goals for fathers across the board. Why should men after their political agenda, help secure equality for women? The long-term gains of course are clear and benefit all involved with the "family."

Hopefully with sufficient introspection these modifications need not be perceived as sacrifices for long, after all fathers are not autonomous individuals operation in isolation from the world around them. Instead they are deeply enmeshed with the fate of women everywhere, mother's sisters, nieces, aunts, and grandmothers.

Most importantly as fathers we need to recognize that we have daughters and if they see their work as benefiting their own girls and boys as they grow, then we as parents are giving them greater opportunities to be and have the opportunity be the egalitarian parents in a better society. They will have the capacity to mobilize around a new set of empowering policies, goals and relationships in practice.

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