

Introduction and Purpose

"Shattering Fictions in Divorce" is an invitation to our professional community to develop new paradigms. With the growth of our national experience it is within our reach to promote social psychological and legislative models that create "low conflict divorce."

We believe that divorce does not have to destroy the fathers and mothers who were once loving families. Each year one million divorcing mothers deserve the help and support that only a cooperative co-parent can provide. We believe that both parents have an equal and integral place in families transformed by divorce. We believe we can evolve policies that promote these values.

Every professional in the chain of divorce decisions has a moral responsibility to know those standards and measures that help. Different approaches to the problems of divorcing couples at the level of psychological treatment, legal management and better family law can change the outcome. Working together we can search for these seeds for healing.

The On Step Institute has brought together in this conference a marriage of research, relevant psychology and compassionate law. With these tools, professional participation at all levels can insure divorces where the continued growth and development of both parents and children is assured for the decades of life that follow.

Edward M. Stephens, M.D.
Ona Robinson, Ph.D.
Program Chairs

*Special thanks to Ildiko Mohacsy, M.D.
and Stephen Walker*

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The Institute is devoted to researching the origins of conflict and developing skill systems for promoting collaboration.

PROGRAM

Saturday, June 5, 1999

- 7:45 **Registration and coffee**
- 8:45 **Welcome and Introduction**
Edward M. Stephens, M.D.
Ona L. Robinson, Ph.D.
Directors, The On Step Institute
- 9:00 **Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) (Part I) Differential Diagnosis of the Three Types of PAS**
Richard A. Gardner, M.D.
- 10:15 **Break**
- 10:30 **Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) (Part II) Differential Diagnosis of the Three Types of PAS**
Richard A. Gardner, M.D.
- 11:15 **A Model Diagnostic Program and Transitional Site Proposal for PAS**
Edward M. Stephens, M.D.
- 12:15 **Lunch**
- 1:15 **Criteria for Differentiation Between True and False Sex Abuse Accusations in Child-Custody Disputes (Part I)**
Richard A. Gardner, M.D.
- 2:45 **Break**
- 3:00 **Criteria for Differentiation Between True and False Sex-Abuse Allegations in Child Custody Disputes (Part II)**
Richard A. Gardner, M.D.
- 4:30 **Wine and Cheese Reception**

Sunday June 6, 1999

- 8:00 **Registration and Coffee**
- 9:00 **Welcome and Introduction**
Edward M. Stephens, M.D.
Sidney Siller, Esq.
- 9:15 **Panel Presentation**
- Part I: A Nation Without Marriage: Planning for Millions of Un-Wed Americans, a project funded by the Ford Foundation, Mott Foundation, Lilly Endowment, and Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement**
Uriel D. Johnson
- Part II: A Nation After Divorce: A National View of Legislation for Divorcing Couples**
David L. Levy, J.D.
- 10:30 **Break**
- 10:45 **Shattering the Myths, Part I: Results of \$ 10,000,000 Federally Funded Research on Divorce, Custody and Support**
Sanford Braver Ph. D.
- 12:15 **Lunch**
- 1:10 **Award Presentation**
Sidney Siller, Esq.
- 1:15 **Legislative Initiatives in New York State**
David Sidikman, Esq., *Assemblyman*
- 1:45 **Shattering the Myths, Part II: Custody Policies That Work**
Sanford Braver, Ph.D.
- 3:00 **Break**

- 3:15 **WORKSHOP A**
Interactive Workshop Demonstration-- "Parenting After Divorce: Moving From Struggle to Cooperation"
A. Jayne Major, Ph.D.
- 3:15 **WORKSHOP B**
Crucial Treatment Issues for Parents and Children after Divorce
Ildiko Mohacsy, M.D.
Herbert J. Levowitz

Program Objectives

- Attorneys will become familiar with alienation and sex abuse allegations to reduce high conflict client behaviors.
- Mental Health Professionals will see the spectrum of PAS behaviors and develop facility in diagnosis and treatment.
- Judges will develop skill sets for crafting decisions using parenting plans and court ordered inventions
- Legislators will see the adversarial process that grows up as the parties try to negotiate in the shadow of the laws they create and see national family law trends that encourage conflict reduction.
- Participants will develop approaches through which they can promote the well-being of all parties, especially our children.