

Statement Regarding Divorce Corp. from Judge Sol Gothard

"I was asked to participate in Divorce Corp. regarding Family Court practices with respect to custody and the inequities and faults of the system. I readily agreed to participate because it was something I have been concerned with, first as an Assistant Chief Probation Officer in a Juvenile Court (6 years), then as a lawyer in private practice and also representing Child Protective Services (10 years), then as Juvenile Court Judge ((14 years), and finally as an Appellate Court judge (19 years). This totals almost 50 years of my career, with my involvement in over 2000 custody cases.

There is no question whatsoever that I participated in this "documentary" to stress the point that it is women who primarily get mistreated in the family courts in America for a variety of reasons that I've been lecturing about for over 50 yrs. I am appalled that my remarks have been taken out of context to make it appear that I support the utterly insane concept that mandatory equal parenting is the solution to anything. The only answer to the problem of custody decisions is to place the child with the most capable parent. Period. In contested custody cases, which, by far, are the minority of cases, they must be heard before an impartial court of law. This is so simple that anything else defies the imagination.

It is inconceivable that I am portrayed as agreeing with those in this film advocating "Mandatory Equal Parenting"!! Contrary to their assertions that false allegations of abuse are common, one of the main problems in the Family Courts, with regard to custody, is that when a parent reports suspected abuse, as they are mandated by law to do, the courts, all too often, shift the paradigm by accusing the reporting parent of "parental alienation syndrome." Although this has been thoroughly discredited, the same dynamics occur in the courts, and those using the concept simply drop the "syndrome" part. Thus, the focus shifts from the possible abuse of a child to the parent alleging abuse.

Common sense dictates that, first and foremost, the alleged abuse be investigated. If proven to be made up by a vindictive parent (and this does, of course happen, but in a small percentage of contested custody cases), let the courts then decide which parent is more capable. Any other approach endangers abused children.

I am incensed that my name and character were used in this film. My remarks have been taken out of context and I believe I was misled. I am considering taking legal action."

Judge Sol Gothard, JD, MSW, ACSW
Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal
State of Louisiana (ret)