

To:- Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry
Department of the House of Representatives
Parliament House

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
Submission No: 54
Date Received: 30-7-03
Secretary:

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Dear Sir / Madam

My Name is Robert Danes. At present I am 41 years of age and have an account of a situation which may be useful in your submission and feel by all accounts that I am not alone.

This situation is not uncommon to us men, man meets woman and woman meets man and a brief intermit encounter takes place. After a given period of time it was announced to me well into the pregnancy (3 months) that I am the non-custodial parent.

GOOD ONE....NOT !!

So in the next breath it also was announced "I" have chosen to have this baby and your the father you have to pay me child support. Bewildered by this event in my life and fact that I had no say and now no control over the issue. I left with the feelings of being cheated and deceived by the whole event.

The worst part about this is that the system that is in place for the male gender is you are expected just say yes and cop it sweet, because you're a man that's what men are supposed to do.

I feel that nothing really prepares you for fatherhood not even a brief encounter with a woman and the end result as in my case.

As I have not been proven to be the father as yet (29-07-03) I have already been approached by certain institutions in their endeavor to extract child support and already have had my finances delved into by these institutions just on the mere suggestion of the "he is the father"

If proven to be the father even in my case I can not negate my pending responsibilities even if it was not my choice to begin with and still is not my choice.

The laws that govern the child support agency are somewhat aggressive in their approach to the male gender and these laws or legislation or even acts are which in powers them to do what they do are somewhat, may I even suggest elusive?

It also disturbs me that a woman can just choose to have a baby by the choice or by design, then pass of the responsibility of that decision to the man for the result without question of the woman's motivations, intentions or agenda.

I wish to say at this point there is no resentment to the child because the child did not have a choice either (it must be a boy) on whether it wanted to be born or not.

Further to add to this is that every legal minded person regarding my matter would always be able to tell me "WHAT YOU CAN'T DO".

It is as if no one knows or there is nothing they can do but are too scared to admit it because the legal systems may fail to support this area of law. WHAT A SHOCKER !!!!

I would like to suggest that and possibly advocate the personal choice of having a reversible vasectomy for every man above the age of 25 until there is a stable committed relationship where both parties can decide to have a child or children where at least at any time the choice can be made jointly and negate any possible misunderstanding or future choices being made without the consent of the other party..

The experiences I have had though out this situation have left a bitter taste in my mouth as to the amount of legal rights that I don't have as a male in this situation it is as if my civil rights and being innocent until proven guilty no longer exists.

Disgruntled taxpayer and voting constituent
And now possible child support payer

Robert Danes