

Washington Square Institute



Family Law and Family Forensics Training Program

An Innovative Interdisciplinary Program
for Attorneys, Judges,
and Mental Health Professionals

Invites you to attend

The Loss of a Parent to the Child
And the Loss of the Child to the Parent:
Investigation of Relocation,
Parental Alienation, and Parental Child Abduction

Friday Feb. 26, 2016, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Washington Square Institute

41 E. 11th St. (between Broadway and University Pl), 4th Fl., NYC

Conference Fee: \$150*

Full-time students with school ID: \$75

**(Limited number of partial scholarships available - please email Linda Gunsberg for further information, lindagunsberg@yahoo.com)*

PRESENTATIONS

Relocation

Philip Stahl, PhD, ABPP

Complexities of Relocation in Separation and Divorce

Relocation cases are among the most difficult in family law. This presentation will focus on both risk and protective factors, as well the limited research available regarding relocation. Dr. Stahl will also address how Courts, mediators, evaluators, consultants, and attorneys can work together to help parents solve difficult problems regarding relocation.

Hon. Helen Sturm

Relocation from the Judicial Perspective

This presentation will begin with a brief summary of the Tropea case, which sets forth the factors that are to be considered in New York State relocation cases. Judge Sturm will then discuss two cases she decided, one an application by a parent to relocate to Texas with 2 young children, and the other an application to relocate to Australia with an infant.

Parental Alienation

Linda Gunsberg, PhD

Parental Alienation: Clinical Issues

It is essential for psychotherapists of children, adolescents and adults to understand both the parental influences and the child/adolescent contributions to the destructive phenomenon referred to as Parental Alienation. Therapists who work with adults need to be familiar with how a mother or father may be fostering or stimulating alienation of the child from the other parent. The adult patient may be the alienating parent or the alienated parent. Dr. Gunsberg will discuss techniques that can help therapists elicit information about the parent's contribution to Parental Alienation, as well as treatment and psychoeducational interventions that are useful in Parental Alienation cases.

Melissa Fenton, MBA

Resilience in the Face of Parental Alienation

This presentation will focus on Ms. Fenton's experience of being an alienated parent, and the knowledge she has gained of the New York City Family Court System and the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act laws (UCCJEA).

Parental Child Abduction

Colin Jones, JD, LL.M

Family Law for Whom? Why Japan is Different

This talk about Japanese family law will likely challenge some basic Western assumptions about the role of law and courts in family-related matters, and will offer a better understanding of the problems of child abduction in Japan.

Samuel Lui, JD

Dead Dad Walking: Moving on in Life without Your Child Who Depended on You

Child abduction coupled with parental alienation is one of the worst kinds of domestic violence against both the child and the left-behind parent. The left-behind parent continues to think and care about his child, but there is nothing he can do. He never gets any news about the welfare of his child, causing continuous anxiety. Other people are expecting him to function and work on a regular basis like a normal person. However, the trauma of losing his child lingers in his mind. He is like a man whose purpose in life has been stolen from him. Mr. Lui will share what it is like to live like this for the past 16 years.

Brian Prager, MA

Erasure of the Father: Coercive Practices, Corrosive Effects in Japanese International Parental Child Abduction

Erasure of the father, the expulsion of a caregiving natural parent from the lives of young children, is epidemic in Japan. Today, roughly three million children in Japan have meager-to-no contact with one parent after divorce, due to the absence of parental rights and protection of the parent-child relationship in family law. This induces parental child abduction, and also the disappearance of parents who despair the loss of the close bonds they previously had with their children. Mr. Prager will highlight factors contributing to the devastation and bereavement suffered by overmatched parents who lose their children to parental abduction in an unresponsive institutional environment.

Ellen B. Holtzman, JD Moderator

Conference educational objectives

- Be able to define and describe relocation, parental alienation, and parental child abduction in nuanced legal and psychological terms
- Understand the specific losses in the parent - child relationship as a result of relocation, parental alienation, and parental child abduction
- Become knowledgeable regarding the legal, treatment, and psychoeducational options available to families facing relocation, parental alienation, and parental child abduction



Schedule

8:30-9:00am	Registration & Continental Breakfast
9:00-9:15am	Introductory Remarks - Linda Gunsberg
9:15-10:30am	Complexities of Relocation in Separation and Divorce - Philip Stahl
10:30-11:00am	Relocation from the Judicial Perspective - Hon. Helen Sturm
11:00-11:15am	Q & A
11:15-11:30am	Stretch Break
11:30-12:30pm	Parental Alienation: Clinical Issues - Linda Gunsberg
12:30-1:00pm	Resilience in the Face of Parental Alienation - Melissa Fenton
1:00-1:15pm	Q & A
1:15-2:15pm	Lunch (on your own)
2:15-3:15pm	Family Law for Whom? Why Japan is Different - Colin Jones
3:15-3:45pm	Dead Dad Walking: Moving on in Life without Your Child Who Depended on You - Samuel Lui
3:45-4:15pm	Erasure of the Father: Coercive Practices, Corrosive Effects in Japanese International Parental Child Abduction - Brian Prager
4:15-5:00pm	Q&A amongst Panelists, and open discussion

Bios of Presenters

Philip Stahl is a forensic psychologist in private practice, living in Maricopa County, Arizona. His current area of specialty is relocation cases, including complex international relocations. He provides consultation and expert witness testimony in child custody litigation throughout the United States, and conducts child custody evaluations. His teaching includes trainings throughout the United States and internationally for attorneys, child custody evaluators, and judges. He is on the faculty of the National Judicial College, is a Specialist Provider in Family Law for the California State Bar, and is Adjunct Faculty at Arizona Summit Law School (Phoenix). Dr. Stahl is an Invited Speaker at the Family Law and Family Forensics Training Program, Washington Square Institute. Dr. Stahl has written extensively in the area of high conflict divorce for over 25 years. His latest works are: *Forensic Psychology Consultation in Child Custody Litigation: A Handbook for Work Product Review, Case Preparation, and Expert Testimony* (2013); *Emerging Issues in Relocation Cases* (2014); and *Analysis in Child Custody Evaluation Reports: A Crucial Component* (2014). Dr. Stahl's child custody evaluation was cited by the California Supreme Court in its landmark decision modifying 8 years of relocation case law following *Burgess* (*In re Marriage of LaMusga* (2004) 32 Cal.4th 1072, 12 Cal.Rptr.3d 356, 88 P.3d 81).

Judge Sturm received her JD, with Honors, from Brooklyn Law School in 1976, and began her career in the New York County District Attorney's Office. In 1983, Judge Sturm relocated to New Mexico where she was Chief of the Medicaid Fraud Unit in the New Mexico Attorney General's Office. In 1988, Judge Sturm returned to New York and to the District Attorney's Office where she remained until she was appointed to the bench in 1999. During the years she served as an Assistant District Attorney, Judge Sturm was the Bureau Chief of the Juvenile Crimes Bureau, created the first Child Abuse Unit, and tried numerous homicide and related cases. As a judge, she was assigned to Family Court where she presided over thousands of custody, visitation and family offense matters. Judge Sturm is currently the Administrative and Compliance Manager for the Mt. Sinai Hospital Adolescent Health Care Unit, maintains a private practice in Divorce Mediation and Consultation, and is an Administrative Law Judge with the New York State Comptroller's Office where she hears and determines matters relating to pension entitlements.

Linda Gunsberg is Chair of the Family Law and Family Forensics Training Program at Washington Square Institute. She created this program almost 20 years ago, with the goal of training mental health professionals, attorneys for children, matrimonial attorneys, and judges from an interdisciplinary perspective. Within family litigation, Dr. Gunsberg has served as a forensic expert on issues such as divorce, child custody and parenting plans, grandparents rights, relocation, parental alienation, parental child abduction, child abuse (sexual, physical, and emotional), battered woman syndrome and domestic violence, Hague Convention cases, and adoption. She works within the United States and internationally. Dr. Gunsberg conducts and supervises forensic evaluations, consults with attorneys for children regarding child interviews, is a trial consultant to legal teams (domestic and international) and conducts work product reviews of child custody evaluations. She also is a parent coordinator, parent - child facilitator, and facilitator for a support group for alienated parents. Dr. Gunsberg was past Clinical and Research Director for Take Root, the only organization in the United States for adults who were parentally abducted as children. She is Co-Chair since 1999 of the Psychoanalysis and Law Discussion Group of the American Psychoanalytic Association. Dr. Gunsberg has co-edited and written chapters in the volumes, *A Handbook of Divorce and Custody: Forensic, Developmental, and Clinical Perspectives* (2005), and *Fathers and Their Families* (1989). She has co-edited and contributed to the monographs for *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, *The Psychoanalyst in the Courtroom* (2009), and *The Adoption Journey* (2010). She has

lectured on numerous forensic topics, most recently the best interests of the child, parental alienation, factors critical to the child/adolescent's paradoxical preference to live with the batterer in child custody cases, and complex issues regarding overnights for infants and toddlers. Dr. Gunsberg is also in private practice where she sees children of all ages, and adults. She feels very fortunate that her work as a psychotherapist and psychoanalyst is informed by forensic issues.

Melissa Fenton is a Fundraising, Event and Communications consultant within non-profit and corporate sectors. She has served as the Chief Development and Communications Officer and interim Chief Financial Officer with charter schools; and a Principal Strategy Consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers, assisting Fortune 500 companies and higher education. She was the Executive Director of City Lights Youth Theatre, a non-profit organization that offers after-school, in-school and summer theater classes and productions to young people in New York City, ages 3-19. She has produced several theater based discussions on topics facing youth such as gun and school violence, persecution for sexual orientation, and the challenges of assimilation after immigration. Ms. Fenton has worked in the Frauds Bureau in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office as a trial preparation assistant, dealing with white collar crime, sex crimes and racketeering cases.

Colin Jones is Professor of Law, Doshisha Law School, Kyoto, Japan. He is author of the book, *The Child Abduction Problem: How the Japanese legal system tears parents and children apart* (2011). He also has written the following academic articles: 19th century rules over 21st reality - legal parentage under Japanese law, *Family Law Quarterly* (2015); Will the child abduction treaty become more "Asian"? A first look at the efforts of Singapore and Japan to implement the Hague Convention, *Denver Journal of International Law & Policy* (2014); No more excuses: Why recent penal code amendments should (but probably won't) stop international parental child abduction to Japan, *Whittier Journal of Child and Family Advocacy* (2007); and, *In the Best Interests of the Court: What American lawyers need to know about child custody and visitation in Japan*, *Asia-Pacific Law and Policy Journal* (2007).

Sam Lui has a B.A. in Japanese Language and Literature from University of California, Irvine and his J.D. from Hofstra University School of Law. He is currently working for Manhattan Legal Services as an attorney in the areas of family and immigration law.

Brian Prager has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and Education from the University of Texas at Austin. He is a Left-Behind-Parent whose young son disappeared into Japan in a scripted, pre-meditated parental abduction in June, 2010. He participated in the United States Department of State Town Hall Meetings in 2011 and 2012 on Japanese International Parental Child Abduction (JIPCA). Mr. Prager submitted testimony to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs in 2011 regarding International Child Abduction. He also has been a participant in left-behind-parent organizations such as Bring Abducted Children Home (BAC-HOME) and Kizuna - Child Parent Reunion (Kizuna-CPR). Presently, he teaches at the City University of New York.

Ellen B. Holtzman concentrates her practice in domestic relations and has represented clients in all aspects of matrimonial and family law, including parental alienation, relocation and parental child abduction. Recently she was successful as the lead attorney in a Hague Convention case, and the decision was upheld on appeal. Ms. Holtzman has frequently lectured at Continuing Legal Education programs on Representing Domestic Violence Victims in Matrimonial Actions. For the Center for Safety and Change, she also educates attorneys in the techniques of representing

battered women in divorce proceedings. Ms. Holtzman was a panelist at the American Psychoanalytic Association on 'The Intersection between Legal, Psychological and Judicial Concepts of Best Interests of the Child' (2012), and a panelist at the New York University Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis on 'Where are We Now Regarding the Best Interests of the Child Standard? - The Interface between Legal, Judicial and Psychoanalytic Perspectives' (2013). Ms. Holtzman is a past President of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY) and is presently President of the Women's Bar Foundation of WBASNY. She is the 2007 recipient of the Association's Joan E. Ellenbogen Founder's Award and she was honored by the Rockland County Women's Bar Association with the Belle Mayer Zeck Award. She is Director of Legal Training at the Family Law and Family Forensics Training Program, Washington Square Institute.



Registration

Please register no later than February 10, 2016 since seating capacity is limited

You can download the [registration form](#) here.

Registration is by check only, payable to Washington Square Institute. Mail your check with the registration form to:

Linda Gunsberg, PhD
130 W. 56th St. (Fl. 2)
New York, NY 10019

Refund & Cancellation Policy

Full refund of registration fee will be granted if cancellation request is prior to February 19, 2016. No refunds for no-shows on the day of the conference.

Continuing Education Credits: 6.5 hrs

- Washington Square Institute for Psychotherapy & Mental Health is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers (#0269).
- WSI is approved by the APA (American Psychological Association) to sponsor continuing education for psychologists.
- Application has been submitted and is pending for CLE credits for lawyers (6.5 hrs-skills)



For further information please contact:

Linda Gunsberg, Ph.D.

Chair, Family Law and Family Forensics Training Program

Washington Square Institute

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