

# THE PARENTAL ALIENATION SYNDROME

A Family Therapy and Collaborative  
Systems Approach to Amelioration

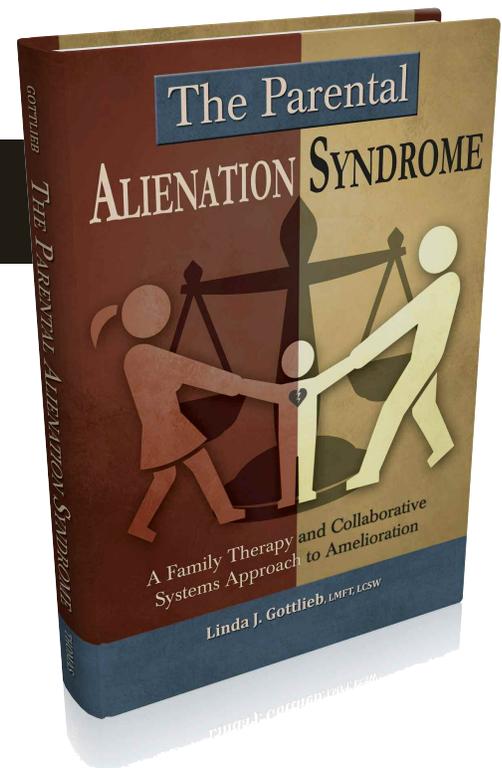
by

Linda J. Gottlieb

2012, 302 pp. (7 x 10),  
\$44.95, paper, \$64.95, hard.

(paper) ISBN 978-0-398-08736-4 • (hard) ISBN 978-0-398-08735-7

(ebook) ISBN 978-0-398-08737-1



In this thought-provoking book, Ms. Gottlieb attempts to resolve the controversies surrounding Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) by providing substantial empirical evidence from her treatment cases in support of the eight symptoms which child psychiatrist, Richard Gardner, had identified as occurring in the PAS child, and she further exemplifies the commonality of the alienating maneuvers among the alienating parents. The author redefines the typically-held characterization of the parents' relationship as portrayed in the pertinent literature and accepted by most PAS-aware professionals. Numerous case examples are explored: horrific tales of manufactured child abuse; referrals to child protective services (CPS) resulting in suspension of visits between targeted parents and their children; meritless reports to police alleging domestic violence in support of orders of protection which slander and stigmatize targeted parents; exclusionary tactics preventing targeted parents' involvement in their children's medical, educational, social lives and activities; and depletion of targeted parents' resources due to legal fees required to defend himself/herself and to obtain judicial enforcement of parental rights. Ms. Gottlieb methodically documents that PAS is a form of emotional child abuse of the severest kind. The author provides an unprecedented number of treatment summaries, which demonstrate the effectiveness of structural family therapy in treating the PAS family. To further elucidate the subject, the author interviewed several matrimonial attorneys, Law Guardians, and forensic evaluators regarding their experiences with PAS, and she incorporated their thoughts into her recommendations as to how the mental health and judicial communities should resolve this situation in the best interests of the child. "New Rules" are suggested which encourage a collaborative rather than an adversarial approach to child custody. This book will be an excellent resource for parents who are divorcing or are in conflict, for adult-child victims of PAS, for mature children of divorcing parents, for judges, for Law Guardians, for matrimonial attorneys, for therapists, for child protective personnel, for law enforcement— and for the professional rescuer who believes that a child must be saved from a parent.

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Springfield • Illinois • U.S.A.

# CONTENTS

Preface  
Introduction  
Chapter

1. DEFINITION OF THE PARENTAL ALIENATION SYNDROME
2. THE CAMPAIGN OF DENIGRATION
3. WEAK, FRIVOLOUS, AND ABSURD RATIONALIZATIONS FOR THE DEPRECIATION
4. LACK OF AMBIVALENCE
5. THE INDEPENDENT THINKER PHENOMENON
6. REFLEXIVE SUPPORT OF THE ALIENATING PARENT
7. CRUELTY TOWARDS THE ALIENATED PARENT WITH NO REMORSE OR GUILT
8. PRESENCE OF BORROWED SCENARIOS
9. SPREAD OF ANIMOSITY TO THE EXTENDED FAMILY OF THE ALIENATED PARENT
10. ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS
11. THE CONTINUUM OF THE PARENTAL ALIENATION SYNDROME
12. THE ALIENATING PARENT
13. THE ALIENATED PARENT
14. JENNIFER'S SAGA
15. JIM'S SAGA
16. BOB'S SAGA
17. JOE'S SAGA
18. DAN'S SAGA
19. JOSE'S SAGA
20. MITCH'S SAGA
21. WILLIAM'S SAGA
22. LINDA'S SAGA
23. TREATMENT INTERVENTIONS

24. PAS: A FORM OF CHILD ABUSE AND MORE
25. JUDICIOUS INTERVENTION
26. CLOSING COMMENTS

Appendix  
References  
Index

## CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR *THE PARENTAL ALIENATION SYNDROME*

In her new book, Ms. Linda Gottlieb has painted a detailed, meticulous, colorful landscape consisting of the statements and acts of family members who experience parental alienation syndrome (PAS). The book includes hundreds of quotations from children, alienating parents, and targeted parents: statements that are angry, vicious, poignant, infuriating, and heart-breaking. *The Parental Alienation Syndrome: A Family Therapy and Collaborative Systems Approach to Amelioration* features nine case vignettes, written in the first person, which help enliven the personal narratives. The high point of the book is the author's application of structural family therapy techniques to healing the relationship between the child and the alienated parent. For Ms. Gottlieb, the central role for the family therapist is to serve as a catalyst to the family as a whole to heal each other with the principal work occurring between the child and the alienated parent together so as to encourage and help them re-establish the loving relationship that they had previously enjoyed. For example, the therapist might coach an alienated parent on how to correct the child's misperceptions of him/her without blaming the other parent. Of course, the goal of treatment for Ms. Gottlieb is not just intellectual understanding but amelioration of emotional injuries by facilitating corrective family member experiences with each other. She provides many examples of how to achieve that goal. This book will be useful to all interdisciplinary professionals in the field of child custody.

—William Bernet, M.D.  
Editor of *Parental Alienation*,  
DSM-5 and ICD-11

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