

PARENTAL ALIENATION FAQ

Is an alienated child mentally kidnapped or brainwashed?

In 2006, Pamela Richardson published a book, *A Kidnapped Mind: A Mother's Heartbreaking Memoir of Parental Alienation*.

Brenlee Carrington, a lawyer and journalist in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, said this about the book, *A Kidnapped Mind*:

This true story is excruciatingly painful to read. With rare courage and brutal honesty, former Vancouver broadcaster Pamela Richardson tells the tragic tale of her son's suicide *A Kidnapped Mind* takes readers on a real life emotional roller-coaster ride. Its message is that whenever possible, former partners and the justice system should work together to ensure that children maintain strong and positive relationships with both parents.

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The American psychologist, Margaret Thaler Singer, Ph.D., met more than 3,000 cult/sect members during her life, whom she studied. Dr. Singer summarized the conditions that are needed to create an atmosphere where someone's thoughts can be influenced and changed, which she called a *thought-reform process*. The six conditions for this process, similar to the process of severe parental alienation, are:

1. Keep the person unaware that there is an agenda to control or change the person
2. Control time and physical environment (contacts, information)
3. Create a sense of powerlessness, fear, and dependency
4. Suppress old behavior and attitudes
5. Instill new behavior and attitudes
6. Put forth a closed system of logic

Singer, M.T. (2003). *Cults in Our Midst: The Continuing Fight against Their Hidden Menace*.

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In discussing parental alienation, Stanley S. Clawar and Brynn V. Rivlin said:

In a closed system of logic, as in the severe parental alienation cases, the child's life history is remade, and a black and white world is developed; one parent becomes perceived as good all through, and the other parent as bad all through. This thought-reform process can be summarized as brainwashing, this is a term used by several researchers.

Clawar, S.S., Rivlin, B.V. (1991). *Children Held Hostage: Dealing with Programmed and Brainwashed Children*. A new, revised edition, based on additional families that have been followed, was published in 2013.