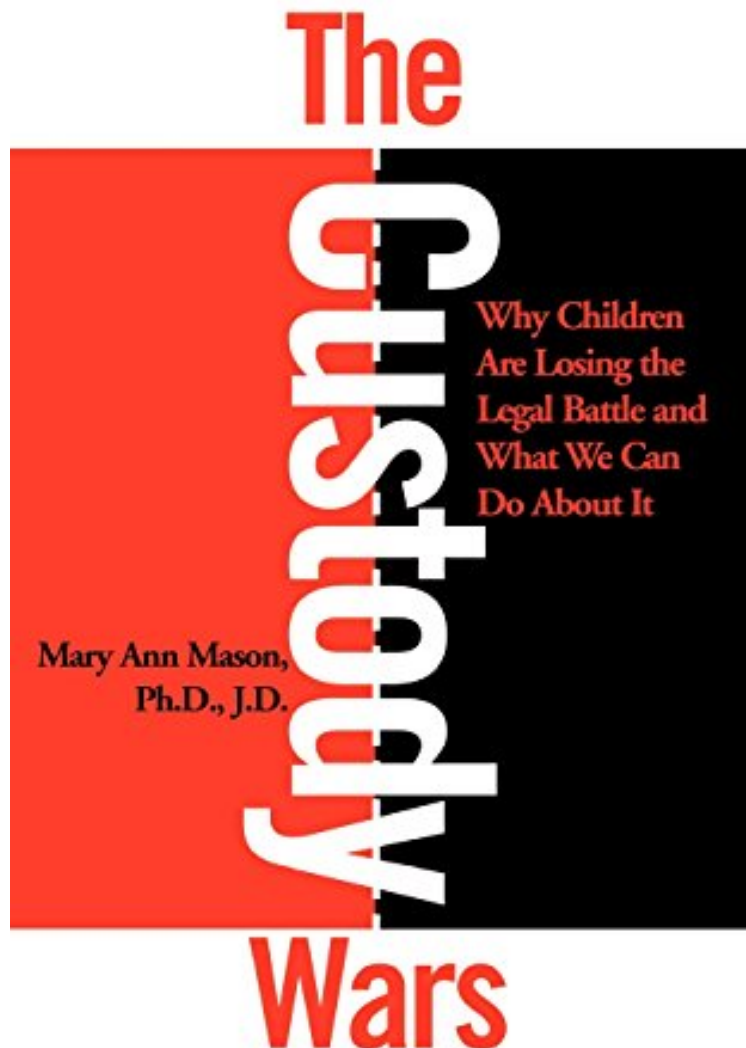


(Mobile ebook) The Custody Wars: Why Children Are Losing The Legal Battle, And What We Can Do About It

# The Custody Wars: Why Children Are Losing The Legal Battle, And What We Can Do About It

Mary Ann Mason

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**Mary Ann Mason : The Custody Wars: Why Children Are Losing The Legal Battle, And What We Can Do About It** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Custody Wars: Why Children Are Losing The Legal Battle, And What We Can Do About It:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I haven't finished reading yet but so far good! Arrived on time and in excellent condition

By Heather Esposito I haven't finished reading yet but so far good! Arrived on time and in excellent condition! Currently fighting for custody with my ex who is very abusive. I finally was able to hire an attorney and hopefully I can turn things around from what has been manipulated in this injustice system for children and victims.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Book we Use to Train Our Mediators

By Diana L. Mercer This is the book which we use to "train" our mediators to make sure they're ready to handle the worst custody disputes which we see at our private mediation firm. In addition to understanding children's developmental needs, it's also important to understand how these battles unfold in court so that we're able to describe them accurately for clients. So often parents come to mediation and at some point threaten to go to court if they don't get their way. If they only understood what was in store for them in court...both from the process itself, as well as the pressure that the other parent will feel to ramp up the case as much as possible in order to attempt to secure a "win". And, of course, when it's custody litigation, there's never a winner. This book provides honest, interesting feedback on the court system and describes the dynamics of custody cases honestly and accurately.

49 of 53 people found the following review helpful. Mason's book demystifies *The Custody Wars* brilliantly.

By A Customer The thesis of Berkeley Law Professor Mary Ann Mason's highly readable and powerfully argued *The Custody Wars* is that the U.S. legal system fails to provide adequate representation and concern for the interests of children in custody disputes. Judiciously articulated irony abounds, as when Mason exposes the court system's vulnerability to the cynically utilized self-interest of many middle/upper class fathers and mothers for whom parenting is on the back burner. On the other hand, it is equally ironic that parents of both genders who practice self-sacrificism (not healthy, involved parenting) are sometimes the most childishly selfish in insisting upon their entitlement, regardless of the child's feelings. We learn of children whose lives are ridiculously fragmented and enervated by joint custody shufflings, and yet we also hear of children who have benefited from the arrangement, thanks in large measure to the parents' maturity. As evidenced by the specificity and nuanced analysis in her case studies, Mason's scrupulous fairness and flexibility in offering parameters of judgment about custodial fitness are rooted in compassion for the child's well-being. She simultaneously seeks reasonably objective standards while realizing how difficult they are to determine, especially on ideological battlefields. Hers is wisdom unavailable to radical relativists or the theologically impaired. To note only two of many fine examples of her clear thinking about how the court system can be changed to make custody decisions more child-centered, Mason proposes that judges be educated in child development and that reviews of custody arrangements be mandated when the child is 7 and 12. Professor Mason has much of interest for various potential readerships. There are chapters on the unwed father, stepparents, domestic violence, gay and lesbian parents, and "test tube troubles." Mason's argument merits serious attention from a broad spectrum of policy-makers, academics, and warring couples and ex-couples. In fact, as a friend of mine, a single mother faced with absurd demands from a father with an abysmal track record, declared, "This book should be required reading for every couple considering marriage or children."

How should the courts decide custody cases that involve adoption, divorce, and single parenting? Should an abusive husband be given custody of his child? What about unwed fathers? Gay parents? How much say should young children have in court? In this text, family lawyer and historian, Mary Ann Mason, casts a harsh spotlight on these and other aspects of child custody. She argues that the legal shift to equal treatment of men and women has translated into parents' rights taking precedence over children's needs. Mason insists that fairness to parents must not come at the expense of children. Drawing on a wealth of legal cases and research, Mason presents a bold programme for reform that aims to change the terms of debate about child custody cases.

From Library Journal Mason (law, Univ. of California, Berkeley) looks at how custody issues are settled and how the needs of children are often ignored. One child is quoted as saying that he was unsure to whom he belonged, and the idea of children treated as property instead of as people with feelings permeates the book. Mason reviews the legal, sociological, and psychological literature to provide extensive examples of how the courts deal with issues relating to children as well as technology and the use of frozen eggs and donated sperm. She also discusses single-sex couples and stepparents. This is fascinating reading that may encourage people to reconsider how children are handled in divorce cases. Mason suggests many alternatives, all of which include letting the child's voice be heard throughout the divorce process. The book is loaded with endnotes and resources for additional reading. Collections with a focus on children's issues, law, family studies, and sociology will want this one.

—Danna C. Bell-Russel, Library of Congress

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About the Author Mary Ann Mason is an attorney and a teacher of child and family law at the University of California, Berkeley.