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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

DICTIONARY OF LEGAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN AMERICAN LAW BOOKS. Compiled by Doris M. Bieber. Buffalo, N.Y.: William S. Hein & Co., 1979. Pp. viii, 337. $19.50 cloth, $7.95 paper.

*Reviewed by Morris L. Cohen**

This reference tool, which is basically an alphabetical list of abbreviations with citations of the works to which they refer, represents a valuable addition to the research apparatus of American law. Although not an original conception, it is more comprehensive in scope than its predecessors, and is probably the most useful effort of its kind. For the ingenuity, perseverance, and painstaking labor that went into this work, its compiler deserves the recognition and thanks of the legal profession and all who research American law.

More than any other profession or discipline, the law has been served by a truly remarkable number of research aids and bibliographic tools. Almost from the beginning of English legal history, the development of abridgments and digests of early case law presaged a long history of searchbooks and guides for Anglo-American legal research. Following the first case digests, there developed statutory compilations and abridgments, dictionaries, practice manuals, encyclopedias, and indexes, all of which facilitated research in the primary sources of the law. During the latter half of the nineteenth century in England and America, the publication of primary authorities such as judicial reports and statutes became more professional, more reliable, and gradually more sophisticated and systematic. Many legal periodicals were established and numerous comprehensive treatises in every field of law were published. The invention of new bibliographic aids reached its peak in this country at the end of the nineteenth century, with the development of the West digest system, the annotated reporters and statutory codes, and Shepard's citators. World War One saw the beginning of looseleaf services, which grew in number and variety with the rapid expansion of administrative law. As the secondary literature of periodicals and monographs increased in size and importance, a wide range of bibliographies and indexes was compiled to provide the necessary control and access. Moreover, two new technological de-

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velopments of the last ten years promise to improve the faltering efficiency of legal research and enlarge the accessibility of legal information. These are, of course, computerized research services and the use of microforms. To guide and instruct the new users of this extensive and complex literature, a number of excellent texts and manuals on American legal research have been published and regularly revised. These research guides are now widely used in legal education and in library reference work.[1]

The proliferation of court reports, which were often published in multiple editions, followed the spread of the common law—first in England, then in the American colonies, and finally throughout the world to countries on every continent. The doctrine of *stare decisis* and the consequent practice of citing to prior decisions became a central focus of legal research in the common law system. As published reporters multiplied and the practice of abbreviation in citation form grew prevalent, confusion became apparent. Guides to the identification of abbreviated citations have become essential in a legal system comprising between three and four million judicial decisions published in many hundreds of reporters. The judicial decision, however, is only one of many forms of authority that are regularly cited by abbreviation in legal writing. If we add the statutory compilations, administrative materials, commentaries and treatises, legal periodicals, newspapers, and gazettes which have developed in common law countries over the last four hundred years, the problem of identifying abbreviations in legal citations becomes staggering.

The proliferation of legal sources and abbreviations poses two related problems—first, the need for standardized citation forms, and second, the need for guides to commonly used abbreviations. The first problem has been difficult to solve, and universal acceptance of standard citations is unlikely to be achieved. *A Uniform System of Citation,*[2] published by the Harvard Law Review Association, in collaboration with the *Columbia Law Review,* the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review,* and the *Yale Law Journal,* has attained wide acceptance and has become the authoritative guide for legal citations in this country. Unless future editions increase in complexity or deteriorate in clarity and scope, the influence of the *Bluebook* (as it is popularly known) should grow, and it should become as close to an effective standard as seems possible.

1. *See generally,* works cited in note 6 *infra*; M. COHEN, LEGAL RESEARCH IN A NUTSHELL (3d ed. 1978); M. COHEN, HOW TO FIND THE LAW (7th ed. 1976).

2. The twelfth edition of this standard work was published in 1976.

Bieber's book is addressed to the second problem, that of providing a convenient and comprehensive guide to the multitude of abbreviations being used in legal publications today. Her work is descriptive, rather than prescriptive, and she in fact expressly refers readers to the *Uniform System of Citation* and other authoritative sources for determining proper citation form. There have been many other guides to legal abbreviations (usually published, however, as part of a larger work, such as a bibliography, case digest, legal research text, law library or law publishers' catalogue, or dictionary) and there are useful, but more limited, alternative sources available today. It should be noted that Bieber includes far more entries than any of these works, which of course treat abbreviations only secondarily. A complete survey of such guides is beyond the scope of this review, but a few examples may be useful to sketch the background of the present effort and provide a basis for comparative evaluation.

Nineteenth-century law bibliographies, such as J.G. Marvin's *Legal Bibliography, or a Thesaurus of American, English, Irish, and Scotch Law Books*[3] and C.C. Soule's *Lawyer's Reference Manual of Law Books and Citations,*[4] contained lists of abbreviations. An expanded version of Soule's list was published separately under the title *Legal Abbreviations, being Citations of American, English, Colonial, and Foreign Law Text-Books and Reports.*[5] Texts for teaching legal bibliography have also provided such aids for students.[6] Modern law dictionaries[7] typically carry abbreviation lists either in a separate section or under the alphabetical entry "Abbreviations," as in *Bouvier's Law Dictionary.*[8] The *Uniform System of Citation*[9] contains several useful lists of abbreviations. Abbreviation guides of general coverage also include legal abbreviations but are not nearly as extensive for that purpose as Bieber or those titles noted above. Examples of such general reference tools are Ralph De Sola's *Abbreviations Dictionary*[10] and Gale Research Company's very comprehensive *Acronyms, Initialisms and Abbreviations Dictionary.*[11]

3. (1st ed. Philadelphia 1847, reprinted 1953).

4. (1st ed. Boston 1833, reprinted 1953).

5. (London 1911).

6. *See, e.g.*, F. HICKS, MATERIALS AND METHODS OF LEGAL RESEARCH (3d rev. ed. 1942); J. JACOBSTEIN & R. MERSKY, FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH (1977); M. PRICE, H. BITNER, & S. BYSIEWICZ, EFFECTIVE LEGAL RESEARCH (4th ed. 1979).

7. *E.g.*, BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY (4th rev. ed. 1968); BALLENTINE'S LAW DICTIONARY (3d ed. 1969).

8. BOUVIER'S LAW DICTIONARY 6-26 (Baldwin's stud. ed. 1940).

9. *See* note 2 *supra* and accompanying text.

10. (4th ed. 1974).

11. (6th ed. 1978-1979).

The most substantial alternative to Bieber's *Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations* is Marion D. Powers' 1971 work *The Legal Citation Directory.* Comparable in size and scholarly care to the present work, Powers' directory has a broader purpose, but a much more limited scope.[12] The work covers judicial and administrative reporters, including some periodical reporters, and can also be used effectively as an abbreviations interpreter for those materials. Powers offers more information about each title listed than Bieber, but, unlike her, does not cover legal materials of other countries, statutes, treatises, looseleaf services, and legal periodicals generally. Because of its complexity and limited coverage, Powers is less useful than the *Bluebook* as a citation guide, and less useful than Bieber as an abbreviations list. It is an altogether commendable work, however, and can be recommended for library reference purposes.

In addition to the coverage noted above, Bieber also interprets a broad selection of acronyms encountered in legal research, including many elusive foreign and international institutions and agencies. Her inclusion of such common abbreviations as *etc., i.e., supra,* and *U.N.* seems excessive, although within her stated purpose. The scope of the work is defined as including "abbreviations that are used or listed in such categories of books as legal encyclopedias, law dictionaries, law reporters, looseleaf services, law reviews, legal treatises, government documents, legal reference books, citators, and some other popular materials that would be found in a medium-sized law library." Thus, the work includes abbreviations in such non-American sources as the *English Reports-Full Reprint* and the *United Nations Treaty Series.*

It is startling to see how many different terms or publications are abbreviated in the same form, making precise identification difficult. One need only consider the nine unrelated publications which are commonly abbreviated as *C.L.J.,*[13] or the eleven publications designated by the initials *C.L.R.,*[14] to realize the extent of

12. A full evaluation of Powers' book would be inappropriate here, and, in any event, can be found in a review at 65 LAW LIB. J. 121 (1972). It is sufficient to note that Powers has attempted a standard citation guide which is limited to United States legal reports, broadly construed.

13. DICTIONARY OF LEGAL ABBREVIATIONS USED IN AMERICAN LAW BOOKS 53 (D. Bieber comp. 1979). They are: *Calcutta Law Journal, California Law Journal, Cambridge Law Journal, Canada Law Journal, Cape Law Journal, Central Law Journal, Chicago Law Journal, Colonial Law Journal Reports,* and *Criminal Law Journal* (India).

14. *Id.* They are: *Calcutta Law Reporter, Canada Law Reports, Cape Law Reports* (South Africa), *Ceylon Law Reports, Cleveland Law Record, Columbia Law Review, Common Law Reports* (English 1853-1855), *Commonwealth Law Reports* (Australia), *Crown Lands Reports* (Queensland, Australia), *Current Law Reports* (Palestine), and *Cyprus Law Reports* (1883).

possible uncertainty. Bieber's list is useful, however, in bringing to the attention of researchers less common, alternative possibilities for a particular abbreviation. In most instances, the context in which the citation appears will simplify the identification of the correct source.

There is little fault to find with Bieber's work. A few reporters listed in Powers' book seem to be missing here, and Bieber does not provide as many title variants of some reports as Powers, but the user can almost always find the entry being sought without difficulty. The inclusion of the various symbols used by the Shepard's citators seems unnecessary since they appear in every Shepard's volume, but again such detail is clearly within the defined scope of this work and may indeed be useful to some researchers in this form. The bibliographic preparation seems meticulous, and only one error was found—*Energy Users Report* is erroneously identified as a CCH publication, rather than a BNA service. The typography is clear, the format easy to use, and the price reasonable in these days of inflated lawbook costs.

Although Bieber has not sought to establish an abbreviation standard for legal materials, others have been grappling with the problem of standardizing abbreviations generally. In 1972, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) issued its abbreviations standard,[15] which superseded the similar American National Standards Institute version.[16] The difficulty of such efforts is reflected in the prefatory note to the ISO standard:

> Owing to the hundreds of thousands of different serial and non-serial publications subject to reference by abbreviated citation, the scores of different languages in which these publications are printed, the variant forms of recording the titles of these publications, and the widely diversified intellectual backgrounds of persons using title abbreviations, it is not possible to set down rules that will in every instance assure unassisted reconstruction of the original title of the publications cited in abbreviated form. As one way to facilitate this identification, authors and editors who make extensive use of title abbreviations in their publications are encouraged to make available to their readers, at frequent intervals, lists of the abbreviated titles they use with corresponding equivalent unabbreviated titles.[17]

Within the terms of the ISO recommendation, Bieber has provided an excellent guide to abbreviations for those who use or refer to legal sources. Her work will be invaluable in legal research, and

15. DOCUMENTATION—INTERNATIONAL CODE FOR THE ABBREVIATION OF TITLES OF PERIODICALS, MONOGRAPH No. 4-1972(E) (1972) [hereinafter cited as ISO MONOGRAPH].

16. DOCUMENTATION—INTERNATIONAL CODE FOR THE ABBREVIATION OF TITLES OF PERIODICALS, MONOGRAPH No. Z.39.5 (1969).

17. ISO MONOGRAPH, *supra* note 15, at ii.

should facilitate efforts toward greater standardization in bibliographic citation practice for legal materials.

WEB OF VIOLENCE: A STUDY OF FAMILY VIOLENCE. By Jean Renvoize. London, Henley-on-Thames & Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978. Pp. xii, 240. $11.50.

*Reviewed by Judith T. Younger**

Every so often someone rediscovers a horrible aspect of the human condition and brings it to public attention. Thus, Professor C. Henry Kempe rediscovered child abuse in America in 1961 and conducted a symposium on the subject.[1] A similar rediscovery occurred in England about 12 years later when a public inquiry was held on the fatal beating of eight-year-old Maria Colwell by her stepfather.[2] From the American symposium came the now familiar term "battered child."[3] From the English inquiry came the catch slogan "Remember Maria."[4] Since these events, the subject of child abuse has been discussed constantly in both countries. In the course of the discussion, other battered family members have turned up. It seems that children also batter parents,[5] parents batter grandparents,[6] siblings[7] and spouses batter each other.[8] Lumped together under the rubric "violent families," these attackers and victims are now in the limelight, a fashionable subject for the ministrations of social workers,[9] lawmakers,[10] and commentators.[11]

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1. Radbill, *A History of Child Abuse and Infanticide*, in THE BATTERED CHILD 18-19 (2d ed. 1974).

2. J. RENVOIZE, CHILDREN IN DANGER 1 (1974). Maria had been taken from foster parents after six happy years and returned to her natural mother who was then married to a second husband. J. HOWELLS, REMEMBER MARIA 1 (1974).

3. Radbill, *supra* note 1, at 19.

4. This was "the message printed on the placards which parents paraded outside the Court of Inquiry" after Maria's death. J. HOWELLS, *supra* note 2, at 115.

5. *E.g.*, N.Y. Times, July 2, 1979, § B, at 9, col. 1.

6. *E.g.*, J. RENVOIZE, WEB OF VIOLENCE 113-127 (1978). Renvoize calls it "granny bashing."

7. *E.g.*, Steinmetz, *Sibling Violence*, in FAMILY VIOLENCE 460-65 (1978).

8. *E.g.*, J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 6, at 16-51.

9. *See, e.g.*, J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 2, at 87-106; J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 6, at 76-112; Davoren, *The Role of the Social Worker*, in THE BATTERED CHILD, *supra* note 1, at 135. Renvoize expresses disenchantment with "the social service ethos that [these] families should be kept together." J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 6, at 198.

10. *See, e.g.*, Maidment, *The Law's Response to Marital Violence: A Comparison Between England and the U.S.A.*, in FAMILY VIOLENCE, *supra* note 7, at 110-34.

11. Renvoize alone, in her bibliography to *Web of Violence*, a 236-page book, lists 59 books, articles, and excerpts from trial transcripts commenting on various aspects of the subject.

Web of Violence[12] by Jean Renvoize, an English author, is her second contribution to the field. Her first was *Children in Danger,*[13] which was published the year after the Maria Colwell inquiry. The new book covers already well-trodden ground. In England as in America the family is the institution which is supposed to provide children with a permanent sense of well-being and the lasting emotional security that is required to make healthy adults. Violent families fail to perform this all important function and by their failure tend to perpetuate their own destructiveness in succeeding generations, as children subjected to violence are often violent in turn. This is the "web" of Renvoize's title. Of course, some who seem destined to be caught in the web escape it but no one knows why. After presenting the problem of family violence, Renvoize goes on to posit what she calls "suggested answers." She recommends, among other things, a minister for children,[14] children's guardians,[15] closer cooperation among police, social workers, and doctors,[16] more and better family planning,[17] keeping mothers and babies together in the days after birth,[18] and self-help groups as a form of therapy for batterers.[19] Some of these proposals are repeats from her earlier book,[20] but none is likely to make any real difference. After all, attempts to ameliorate family violence go back 4,000 years[21] and measures to combat it run the gamut from the most severe (for example, the Theban law making infanticide a capital offense),[22] to the merely ludicrous (for example, the new Swedish law prohibiting spanking).[23] It persists nevertheless, and to think that tinkering *a*

12. J. RENVOIZE, WEB OF VIOLENCE (1978).

13. *See* J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 2. Also to the author's credit, according to the dust-jacket of *Web of Violence,* are three novels.

14. J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 6, at 196. She doubts its feasibility, however. *Id.*

15. *Id.* at 198. These guardians would collate information and be empowered to seek removal of children from homes though the evidence against parents was insufficient for criminal conviction. *Id.*

16. *Id.* at 203. She recognizes, however, that such cooperation is "easier said than done" because of differing viewpoints and status. *Id.* at 203-06.

17. *Id.* at 228-29. She quotes policewomen and social workers as telling her how "impossible it is to get this sort of girl to go on the pill or persuade her to take it regularly," however. *Id.* at 229.

18. *Id.* at 209-15. This is called "bonding" and is already being done in some American hospitals.

19. *Id.* at 224-26. She warns, however, of the dangers of this kind of therapy if practiced by amateurs. *Id.* at 226.

20. In *Children in Danger* she similarly called for a central coordinating agency, a children's advocate, and self-help groups, and stressed the need for closer cooperation among police, doctors, and social workers. J. RENVOIZE, *supra* note 2, at 181, 187-89.

21. The earliest known statute can be found in the Code of Hammurabi. Radbill, *supra* note 1, at 14.

22. *Id.*

23. Effective July 1, 1979, it specifically forbids *"krankande behandling*—any insulting

la Renvoize, can affect it is naive.

My cynicism about her answers perhaps should, but will not, stop me from offering my own modest proposal for helping the modern family perform its functions. Her books and others on family violence underscore the obvious fact that not all people make good parents. Yet the law presently treats parenthood as prospectively appropriate for anyone. By fully sanctioning only one kind of family arrangement—legal marriage[24]—which it expects to produce children, the law elevates procreation (along with marriage and family privacy) to fundamental constitutional status.[25] The clear implication is that life without marriage and children is wanting. This stance is so unrealistic that the law is being openly flouted. People are making family arrangements which include neither marriage nor children. Witness, for example, the increasing number of unmarried cohabitors and homosexual couples.[26] Moreover, courts are dealing with problem parents by ignoring the constitution. Witness, for example, a Florida mother of two who pleaded "no contest" to a child abuse charge and was sentenced to ten years of probation on the conditions that she not become pregnant or marry a man with children,[27] and a Georgia mother of three who admittedly stole her neighbor's social security check and was sentenced to five years of probation on condition that she not have another illegitimate baby.[28] Such results suggest the need for reforms. I offer two: (1) enactment of a variety of sanctioned family arrangements[29] only

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or injurious treatment by parents that would cause their children mental distress." Johnson, *Oh, Spank, Where is Thy Sting?*, PEOPLE, May 7, 1979, at 113-14.

24. Of course, the law's view of marriage has changed over the years. In a nutshell, spouses have become more equal, divorce has become more available, and unmarried cohabitors have been endowed with some marital rights. Legal marriage, although undergoing rapid change, is still the only fully sanctioned arrangement.

25. *E.g.*, Zablocki v. Redhail, 434 U.S. 374 (1978); Griswold v. Connecticut, 381 U.S. 479 (1965); Skinner v. Oklahoma, 316 U.S. 535 (1942).

26. On cohabitors see U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS, MARITAL STATUS AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS: MARCH 1977 at 2-3 (series P-20, No. 323, 1978), and *The New Morality*, TIME, Nov. 21, 1977, at 111. On homosexual couples see N.Y. Times, May 8, 1979, § C at 11, col. 1.

27. N.Y. Times, June 11, 1979, § A, at 16, col. 1. The sentencing judge was Oliver Green of the Florida Circuit Court. He also removed defendant's two children from her custody. She said she would appeal the sentence as too harsh.

28. N.Y. Times, June 17, 1979, § 1, at 22, col. 5; Am. Law., Aug. 1979, at 10, col. 1. The sentencing judge was United States District Judge Wilbur Owens. He also ordered the defendant to get a job. She was only 20 years old, unmarried, and in addition to the federal charge, faced 11 state counts of fraud for taking $4000 from other people's savings accounts. The American Civil Liberties Union, through a spokesman, called the sentence "barbaric." A law school dean expressed "grave reservations" about its "propriety." The defendant would not talk about it but her lawyer called it "a favor" and said an appeal was "out of the question."

29. California may have taken a step in this direction by enacting its new summary divorce procedure for couples if there are no minor children, the wife is not pregnant, the

one of which contemplates children, and (2) narrowing current interpretation of the federal constitution just enough to make the arrangement for children more difficult to enter and leave and economically more burdensome than the other arrangements. Specifically, I would start with three options. I call them "dress rehearsal," "companionate status," and "marriage for children."

"Dress rehearsal" would not be a marriage at all, but rather a free and easy, changing relationship without legal formalities at entry or exit. It would have no economic consequences, no legal obligations, and would dissolve without intervention by courts. It is prevalent on today's coeducational vocational college campuses and should be available to anyone over sixteen. The young people who engage in it are already encouraged to use contraceptives by their parents and their colleges,[30] and the law should follow suit. Obviously the relationship is not right for raising children.

"Companionate status"[31] would be designed for heterosexual or homosexual couples[32] older than college age; a minimum age of twenty-two might be required. It would be a vehicle for personal fulfillment and self-expression of the "spouses," and would last only as long as it served these purposes for each. Entry would be simple, perhaps by public registration, and exit would be easy, through the courts on no-fault grounds even if only one party wanted it, or by a filed agreement. Parties to this kind of arrangement would be able to elect one of three options as to property. Each couple would choose (1) to keep their earnings and assets separate, with each individual paying his[33] own way during the relationship; (2) to pool

marriage is less than two years old, and the couple has neither property nor obligations in excess of prescribed limits. CAL. CIV. CODE § 4550 (West Supp. 1979).

30. At Cornell University the message is "Please love carefully," and the directions are explicit. CORNELL UNIVERSITY, SEX, A FACT BOOK 2 (1977).

31. This term comes from a delightful book, *Companionate Marriage,* by Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans. Their version of "the Companionate," as they call it, is not quite the same as mine. *See* B. LINDSEY & W. EVANS, COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE 244-46 (1927).

32. In some states, of course, sodomy and fornication are still crimes. My suggested reform would include decriminalization of such conduct if between consenting adults.

33. I am well aware of the move afoot to recast part of English grammar by substituting "he or she" or "him or her" where "he" or "him," as the unmarked pronoun, should suffice. Ever since I read a letter from seventeen linguists to the Harvard Crimson, Nov. 16, 1971, I have opposed it. Specifically, three of their arguments convinced me. First, "Markedness is one of the fundamental principles which govern the organization of the internal economies of all human languages." Second, "The fact that the masculine is the unmarked gender in English (or that the feminine is unmarked in the language of the Tunica Indians) is simply a feature of grammar. It is unlikely to be an impediment to any change in the patterns of the sexual division of labor toward which our society may wish to evolve." Finally, "The more marked member (in this case 'she' or 'her') carries more information, tends to be less frequent, and always means exactly what it says." *Id.*

earnings and assets and share expenses; or (3) to make other arrangements by written contract. Under the first option, there would be no division of assets on divorce; each would take what was his and that would end the matter. Under the second option, there would be a property division. The practice in West Germany might serve as an example.[34] Under this practice, any increase in the value of each spouse's assets during marriage is measured; those assets brought to marriage are included as are those acquired later. If the increase in value of one spouse's assets is greater than the increase in value of the other's, that spouse pays half the increase to the other upon divorce. Under the third option, the law of contract would govern. No matter which option were chosen, however, there would be no continued right in either spouse to support.

"Marriage for children" would be available only to those willing to make an advance written commitment to stay married until all of the children reached eighteen. The minimum age of entry would be twenty-two. At least one prospective spouse would need to show a demonstrable job skill, profession, or other means of supporting a family. The spouses' rights to support and services during marriage would be equal and mutual, and would be enforceable by courts during marriage[35] as well as on divorce. On divorce, there would be continued support as a matter of right for a needy spouse who could not then be self-supporting, but such support would be designed to make him self-supporting as soon as possible and would last only until he attained that status. Property acquired by either spouse during the marriage would be managed jointly by both throughout and on divorce all property acquired after marriage would be subject to mandatory equal division. Divorce would be available after the children were grown on no-fault grounds and unilaterally, over the objection of one party, after a waiting period.[36] Courts would be empowered, in cases of exceptional hardship, to relieve couples of the effects of their advance agreements to stay married until the children were grown, but only if they were satisfied that the children's emotional and financial well-being could otherwise be assured. The birth of children in "dress rehearsal" or "companionate status" would automatically transform either relationship into a "marriage for children"[37] if the couple decided to raise them.

34. M. GLENDON, STATE, LAW AND FAMILY, 267-68 (1977).

35. This would overcome McGuire v. McGuire, 157 Neb. 226, 59 N.W.2d 336 (1953), and its progeny.

36. *See* WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 26.09.030(3) (1978 Supp.).

37. The question of adoption by homosexuals is beyond the scope of this review, but for the time being I am satisfied with the case-by-case approach that courts and agencies have

I disclaim any notion that such a reform could substantially reduce the incidence of family violence. Violence, in or out of the family, is a sad but permanent fact of human existence. I do think, however, that the suggested reform would encourage people to think carefully before taking on parenthood. Those ill-suited for the role might decide to forego it altogether or to postpone assuming it until they were better prepared for its rigors. Thus, the reform could operate as a welcome preventive of future family malfunction.

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apparently adopted in addressing this question. *See* N.Y. Times, June 21, 1979, § B, at 1, col. 1.