



March 2023
VOL. 18 No.3

IN THIS ISSUE

- 60th Anniversary Conference
- Conversation Corner with William J. Doherty
- Upcoming AFCC Fall Conferences
- AFCC Member News

AFCC 60th Anniversary Conference

60 Years of Asking the Difficult Questions

May 31-June 3, 2023

Westin Bonaventure
Los Angeles, California

Join us as we celebrate 60 years of AFCC in the birthplace of AFCC.

Tomorrow is the last day to take advantage of the early bird registration rates. These reduced rates are offered until Midnight pacific on March 21, 2023. [Register now!](#)

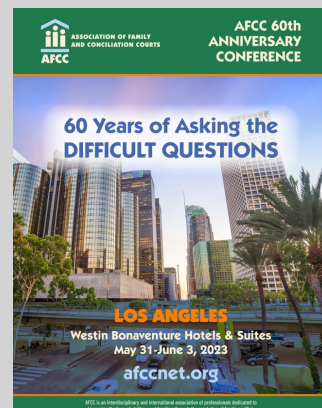
Read the Conference Brochure!

See what we have in store for this conference! The conference [brochure](#) provides a complete breakdown including pre-conference institutes, workshops, presenters, schedule, CE information, and registration information. Peruse the [schedule](#) and [register](#) soon.

Plenary Session

Resolving parenting time disputes has evolved over the last 60 years into a complex process that requires professionals to possess a nuanced understanding of many facets. This plenary session will feature an expert panel moderated by Robert Emery, PhD. Panelists will engage in lively conversation to examine the many difficult questions that have emerged over six decades

60th Anniversary Conference
May 31-June 3, 2023
Los Angeles, California



Conference Sponsors



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of family law. [See the panel.](#)

Exhibit, Sponsor, and Advertise

If your business caters to the needs of family law professionals, please consider exhibiting with us in Los Angeles! Confirming early lets you take advantage of lower prices, secure a better table location, and more. Read the [exhibitor prospectus](#) for more details and contact [Abby Rebolz](#) to sign up.

Reserve Your Room Today!

Book your room early at the Westin Bonaventure Los Angeles today. You can make your reservations [online](#) or over the phone by calling 800-937-8461 or 888-627-8520. Do not delay as AFCC room blocks frequently sell out.

Save, Save, Save!

The early bird rate ends March 21, 2023. [Register now](#) for the best rates. AFCC members can save up to \$160 on registration rates. Not a member? Join AFCC when you register to receive \$10 off your first year of membership and gain access to the reduced member registration rates. See back of the [brochure](#) for more details or call our office at 608-664-3750 to learn more.

Silent Auction

After a three-year hiatus, the AFCC silent auction returns to the 60th Anniversary Conference. The auction will take place on Friday night of the conference. The proceeds raised from the auction help fund essential AFCC projects and initiatives. To donate an item to the Silent Auction, please contact Abby Rebolz at arebolz@afccnet.org or at 608-664-3750.

[Register Now!](#)



Conversation Corner with William J. Doherty

William J. Doherty, PhD (WJD), is the keynote speaker for AFCC's 60th Anniversary Conference. He is a professor at the

University of Minnesota, a family therapist, co-founder of Braver Angels, an organization dedicated to opening dialogue and depolarizing, and chief architect of the Braver Angels workshops. He is also a practicing marriage and family therapist and co-founder of The Doherty Relationship Institute, LLC, a new venture designed to help engaged couples through couples on the brink. Bill is a past-President of the National Council on Family Relations and has received the Significant Contribution to the Field of Marriage and Family Therapy Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.



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[Tony Pelusi & Associates](#)

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AFCC-AAML Joint Conference

Washington, DC
September 28-30, 2023

AFCC Fall Virtual Conference

November 1-3 & 6-7, 2023
Virtual

AFCC Chapter Conferences

AFCC Minnesota Spring Conference

March 24, 2023
Virtual

AFCC Ohio Annual Conference

March 29, 2023
Westerville, OH

AFCC North Carolina Inaugural Conference

March 31, 2023
Greensboro, NC

AFCC Massachusetts Annual Conference

March 31, 2023
Weston, MA

AFCC New York In-Person Event

March 31, 2023
Mineola, NY

AFCC Missouri Annual Conference

April 14, 2023
Virtual

AFCC Colorado Spring Conference

AFCC: Polarization in society seems to be everywhere right now. We see it with political differences, value and ideological differences – and it bubbles up and over in all aspects of our lives. Why are people digging in their heels over what seems like everything?

WJD: A lot of factors that have been converging and increasing over the past 35 years or so (media silos, social media, gerrymandering, money in politics, income inequality, etc.) with the effect that politics have been central to personal identity for many people—and those with a different political orientation are the “Other”—strangers not to be trusted.

[Continue Reading](#)

April 28 & 29, 2023
Denver, CO

**AFCC Utah
2nd Southern Utah
Symposium**
April 28, 2023
Washington, UT

**AFCC Florida
Advanced Education**
October 4-6, 2023
Orlando, FL

AFCC Fall 2023 Virtual Conference November 1-3 and 6-7, 2023


AFCC Fall 2023 Virtual Conference Call for Proposals

**Addiction, Family Violence, and Mental Illness:
Assessing and Managing Challenges to Contemporary Co-parenting**
November 1-3 and 6-7, 2023

In response to popular demand, AFCC is offering the 2023 Fall Conference in a virtual format. If you'd like to present at an AFCC conference from the comfort of your home or office, **we are accepting proposals for 90-minute workshop sessions.** See the [Call for Proposals](#) for complete instructions. Proposals must be submitted using the [online form](#) by the deadline on **Wednesday, May 3, 2023 by midnight.**

Proposed topics may include but are not limited to:

- Interviewing Children
- Cultural Biases Regarding Addiction, Abuse, and Mental Illness
- Parenting Coordination with Complex Issues
- Parenting Plan Evaluations
- Viability of Co-parenting after Family Violence
- Parenting Capacity and Mental Illness
- Child Safety and Parental Addiction
- Step-up Parenting Plans
- Mediation
- Access to Justice
- Parent-child Contact Problems
- Family Dispute Resolution Innovations
- Innovations in Family Court Services
- Supervised Parenting Time
- Court-Involved Therapy



In response to popular demand, AFCC is offering the 2023 Fall Conference in a virtual format. Each session will be 90 minutes, with either a 60-minute or 30-minute break between programs to allow participants to return phone calls, check email, or grab a bite to eat. All programs will be recorded and available for registrants to access at any time. The conference will include educational and social opportunities.

AFCC is accepting proposals for 90 minute workshop sessions either related to the conference theme or on other topics of relevance to family law, dispute resolution and mental health professionals.

All proposals are due by midnight, Wednesday, May 3, 2023, using the online submission form at [afccnet.org](#)

Proposed topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Interviewing Children
- Cultural Biases Regarding Addiction, Abuse, and Mental Illness
- Parenting Coordination with Complex Issues
- Parenting Plan Evaluations
- Viability of Co-parenting after Family Violence
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- Innovations in Family Court Services
- Supervised Parenting Time
- Court-Involved Therapy

AFCC encourages workshop proposals with more than one presenter. University faculty are encouraged to include their students as co-presenters.

AFCC strongly encourages workshop proposals with more than one presenter and including presenters representing diverse perspectives. University faculty members are encouraged to involve students as co-presenters.

The deadline to submit your proposal is Wednesday, May 3, 2023 by midnight.

Submit Your Proposal

Webinar Corner

Group to Individual Inference in Scientific Testimony

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman and Michael A. Saini, PhD

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

1:00pm – 2:00pm Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Registration will close on April 17, 2023 at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.



OurFamilyWizard®

In this interactive webinar, we will consider evidentiary standards in the courts and the challenges of scientific and expert testimony. The discussion will focus initially on the need, inherent in the nature of employing scientific research in individual cases, of relying on group level data (G) to make decisions about individuals (i) in the family courts, also known as “G2i”. Associated with the challenges of “G2i,” and going beyond those challenges, there remain fundamental gaps in knowledge about how best to apply scientific evidence in the family courts. Moreover, scientific evidence runs the risk of being ignored, overestimated, or misunderstood. The discussion will help to explain the importance of G2i, differentiate between framework evidence and diagnostic evidence, consider the roles and limits of expert testimony, especially when experts are asked to apply general propositions to individual cases. The audience for the webinar includes judges, lawyers, expert witnesses, parenting plan evaluators, and other legal and mental health decisionmakers who use scientific evidence to make determinations / recommendations about parenting plans post separation and divorce.

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman is the John F. Digardi Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of California Hastings College of the Law and holds an appointment as Professor in the School of Medicine (Dept. of Psychiatry) at the University of California, San Francisco. He received both his MA (Psychology) and JD from the University of Virginia. Professor Faigman clerked for the Honorable Thomas M. Reavley of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.



Michael A. Saini, PhD holds the endowed Factor-Inwentash Chair in Law and Social Work, and he is the Co-Director of the combined JD/MSW program at the University of Toronto. He has over 200 publications, addressing children and families’ wellbeing in systems governed by law. He is a Board Member of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC), Access for Parents and Children of Ontario (APCO), Family Mediation Canada (FMC), the Canadian Coalition of the Rights of the Child (CCRC) and he is also an Associate Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers.



Registration

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$50

Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15

Non-members: \$20

[Register Now!](#)

AFCC DE&I Series

Gender and Sex in Family Law: How to Work with a Gender Diverse Population

Rebecca Stahl, JD, LLM

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

4:00pm-6:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

Registration closes April 11, 2023 at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.

This session will explore how cisgender heteronormative structures have permeated family law, how these norms are shifting, the current language we use to describe transgender and nonbinary folks, and how to use this information to be a more trauma-responsive professional in family court. The workshop will address how we are always learning and what it means to continue to learn as culture shifts around issues baked into the family law system since its beginning.

This webinar is free to attend, but you must register in advance to receive the webinar link.

Rebecca M. Stahl, JD, LLM is the former Staff Director of the Sayra and Neil Meyerhoff Center for Families, Children and the Courts at the University of Baltimore School of Law. Rebecca previously represented children in child welfare cases in Los Angeles County and Tucson, Arizona. Rebecca has presented at a variety of international conferences focused on children's rights and family law on topics ranging from the role of lawyers for children to trauma. Rebecca coauthored, *Representing Children in Dependency and Family Law: Beyond the Law*, a book regarding the psychological issues lawyers for children need to understand to better represent their child clients and has published articles on the role of children's representation, including a recent one on trauma, published in October 2020 in the Family Court Review.



[Register Now!](#)

More Upcoming Webinars!

The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Young Children

Kate Wurmfeld, JD; Kiran Malpe, LCSW, BS

May 10, 2023

The Work Before the Work

Sol Rappaport, PhD, ABPP

June 22, 2023

AFCC-AAML Joint Conference Advanced Issues in Child Custody

September 28-30, 2023
Washington, DC

AFCC-AAML Joint Conference

Advanced Issues in Child Custody: Evaluation, Litigation, and Settlement

Capital Hilton
Washington, DC
September 28-30, 2023

The **Association of Family and Conciliation Courts** and **American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers** are excited to be hosting their first completely in-person joint conference in four years! Leading family law experts will offer extended institutes and breakout sessions that address the most challenging issues faced by lawyers, judges, psychologists, custody evaluators, parenting coordinators, mediators, therapists, arbitrators, educators, and others.

[Read the Brochure](#)

Award Nominations

AFCC will be acknowledging the accomplishments of leaders in family law by presenting awards at the AFCC 60th Anniversary Conference. We encourage you to recognize your colleagues by submitting a nomination. Nominations for the awards listed below will be accepted online through March 21, 2023.

John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by AFCC members. [Nominate a colleague!](#)

Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award recognizes outstanding research and/or research achievements in the field of family and divorce. [Submit your nomination now!](#)

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award recognizes innovation in court-connected or court-related programs created by AFCC members. [Nominate a program!](#)

AFCC Member News

Diane Goodman, AFCC member from California has been appointed a judge in the Los Angeles Superior Court. Judge Goodman was appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom in order to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Susan Lopez-Giss. Prior to her appointment, Diana worked as an attorney at her private practice, The Law and Mediation Office of Diane M. Goodman, APC. Congratulations, Diane!

January eNews Technical Difficulties

During the first few weeks in January, AFCC members may not have been receiving our newsletters due to an issue with our emailing server. This issue has been resolved, but we encourage you to check out the [January eNews](#) which you may have missed due to this

issue.

AFCC eNEWS

The *AFCC eNEWS* is the monthly e-newsletter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The *eNEWS* provides up-to-date information for professionals including practice tips, international news, and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The *AFCC eNEWS* is provided at no charge to you; anyone can subscribe. [Subscribe here.](#)

AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

EDITOR:

[Ann Ordway, JD, PhD](#)

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Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) | 6525 Grand Teton Plaza, Madison, WI
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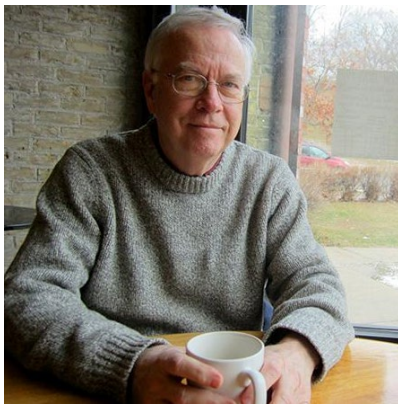


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**Conversation Corner: Dr. William J. Doherty
A Column Throwback to the AFCC Newsletter of the 90's**



William J. Doherty, PhD, (WJD) is the keynote speaker for AFCC’s 60th Anniversary Conference. He is a professor at the University of Minnesota, a family therapist, co-founder of Braver Angels, an organization dedicated to opening dialogue and depolarizing, and chief architect of the Braver Angels workshops. He is also a practicing marriage and family therapist and co-founder of The Doherty Relationship Institute, LLC, a new venture designed to help engaged couples through couples on the brink. Bill is a past-President of the National Council on Family Relations and has received the Significant Contribution to the Field of Marriage and Family Therapy Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

AFCC: Polarization in society seems to be everywhere right now. We see it with political differences, value and ideological differences – and it bubbles up and over in all aspects of our lives. Why are people digging in their heels over what seems like everything?

WJD: A lot of factors that have been converging and increasing over the past 35 years or so (media silos, social media, gerrymandering, money in politics, income inequality, etc.) with the effect that politics have been central to personal identity for many people—and those with a different political orientation are the “Other”—strangers not to be trusted.

AFCC: You and your colleagues started *Better Angels* (now *Braver Angels*) following the 2016 presidential election. What is *Braver Angels* and what inspired you to begin this endeavor?

WJD: We are a national nonprofit membership organization with a mission to bridge the partisan divide and strengthen our democratic republic. Our leadership is half red and half blue. We have chapters in most states. We work on our mission through workshops bringing reds and blues together to understand each other beyond stereotypes and look for common ground, through workshops where we teach skills for communicating across the political divide, through Braver Angels style debates, through social media, and other ways. We are now doing workshops for elected officials (Braver Politics) and developing partnerships with civic,

religious, any other organizations concerned about polarization. Of importance is that we don't aim to change anyone's mind about policy (we are not promoting "centrist" political views), but to change how they regard each other. We want to move from demonization to humanization.

AFCC: What are some of the key sources of polarization we encounter?

WJD: Those I have already mentioned, plus the decades-long decline in overall social trust which leaves Americans prone to form ideological silos.

AFCC: What is the connection between family conflict and the bigger picture conflicts you are describing? What are the similarities? What are the differences?

WJD: Polarization has invaded families and increased conflict. The red/blue divide has an analogy to marital conflict. Reds and blues are responsible to run the country but can't get along and they both see it as mostly the other side's fault. Unlike marriage, we can't have a civic divorce (one side can't all move to Canada).

AFCC: Extreme differences come up all the time in our conversations with colleagues, friends, and even family members – whether the differences stem from political alliances, or personal beliefs over controversial issues – should we avoid "hot" topics before conflict compromises our relationships?

WJD: Better than avoidance is to engage with curiosity rather than try to convince someone to change their mind. Vigorous persuasion and defense are what generally trigger conflict over hot topics. Let avoidance be the last resort after trying to engage via listening, not using jargon (racist, socialist), and looking for some common ground. There is usually *some* ground at the level of aspirations for the country (for example, all kids having good schools) and concerns (the immigration system is a mess). Start there rather than with specific policies.

AFCC: Is it possible to stay true to our strongly held personal convictions without seeming to deeply offend anyone who does not share them?

WJD: Yes. We live in an era where differences of opinion are labeled as "offensive" even though the viewpoint is expressed without personal attack. Using "I-statements" (this is how I see the issue, and these are my sources and my story behind my view) are less apt to lead to personal offense than "Truth statements" (here's how it absolutely is!) We can hold strong values and not see particular policies as beyond discussion. Example: the value of equal opportunity and the policy of affirmative action; those are not the same thing.

AFCC: What specific advice would you offer for managing polarization in our personal and professional lives?

WJD: Lots of advice is already incorporated in this conversation. Overall, see yourself as an "engager" in political conversation, not a "gladiator" or a "defender of the truth." Develop the skills needed to do this.