Child sexual abuse: increasing incidents or unfounded allegations

A number of professionals have commented on the increasing number of divorce cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse. Does this represent an increasing incidence of sexual abuse and better reporting of these cases or a growing number of unfounded allegations intended to defame a parent and serve as leverage when bargaining over custody and financial matters?

The Research Unit of AFCC, under the direction of Dr. Jessica arson, and the American Bar Association's National Legal Resource Center for Child Advocacy and Protection jointly received a grant from the federal Office of Human Development Services to explore these concerns. Research efforts will be directed toward establishing the incidence of such allegations, tracking who initiates the complaint and the proportion of found versus unfounded cases. Information will be gathered about how courts and protective service agencies handle these complaints and the procedures used, including interviews with the child, appointment of a guardian ad litem and sanctions against parents making false allegations. Policy questions will be studied, such as waiver of confidentiality in mediation when a sexual abuse allegation is made, and the use of sanctions to discourage false claims.

The research will result in the development of educational materials to assist courts and others in developing effective policies and procedures to investigate sexual abuse complaints and to address the problem of unfounded allegations. The ABA will assist in the dissemination of the information.

To date, site visits have been made to court programs in Cambridge and Los Angeles and it is anticipated that three additional, as yet unchosen, sites will actively participate. AFCC's Research Unit is eager to receive additional information on policies and procedures from courts or court-related agencies. Contact Dr. Jessica Pearson, 1720 Emerson Street, Denver, CO 80218, (303-837-1855).

AFCC needs you!

The Annual Meeting provides not only an opportunity to hear featured speakers from around the world and to visit with colleagues on a more informal basis, but is also the time when members are elected to the Board of Directors and the Board elects the officers for the coming year.

In order to keep AFCC a vital and energetic organization, it is imperative that the Board represent the disciplines and geographic distribution of our membership. If you would like to be considered for a position on the Board or would like to make a nomination, please send a resume to Gerald Lecovin, AFCC Nominating Committee Chairperson, #300 896 Cambie Street, Vancouver, BC, CANADA V6B 2P6.

AFCC depends heavily on its committee structure to carry out the work of the Association and provide services to members and others. Committee chair positions are appointed by the President following each annual meeting and committee members are appointed by the President in consultation with the chairperson. A list of committees and contact information is printed in the membership directory. Please contact either the AFCC President or Committee chairperson and advise them of your interest.

Boston—something for everyone

AFCC's Annual Meeting at the Copley Plaza Hotel, May 21-24, 1986 has something for everyone. Conference chairpersons Tim Salius, Bob Tompkins, Patrick Phear and Tom Bishop have promised a conference that no one will forget. (And no one has forgotten that sumptuous banquet that Tim Salius produced in Hartford in 1979!)

Dr. Dorothy Huntington and Professor Frank Sander will open the conference Wednesday evening with a discussion of provocative public policy issues for families and courts. Panel presentations and workshops have been planned to meet the interests of judges, lawyers, mental health professionals and mediators. An open forum for judges will highlight family law issues and trends at the trial and appellate court level. Professor Robert Mookin, Stanford University, will be the featured luncheon speaker. Attorney Tom Bishop will narrate a dramatic new montage which will represent the experiences of a multi-problem family and the relationships and practices of the professional service providers.

Complete the enclosed form and register today.

And if that's not enough - don't forget that Boston is the kickoff to the educational post-conference trip to London. Bob Tompkins, tour coordinator, says that tour plans provide ample opportunity to visit with family court personnel and see the sights of London. Package price of $749 includes roundtrip airfare on PanAm, six nights lodging (duble occupancy) at the Royal National Hotel, daily continental breakfast and ground transportation. The tour departs Boston on Saturday, May 24 at 4:00 p.m. and returns to New York and Boston on Saturday, May 31.

Other tour arrangements and return options are available. Contact Bob Tompkins, 28 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106, (203) 566-7973.
Mediation news

AFCC Board member Robert McWhinney provided the impetus for the formation of the Nova Scotia Association for Divorce & Family Mediation when he presented a workshop on mediation in November 1984 in Halifax. The Provincial association was established in June 1985 to promote and publicize family mediation, to provide training and continuing education and to develop standards and a code of ethics for mediators. Members have been working on a report to the Task Force on Family & Children’s Services which supports the institutionalization and financing of court-based mediation programs. The Association’s mailing address is P.O. Box 3154 South, Halifax, Nova Scotia Canada B3K 3H5.

Parent-child mediation is gaining popularity in New Hampshire. The passage of Senate Bill 1 provides for the funding of start-up costs for new mediation programs and the expansion of court connected programs. Family mediation is seen as offering a successful forum to resolve disputes between juveniles and family members and to avoid adjudication and possible removal of children from the family home. The New Hampshire Mediators Association, founded in 1984, represents mediators from the fields of divorce mediation, parent-child mediation, special education mediation and higher education mediation. Members have been working on a Code of Rules for Mediator Certification, Ethics and Standards. Copies of the draft code are available from Judith Reardon, P.O. Box 350, Chocorua, NH 03817.

Ailene Hubert, Director of the Family Mediation and Conciliation Program and Judge Frank Orlando both of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, were panelists on a program on “Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Judicial Environment” sponsored by the Supreme Court of Florida, the Florida State University College of Law and the Florida Legislative Study Commission on Alternative Dispute Resolution. The sponsors also held a five day mediation training program for court-annexed and private practice mediators. Linda Singer, Executive Director of the Center for Community Justice in Washington, D.C., and Michael Lewis, Deputy Director of the National Center for Dispute Resolution (NIDR), Washington, D.C., served as training faculty.

Health & Welfare Canada sponsored a two day custody mediation workshop conducted by Ann Milne for court-connected and community mediators in Moncton, New Brunswick. Ms. Milne also served as a faculty member for a state accredited mediation training program sponsored by the Mediation Resource Center in Clarkston, Michigan.

Russell Schoenemen, Director of the Maricopa County Conciliation Court (Phoenix, AZ) and Clarence Cramer, Director of the Pinal County Conciliation Court (Florence, AZ) provided 22 hours of introductory mediation training to the staff of the Las Vegas Child Custody Division. They also met with members of the bar and bench.

The April Arbitration Day ‘88 family mediation seminar sponsored by the American Arbitration Association focused on new areas beyond matrimonial resolution. AFCC Board member Patrick Phear and Margaret Shaw discussed the use of mediation in disputes over the care of elderly parents, the settlement of wills and conflicts in parent-child relationships.

Committee reports

Academic - The Academic Committee requests suggestions and participation in a project to create a coordinated research package for conciliation/mediation court services. The committee hopes to gather information on demographics, user satisfaction, child adjustment, mediation process analyses and legislative impact. Members interested in assisting the committee or topic groups may contact chairperson Elizabeth Koopman, Institute for Child Study, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, (301) 454-2034.

Mediation - The Mediation Committee sponsored an open-forum on the subject of mediation training and education during AFCC’s mid-winter meeting in San Diego. The “town hall meeting” provided an opportunity for conference participants to raise issues and concerns about the training and education field. Concerns included the need for affordable training programs, a method of distinguishing between the types of training programs offered and their applicability to specific settings, the need to develop competency scales and to identify effective interventions for a variety of disputes. Forum participants urged AFCC to include mediation training modules in conference programs and to continue to provide guidance in the establishment of standards of practice. The Mediation Committee will conduct a second open forum on the topic of training and education during the International Peacemaking Conference, June 1988, in Denver. This informal needs assessment will be used to assist the Mediation Committee in formulating future plans.

Technical Assistance - The Technical Assistance Committee, under the direction of Patrick Phear and Sarah Feneley, reports continuing requests for technical assistance and the development of programs to meet these needs. Contributions to AFCC’s Development Fund will greatly assist with plans to approach foundations for seed money to help fund these projects. Guidelines for the provision of technical assistance were developed by the Executive Committee. Technical assistance and training is available to court-connected services in the areas of conciliation, counseling, education, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, litigation, custody evaluation, child support and visitation enforcement, post-judicial adjustment and abuse and protection programs. The Technical Assistance Committee attempts to draw faculty from AFCC members in close geographic proximity to the host site. The Committee requests that individuals wishing to be considered faculty positions forward a resume and statement of areas of interest and experience to Patrick Phear, 264 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02116, (617) 267-3590.
ASSOCIATION OF
FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

ASSOCIATION OF
FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

Publication Order Form

FILMS/VIDEO TAPES

Custody Resolution Counseling: Designed for training counselors in mediation techniques for family disputes concerning custody and visitation. Color, 45 minutes. Rental-$40/5 days; Purchase-$130.

A Family Affair: Designed to inform judges and other professionals of the legal remedies and implications regarding child abuse. This film is a gold medal winner. New York International Film and Television Festival (1982), First Prize winner, American Film Festival (1982) in its category. Gold Medal, National Council Family Relations (1983). Available in 16 mm or video cassette through VISUCOM Productions, Inc., 1255 Veterans Blvd., Redwood City, CA 94063. Rental-$60/3 days; Purchase-$450.

You're Still Mom and Dad: A sensitive portrayal of the issues of Joint Custody. Designed for parents, professionals, and others who wish to understand and implement this post-divorce parenting plan. Color, 38 minutes. Video Cassette: Rental-$40/5 days; Purchase-$100.

PUBLICATIONS

Guidelines for Court-Connected Child Custody Evaluations: A procedural guide for custody evaluators. Developed by AFCC Committee on Custody Evaluation, this booklet provides a much needed practical format that can be used easily by evaluators charged with the responsibility of preparing custody evaluation reports for use by domestic relations courts. ($3.00).

Joint Custody and Shared Parenting: Edited by Jay Folberg, Past President AFCC and Professor of Law at Lewis and Clark College, this book provides the reader with a compilation of writings that cut across the disciplines of law, social work, family therapy, and psychology. It presents a balanced debate on a sometimes volatile and difficult issue. The book's interdisciplinary approach enables judges, social workers and family therapists to benefit from its material. Royalty proceeds have been donated to AFCC by Jay Folberg. This book ordinarily is $27.50. AFCC has a limited number available for purchase @ a 10% discount ($24.75).

Guidelines for Establishing a Court Connected Counseling Service: A manual written for courts and individuals with helpful information regarding how to establish a court connected counseling service. $2.00.

My Mom and Dad Are Getting a Divorce: Written by Florence Blumenfeld, an AFCC member and conciliation court counselor in Los Angeles, this colorfully illustrated book appeals to children whose parents are going through divorce and assists parents in understanding their children's feelings. Available for $3.95 plus $1.25 postage and handling from Changing Times Education Service, Division of EMC Publishing, 300 York Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55101, (600) 326-1452.

Divorce and Family Mediation: History, Review, Future Considerations: A monograph, published in the December, 1982 issue Conciliation Courts Review. This 45 page article presents a well researched history of the development of mediation in the field of divorce. $2.00 each. Orders of ten or more, $1.50 each.

Divorce Mediation Final Report: The findings of this AFCC sponsored project is now available in a bound volume. The project was under the direction of Dr. Jessica Pearson. The findings are presented in eleven extensive reports and is an important contribution to the field. Copies are available for $25.00 by contacting Dr. Jessica Pearson, 1720 Emerson Street, Denver, CO 80218; (303) 837-1555.
**PAMPHLETS**

Parents Are Forever: Internationally acclaimed pamphlet used by Conciliation Court staff, family courts, lawyers, counselors and mediators to assist families in the divorce process. Pamphlet addresses custody and visitation issues and assists parents in using the divorce experience as an opportunity for growth.

An Important Message to Step Parents: This pamphlet provides guidelines that will assist the blended family in working together.

Joint Custody: A New Way of Being Related: This brochure provides guidelines for parents considering joint custody of their children and suggestions for what to include in a joint custody agreement.

Twenty Questions Divorcing Parents Ask About Their Children: This brochure answers 20 of the most commonly asked questions about how to help children adjust to divorce, such as "How can parents prepare children for divorce?" and "What kinds of things are especially damaging to children?"

Is Mediation for Us: This brochure has been developed to provide basic information about the use of mediation in resolving family conflict. Presented in a clear and concise manner, this pamphlet describes the mediation process to the potential consumer.

**THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE DIRECTLY THROUGH AFCC**

**VIDEO TAPES**

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(Pamphlet Orders over 1,000 -- $.15 each)

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Checks payable in U.S. funds to: ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS c/o OHSU, Dept. of Psychiatry Gaines Hall, Room 149 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Road Portland, OR 97201 (503) 220-5651
John Kydd is a man who likes to get projects off the ground. Following graduation from the University of Puget Sound Law School in 1981, he began the Puget Sound Law Foundation, a non-profit foundation which supports pro bono and public interest law; the Pacific Family Mediation Institute, an interdisciplinary group of professionals interested in improving the process of resolving family conflict out of court; the Pacific Mediation Center, an organization which assists with the resolution of civil disputes; the King County Dispute Resolution Center, which resolves a variety of community disputes; and the Washington State Mediation Consortium. And when he has a few spare minutes, John is a managing partner with the Seattle law firm of Halverson & Strong.

In addition to a law degree, John also has a Master’s Degree in Social Work from the University of Washington. His interest in helping people retain responsibility for their lives and make informed decisions led to the co-authorship of Divorce in Washington - A Humane Approach. Published by the Pacific Family Law Institute Press in 1985, the book provides a comprehensive review of the psychological and legal aspects of divorce. The book has been well received in Washington and may be revised in the near future for national distribution.

Fortunately, John’s talents have not gone unrecognized. He received the “Outstanding Young Man of the Year Award” in 1980 from the Jaycees and last year was honored by the Seattle-King County Bar Association with the President’s Award for Pro-Bono work. Fortunately for AFCC we captured some of John’s energy by electing him to the Board of Directors in May 1985. John hopes to travel to China this fall. Perhaps he can do some advance work for AFCC’s trip to China in 1987! Congratulations, John, on your new book. We look forward to your contributions to AFCC and helping us get more new projects off the ground. (Divorce in Washington is available from John Kydd, 1300 Hoga Building, Seattle, WA 98104, 206-623 1590, $12.85/copy including postage.)

Those of you coming to the Boston conference will have an opportunity to meet Gail Packer, Family Service Officer in the Suffolk County Probate & Family Court (Boston, Massachusetts). Gail has been an active member of the Boston conference committee and is the chairperson of the Hospitality Subcommittee. Anyone feeling lost or looking for a good restaurant will find the help they need from Gail and her committee!

Although Gail is a new member to AFCC, she is not new to the family court area, having worked in the field for the past eight years. Last year, Gail was appointed to the Governor’s Commission on Divorce. The Commission, made up of lawyers, legislators, clergy and mental health professionals, is studying the impact of divorce on families from both an economic and emotional perspective. Gail’s expertise in children’s issues, particularly custody investigations and mediation, have prompted invitations to participate in a number of workshops including a two day training program with the Connecticut Family Court.

In her free time, Gail swims oceans and skis mountains. Last summer she and several friends swam a mile in the Atlantic Ocean and she recently returned from a ski trip to the Canadian Rockies. We welcome Gail as a new member and appreciate her warm hospitality as she welcomes us to Boston.
Upcoming events of interest

April 25, 1986
Wisconsin Association of Family & Divorce Mediators Annual Meeting
Red Carpet Country Inn
Pewaukee, Wisconsin
Contact: WAFDM
P.O. Box 11612
Milwaukee, WI 53211
(414) 274-9012

April 26 – 29, 1986
Divorce Mediation Training
Basic Workshop
Contact: Dr. Carl Schneider
Divorce Mediation Institute
Suite 111
1580 N. Northwest Hwy.
Park Ridge, IL 60068
(312) 996 6023

May 14-15, 1986
"Building Family Strengths"
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Contact: Dept' Conferences & Institutes
205 Nebraska Center
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68583
(402) 472-2844

May 16, 1986
"Understanding & Treating the Remarried Family" with Florence Kaslow, Ph.D.
Orlando, FL
Contact: Florence Kaslow, Ph.D.
2617 N. Flagler Drive, Suite 204
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
(205) 832-7805

May 18, 1986
"Law & Children's Policy: A mid-80s Evaluation"
National Legal Resource Center for Child Advocacy & Protection
Washington, D.C.
Contact: American Bar Association
1600 M Street NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 331-2200

May 19-20, 1986
"The Role of Mediation in Divorce Proceedings - A Comparative Prospective"
Trans Atlantic Mediation Conference
Vermont Law School Dispute Resolution Project & NY Univ. Law School Dispute Resolution Assistance Center
Radisson Hotel, Burlington, VT
Contact: John McCrory
Vermont Law School
P.O. Box 96, Chelsea Street South
Royalton, VT 05068
(802) 763-8303

May 19-23, 1986
15th Annual Child Abuse & Neglect Symposium
Keystone, Colorado
Contact: Kempe National Center
for the Prevention & Treatment of Child Abuse & Neglect
1205 Onelida
Denver, CO 80220
(303) 321-3963

May 21-24, 1986
ACFCC Annual Meeting "Creating New partnerships in Serving Families"
Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston
Contact: Tim Sallus
28 Grand Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(203) 566-8187

May 27-28, 1986
ACFCC's post-Conference London Exchange
Contact: Bob Tompkins
London Conference Coordinator
28 Grand Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(203) 566-8187

May 29-June 1, 1986
"Traditions of Critical Inquiry In Law & Society" 1986 Annual Meeting of Law & Society Association, Chicago, IL
Contact: Bryant Garth
Indiana University School of Law
Bloomington, IN 47405
(812) 335-1161

June 3-8, 1986
"Peace Making & Conflict Resolution as a Social Movement: Power, Justice & Institution Building."
National Conference on Peace Making & Conflict Resolution
Regency Hotel, Denver, CO
Contact: Janet Rifkin
127 Hasbrook Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
(413) 545-2682

July 14-18, 1986
"Children of Divorce: New Research Findings & New Interventions" with Judith Wallerstein
Contact: Cape Cod Institute - Eastham
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
1312 Belfer Building
Bronx, NY 10461

July 16-19, 1986
"Expanding Horizons"
Academy of Family Mediators Annual Conference, St. Paul, Minnesota
Contact: Academy of Family Mediators
P.O. Box 4666
Greenwich, CT 06830
(203) 629-8049

September 11-14, 1986
"Scope, Skills & Specification: Challenges for Clinical Social Work"
1986 NASW National Clinical Social Work Conference
San Francisco, CA
Contact: NASW Conference Office
7981 Eastern Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 565-0333

September 24-18, 1986
Divorce Mediation Basic Training
Contact: Florence Kaslow, Ph.D.
2617 N. Flagler Drive, Suite 204
West Palm Beach, FL 33404
(205) 832-7805

October 23, 1986
American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy 44th Annual Conference
Orlando World Center
Contact: AAMFT Program Con
1717 K Street, N.W., Suite Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 429-1825

Announcements of upcoming events of interest to ACFCC members should be sent to Newsletter Editor Ann L. Milne, 314 E. Mifflin Street Madison, WI 53703 (608) 251-0604.

The ACFCC Newsletter is published four times a year in January, April, July, and October. News items should be sent by the 15th of the month preceding publication to Newsletter Editor, Ann L. Milne, 314 E. Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703, (608) 251-0604.
AFCC goes to China in 1987

Now is the time to start budgeting for AFCC's Goodwill People-to-People tour to the People's Republic of China. International Committee Chairperson Leonore Levit reports that preliminary plans provide for a 16 or 18 day tour following the May 1987 meeting in Honolulu. Tour plans include meeting with Chinese Family Court judges and mediators. Trip costs are estimated at $3,500 - $3,900 depending upon length of tour. Costs include international airfare, air and surface transportation within China, first class hotel accommodations, guide and translation services and all meals. Further information may be obtained from Leonore Levit, Ph.D., Circuit Court of Cooke County, 1901 Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602.

Conference Registration

Complete form and make check payable to 1986 Annual Conference, Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. Mail to: Anthony J. Selius, Director, Family Division - Superior Court, 28 Grand Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Registration Fees: $125.00 (if received prior to March 1, 1986)
$150.00 (if received after March 1, 1986)
$65.00 Spouse or Guest
$65.00 Student (with photocopy of current ID)

Please print or type:

Name:
Address:
City  State/Province  County  Zip
Affiliation:
No. of Persons  Phone:

Amount Enclosed

HOTEL REGISTRATION

PLEASE DON'T FORGET — MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO THE COLEY PLAZA, COLEY SQUARE, BOSTON. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CURRENCY.

Reservation is considered tentative and subject to cancellation seven days prior to arrival, unless guaranteed by one night's advance deposit, American Express card, Diners Club card, or Carte Blanche card.

Card # _______________________________ Expiration date _______________________________

Signature __________________________

Reservations will be held until 9:00 a.m. on the day indicated, or until 48 hours prior to arrival. A $10.00 charge per room per night will be assessed if it is not occupied. No deposit required. A $15.00 deposit will be required for the first night's stay.

The Copley Plaza

Copley Square, Boston

Please request credit card information below if you wish to pay in advance.

Card # _______________________________ Expiration date _______________________________

Signature __________________________

If reservered more than three days prior to a Sunday night, the rate will be $125.00 per room, plus tax. Reservations cannot be guaranteed if payment is not made in advance.

The Copley Plaza

Copley Square, Boston

Please request credit card information below if you wish to pay in advance.

Card # _______________________________ Expiration date _______________________________

Signature __________________________

If room reserved in advance and payment is not made within 24 hours, the room will be released.

The Copley Plaza

Copley Square, Boston

Please request credit card information below if you wish to pay in advance.

Card # _______________________________ Expiration date _______________________________

Signature __________________________

If room reserved in advance and payment is not made within 24 hours, the room will be released.
Publications and films

Mediation and Divorce: Bibliography is produced by the Program Information Unit and the Divorce Counseling and Family Affairs Unit of Health & Welfare Canada. Copies are available from Program Information, 7th Floor, Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 1S4.

Coming Apart, a film on custody mediation focuses on the needs of children and demonstrates how conciliation and mediation can be used to help parents work out shared parenting responsibilities. Film may be obtained from the Canadian National Film Board (I.D. #065-078) or Media Marketing, 115 Torquay Road, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3Z 2M9, (416) 475-3763, $2.50.

Effective Step-Parenting is a pamphlet written for the public on step parenting and marital breakdown. Copies may be obtained from the Program Information Unit, Social Service Programs Branch, Health & Welfare Canada, Brooke Claxton Building, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 1S4.

Divorce Mediation: A Guide for Women is written in a question and answer format and addresses issues of concern to women and professionals engaged in mediation. The Guide may be obtained from NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, 99 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10013, $2.75/copy.

The American Mental Health Counselor's Association Task Force on Childhood and Adolescence is offering a free annotated bibliography on children of divorce. Send a stamped, self addressed envelope to Dr. Paul J. Ciborowski, Sachem High School North, Lake Ronkonkoma, New York 11779.

The following two publications may be ordered from the American Bar Association, Order Fulfillment Department, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 988-5500. Handling charge per order is $3.

Dispute Resolution Program Directory presents detailed information on over 300 community dispute resolution programs. Information on types of cases, referral sources, staff and training, program procedures, and budget and funding sources is included. Appendices cover programs and practitioners in environmental mediation, custody and divorce, and corporate dispute resolution. 300 pp., $18.00.

The Oregon Health Sciences University Association of Family and Conciliation Courts
Department of Psychiatry
Gaines Hall, Room 149
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Road
Portland, Oregon 97201

A MILNE
314 E MIFFLIN ST
MADISON WI 53703