

# The Disengagement of Paternal Grandparents Subsequent to Divorce

Edward Kruk  
Barry L. Hall

**ABSTRACT.** Divorce within a family is a well researched practice phenomenon that has tended to primarily focus on the nuclear family. However, in the family counselling literature there is a lack of a detailed examination of the effect of the adult child's divorce on the grandparent-grandchild relationship and other family system levels. In particular, paternal grandparents are viewed as being at high risk for losing contact with grandchildren when the child-in-law is the custodial mother. It is suggested that the disengaged grandparent phenomenon is more widespread than previously believed, and this has serious implications for counsellors and mediators in the field of family divorce.

During the course of the past 25 years, divorce has achieved prominence as a widespread social phenomenon, and family transition during divorce as a major counselling issue. By and large, however, clinical emphasis, social policy analysis, and research attention concerning the impact of divorce has been focused on the nuclear family unit (Ahrons, 1980; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1978), children of divorce (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Hetherington et al., 1978; Hess & Camara, 1979), divorced mothers (Chesler, 1986; Weitzman, 1985) and, more recently, noncustodial fathers (Jacobs, 1986; Kruk, 1989). The experience of grandparents affected by divorce has been largely ignored,

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Edward Kruk, PhD, is on the faculty, School of Social Work, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC. Barry L. Hall, MSW, PhD, is on the faculty, School of Social Work, The University of Calgary, Lethbridge Division, 4401 University Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 3M4.

despite the fact that the importance of the grandparent-grandchild attachment bond is being studied widely and thoroughly. While the salience of this relationship does not decline subsequent to divorce, the experience and role of grandparents post-divorce has not achieved such stature as a topic for exclusive empirical investigation.

This paper discusses the gap within the professional literature on the phenomenon of grandparent-grandchild contact loss—the disengagement of grandparents, particularly by paternal, from their grandchildren's lives after adult children divorce. The recent proliferation of "grandparent rights" groups concerned with withheld access to grandchildren subsequent to divorce (such as GRAND-Grandparents Requesting Access and Dignity), and recent evidence emanating from studies on the disengagement of noncustodial parents (particularly fathers) after divorce (Kruk, 1989) suggests that the "disengaged grandparent" phenomenon may be much more widespread than previously believed, especially among paternal grandparents.

### ***FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS***

A number of studies have confirmed that contact between first and second generation affines (in-laws) is substantially reduced after divorce (Spicer & Hampe, 1975; Anspach, 1976; Ahrons & Bowman, 1982), whereas relationships between first and second generation consanguines usually become closer, particularly in the case of mothers: divorce often results in mother-maternal grandparent relationships becoming closer (*ibid*). In the great majority of cases, mothers become custodial parents after divorce, and post-divorce contact between maternal grandparents and grandchildren either increases or remains the same. Men are typically noncustodial parents after divorce, and paternal grandparents' contact with their grandchildren is highly dependent on the level of the father's contact with his children.

It has been well-established that pre-divorce parents mediate the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren and the grandparent-grandchild relationship rests upon the voluntary consent of both parents (Robertson, 1975). The relationship may be-

come more tenuous after adult children divorce, particularly in the case of paternal grandparents whose ties with the custodial mother may have been attenuated. This is not to ignore the fact that maternal grandparents could just as easily be denied access to their grandchildren. Clearly, there will be cases where the father has custody which could interfere with maternal grandparent access but this occurrence tends not to be the norm and in all likelihood the custodial parent will be the mother, thereby reducing the probabilities of cessation of maternal grandparent-grandchild contacts. Further, during divorce, grandparents normally support the position of their own children in cases of dispute and after the dust settles, they may be closer to their own child but isolated and estranged from their former child-in-law who has custody of the grandchildren which may not bode well for their continued contact with their grandchildren. After divorce, the paternal grandparent-grandchild relationship may thus be at-risk, whereas the grandchild's relationship with the maternal grandparents may well be enhanced. Therefore, the critical variable will be which adult child parent has custody of the grandchildren.

Although empirical investigations are largely lacking, it has often been suggested that the actual extent of contact loss between grandchildren and grandparents is, at best, modest. Most studies, however, fail to control for custodial status of the divorced parents and not differentiating between the contact patterns of paternal *versus* maternal grandparents. Where such a differentiation is made, the literature indicates that paternal grandparents are in fact less likely to remain in contact with their grandchildren than are maternal grandparents subsequent to divorce. Anspach (1976) found that in 69% of cases, paternal grandparents see their grandchildren less often than maternal grandparents (20% of all grandparents in her study reported decreased contact/negative changes in the grandparent-grandchild relationship). Ahrons and Bowman (1982) determined that while maternal grandparents reported no change in the relationship or more contact and greater emotional closeness to their grandchildren after divorce, paternal grandparents were more likely to lose contact. Sprey and Matthews (1982) and Matthews and Sprey (1984) found that grandparents of custodial children see their grandchildren more often because they represent important re-

sources/support systems to the middle generation. They also reported that by preventing an estranged spouse from seeing his/her child, custodial parents are likely to prevent grandparents' access to their grandchildren: custodial parents may indirectly affect visiting between grandparents and grandchildren by restricting or disrupting the visits between noncustodial parents and their children. Gladstone (1987, 1988) interviewed 23 maternal and 23 paternal grandmothers, finding that contact was more likely to decrease for paternal grandparents. A particular problem for the latter was the obstruction of visits by the custodial mother and, in some cases, obstruction of visits by the father. Gladstone concluded that the most important factors associated with decreased visiting for grandparents included unresolved conflict either between the grandparent and her child or between the former spouses, resulting in withheld access to the noncustodial father, and thereby to the paternal grandparents.

The literature has identified other factors influencing the level of grandparent contact with grandchildren post-divorce, most notably the age of the grandparents, parental mobility and grandparent geographical proximity to grandchildren. Younger grandparents are more likely to remain in contact whereas older grandparents, particularly those in poor health, have less contact (Johnson, 1988). Grandparents who are geographically distant have less contact (Matthews & Sprey, 1984; Gladstone, 1987; Johnson, 1988). Gladstone (1987) concluded that factors associated with increased visiting for grandparents included geographical mobility resulting in residential propinquity, the appeal of the grandmother's home, the employment status of the adult child (i.e., grandmothers providing child care for their custodial daughters), and the absence of the child-in-law in instances where the child-in-law had previously impeded access. Another factor to consider is the age of the grandchildren in that older children may well be listened to by all parties regarding their wishes for grandparent (both paternal and maternal) contacts. This is important since not all grandparent-grandchildren relationships are positive in nature (Kaslo & Schwartz, 1987) and the role expectations of a grandparent with a preschooler would be different from a teenager (Matthews & Sprey, 1984). While these factors undoubtedly influence the quantity and quality of post-di-

voice contact between grandparents and their grandchildren, the salience of kinship lineage as a determinant of post-divorce contact, we would argue, has been largely under-reported.

When divorce reduces or eliminates contact between a noncustodial father and his children, the relationship between the grandparent-grandchild generations is likely to be drastically altered (Ahrons & Bowman, 1982). Father absence after divorce is widespread and well-documented; research findings on the disengagement of non-custodial fathers after divorce (Furstenberg, Nord, Peterson, & Zill, 1983; Kruk, 1989) may be instructive in understanding the extent of paternal grandparents' disengagement from their grandchildren. A staggering 50% of noncustodial fathers gradually lose all contact with their children: in a nationally representative sample of U.S. children aged 11 to 16, it was found that for 52%, the last contact with their fathers had been one or more years prior; only one-third averaged monthly or more contact (Furstenberg et al., 1983). The process of a father's disengagement from his children typically begins soon after the marital separation and gradually increases over time, most sharply at about 12 months after separation; between 25-30% of children lose all contact with their fathers by the end of the first year after divorce (Hetherington et al., 1978). As the great majority of divorced fathers become noncustodial parents, as fully half of non-custodial fathers become absent fathers, and as paternal grandparent contact is highly dependent on ongoing contact between noncustodial fathers and their children, the incidence of paternal grandparent disengagement is likely to be much higher than previously assumed. Where fathers become disengaged from their children's lives, paternal grandparents are also likely to be disengaged.

While the relative rate of contact loss of paternal grandparents has clearly been established, the actual rates of disengagement are less obvious. Compared to the frequency of paternal disengagement after divorce, a comparatively minimal decline in contact is reported for paternal grandparents: in stark contrast to Furstenberg's et al. (1983) figure of 52% of children of divorce having no contact with their noncustodial fathers in the year prior, Spicer and Hampe (1975) found that only 14-19% of paternal grandparents reported a decline in contacts or in the quality of their relationships with their

grandchildren; Ahrons and Bowman (1982) found 31% indicating decreased contact, but only 14% reporting a substantial decrease. The high levels of noncustodial father disengagement reported in studies utilizing nationally representative samples far exceeds the levels of paternal grandparent disengagement reported in smaller-scale studies not using representative samples.

It may be that decreased rates of grandchild contact are under-reported in existing studies, as the grandparents (usually grandmothers) interviewed may find it particularly difficult to admit and painful to talk about the loss of a salient relationship in their lives, within the context of a research interview. Those paternal grandparents who have in fact been successful in negotiating continued contact may exhibit a greater readiness to talk about their relationship with their grandchildren and thus avail themselves for research purposes; disengaged grandparents are likely to be less visible, and more reluctant to open up wounds. Such grandparents may also be less likely to make use of traditional legal and counselling resources, although they are beginning to make use of self-help and "grandparents' rights" advocacy groups specifically concerned with the issue of withheld access.

In a recent study of paternal disengagement after divorce, a majority of fathers identified withheld access by their former spouse as a primary factor in their loss of contact with their children (Kruk, 1989). In cases where paternal disengagement after divorce is in fact a result of withheld access by a custodial mother desiring a "clean break" from the former spouse (for both herself and her children), paternal grandparent contact may also be seen as a threat to the new family unit. Custodial mothers who, upon the loss of their marital identity, attempt to bolster their sense of parental identity, are likely to want to remove all other parental figures from the children's lives (Williams, 1986). A further concern of those custodial mothers desiring a "clean break" may be that paternal grandparent access may allow the noncustodial father to re-enter the children's lives.

Those noncustodial fathers who are able to remain in contact with their children often find that their relationships with their children are severely constrained by the limits of legal access arrangements (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Thus, even in cases where

contact between noncustodial fathers and their children remains stable, it is likely that the level of contact between paternal grandparents and their grandchildren will substantially decline as the level of paternal contact with children is considerably reduced.

It is often assumed that as a result of "selective investment" in their grandchildren, grandparents may *choose* to disengage themselves from certain grandchildren following divorce; similarly, it has been suggested that paternal grandparents may decide to retain ties with their former daughters-in-law and, by so doing, maintain their links to their grandchildren (Johnson, 1988). Grandparents thus may not necessarily be powerless in situations of lost access (or threatened loss of access) subsequent to divorce; it is claimed that paternal grandparents can initiate a process of negotiation with custodial mothers by being assertive and explicitly stating their desires and expectations (Gladstone, 1988). Such analyses, however, fail to recognize the intractable nature of post-divorce conflict between many former spouses, often resulting from an adversarial process of child custody and access determination, and the "spill-over" effect on first and second generation affine relationships. In such instances custodial parents may directly discourage or prohibit child access to noncustodial parents and, as a corollary, their former inlaws. In light of recent findings concerning noncustodial fathers' lack of success in overcoming withheld access (Kruk, 1989), the negotiation process may be highly problematic for grandparents who have already lost contact.

### **ETIOLOGY OF PATERNAL GRANDPARENT DISENGAGEMENT**

Various clinical accounts have identified the "struggle for parental identity" as characteristic of the post-divorce process for many families (Jacobs, 1986; Williams, 1983). This struggle may become so intense that each parent needs to bolster his or her parenting role by devaluing and invalidating the other's; in the extreme, "psychological erasure" of one of the parents and any other parent figures (Williams, 1983). While custodial mothers have been shown to maintain supportive relationships with their former in-laws to a greater extent than noncustodial fathers, the end result of a negotiat-

ing environment that encourages the former spouses to adopt extreme positions vis-à-vis child custody and access more often results in the exacerbation of conflict, which transfers itself to future relationships between parents and former in-laws, particularly if grandparents support the position of their own child in the divorce. Adversarial resolution of parental issues does not bode well for the continued contact of a sizeable proportion of paternal grandparents with their grandchildren.

The nature and extent of paternal grandparents' contact with their grandchildren subsequent to divorce is constrained by legal access determinations (which set the boundaries for post-divorce contact for noncustodial fathers and thereby for paternal grandparents), and what the custodial mother (and in some cases noncustodial father) will allow. The question remains, however, why it is that in situations where there exists an established, intense attachment bond between grandparents and grandchildren, those grandparents faced with actual or imminent loss of contact do not avail themselves of existing legal and counselling resources in an effort to overcome the problem of withheld access.

Grandparent relationships with non-divorcing adult children are a complex enough phenomenon without the addition of the dynamics of divorce. Sprey and Matthews (1982) noted a two level relationship process whereby grandparents involve themselves in processes with children-in-law and then learn new rules when grandchildren are born. More changes occur at the time of the adult child's divorce. The changes may directly reflect upon the quality of previous intergenerational relationships; hence, the interpersonal historical context becomes an issue. According to Wilks and Melville (1990), there are few social rules or traditional models for today's grandparents as they enter the uncharted territory of negotiating new post-divorce relationships with their children, former in-laws, and grandchildren. Concern about interference in their children's affairs and difficulty assimilating the reality of their children's divorce result in considerable reluctance on the part of many grandparents to insist on grandchild contact in the initial stages of the divorce. Concern about antagonizing the former daughter-in-law and thereby jeopardizing ongoing contact with grandchildren may serve as a "Catch-22" against paternal grandparents: early



*action* toward ensuring access may antagonize the custodial mother, who may then completely withhold access; on the other hand, *inaction* in the initial stages of contact loss clearly jeopardizes future contact.

### GRIEVING PROCESSES

In addition to legal constraints, the custodial mother's disposition toward paternal access, her disposition toward grandparent access, and the noncustodial father's disposition toward grandparent access, there may be powerful psychological factors at work which influence the nature of paternal grandparents' subsequent contact with their grandchildren. The potential onset of a grieving process related to the actual or threatened loss of a salient attachment is likely to severely weaken grandparents in their negotiation of and demand for grandchild access, contributing to eventual disengagement from the lives of their grandchildren.

Attachment theory constructs may be instructive in addressing the question of grandparent inaction vis-à-vis lost contact with grandchildren. The effects of divorce on grandparents, both maternal and paternal, as with all family members, are greatly influenced by the quality of the relationships involved: if grandparents form strong attachments to and are salient individuals in their grandchildren's lives, severance of such ties will likely occasion strong reactions of loss and grief. The effects of sudden grandchild absence and cessation of the previous grandparenting role will be particularly debilitating for those grandparents with previously intense attachments to their grandchildren.

Facing an abrupt discontinuity in their relationship with their grandchildren, previously highly involved and attached grandparents, like such noncustodial fathers (Kruk, 1989), are prone to experience a grief reaction containing all the elements of bereavement. During and after divorce, paternal grandparents experiencing a significant loss of contact with their grandchildren locate themselves at various points of the bereavement continuum: numbness, shock and denial; anger, rejection and betrayal; hopelessness and depression; or else acceptance and resolution. Resolution of the grieving process may be particularly problematic, however, for those with pre-

viously intense attachments, as the object of their grief is very much alive; reactions of intense grieving are characteristic of such grandparents, who continue mourning and become "stuck" along the bereavement continuum. Those with less well-formed attachments are better able to successfully "work through" and resolve their grief.

The view of loss from the position of attachment theory (Parkes, 1986) is such that grief is a "normal" reaction to a major loss (albeit a reaction during which normal functioning no longer holds), which is expected to gradually decline in intensity, allowing the affected individual to "recover" in the sense of achieving acceptance and resolution of the loss, and reorganization of their lives. According to Parkes, there are two sets of factors which may complicate the grieving process: those that discourage the *expression* of grief (including the mode of the loss and the surrounding social circumstances) and those that discourage the *termination* of grief (including the nature of the relationship with the lost person and the surrounding social circumstances). The loss of one's grandchild upon divorce may be sudden and unexpected; paternal grandparents in particular are not likely to have any forewarning of the impending divorce as in the majority of cases, mothers initiate separation and legal divorce proceedings (Bala, 1987). Such unanticipated bereavements are a precursor of poor outcome—the magnitude of grief is greater following a loss that is unexpected and untimely than when the bereaved has had time to anticipate the loss (Parkes, 1986). Also, when divorce occurs, grandparents feel relatively powerless in terms of affecting its outcome, perhaps experiencing considerable guilt over their inability to affect a more positive result. During and after divorce, grandparents are unable to openly express their grief as such a reaction may be interpreted by the divorcing family as "interference" and may further burden those divorced family members experiencing the multiple transitions and losses attendant to divorce. Most significantly, if the lost grandparent-grandchild relationship had been a salient one for the grandparents, reactions of intense yearning in the early stages of bereavement predict chronic grieving later, usually accounting for the poorest outcome for the bereaved (*ibid*). The most intimate and intense relationships are those that result in the greatest grief when they are

lost; the "normal" phases of grief become protracted or excessively intense, making resolution and adaptation extremely difficult.

Those paternal grandparents enjoying high levels of involvement with and attachment to their grandchildren before the divorce of their adult children, experiencing contact loss and intense bereavement, are severely weakened in terms of demanding their access rights. These grandparents in particular may be viewed by the custodial mother as a threat to the integrity of the new post-divorce family, and may be, paradoxically, the group most likely to lose contact.

Finally, social supports are often unavailable to grandparents mourning the loss of their grandchildren, either within the immediate family (who are themselves likely to be mourning the losses associated with divorce) or society at large (which is mainly oriented toward providing legal and therapeutic supports exclusively to members of the nuclear family unit).

### ***THE WAY FORWARD***

The importance of grandparents in their grandchildren's lives is a subject now being studied widely and thoroughly. While a clear heterogeneity of grandparenting roles has been shown to exist, for many children and their grandparents, the grandparent-grandchild attachment bond is an important component of their self-identities and a significant factor in their everyday lives. This bond has been described as a critical element of child development (George, 1988; Wilcoxon, 1987). The salience of the attachment does not diminish upon divorce; indeed, many have suggested that in cases where grandparents have closely developed attachments with their grandchildren, they may well play a critical role in helping grandchildren adjust to the consequences of parental divorce, providing a sanctuary for the emotional needs of their grandchildren at a time when parents, faced by the multiple losses and transitions related to the divorce, may be relatively insensitive to these needs. For this reason alone, family counsellors and mediators who subscribe to the belief of what is in the best interests of the child must not overlook the grandparents as adult children divorce.

One subgroup of grandparents—paternal grandparents whose di-

vorcing sons become noncustodial parents who may or may not remain in contact with their children—are highly at risk of having their relationship with their grandchildren drastically changed or suddenly severed. Where the previous relationship involved a great deal of emotional investment, its loss may eventuate a grief process containing all the major elements of bereavement on both sides which, combined with the multiple losses attendant to divorce, may have devastating consequences for both grandparents and their grandchildren. All family members need to be made aware of the role of the grandparents in the family and that the emotional stages connected to the grieving are normal and should not be construed as pathological or manipulative behavior.

Professionals providing counselling services within an intergenerational perspective need to expand their definition of the post-divorce family system. They can no longer focus exclusively on the nuclear family but must account for the fact that the grandparent generation is often highly involved both before and after divorce. As efforts are being made to involve the non-custodial father in post-divorce counselling, the counsellor's task is to engage both sets of grandparents. Grandparents are important resources and need to be given the opportunity to decide on their involvement in the divorce counselling and mediation processes. Their involvement needs to be reframed in a positive aspect when custodial mothers view grandparent access as a threat to their new post-divorce identity.

Mediators, and in particular family counsellors, need to be sensitive to the new roles (e.g., protector, being disengaged from grandchildren) thrust upon grandparents and to account for these variables in their intervention strategies. This would entail the recognition that old age is a unique developmental stage with tasks that need to be addressed in conjunction with learning the new post divorce family rules. The counsellor must assess the position of the grandparent in the family constellation as well as the interpersonal functioning both pre-divorce and changes required in the post-divorce family system. As well, more concrete factors such as the health status and age of the grandparents must be considered as they may limit the type and quantity of involvement with the family after divorce of adult children. One must not automatically assume that

every grandparent and every grandchild wish to be closer together during and after the marital breakup of adult children. Grandparents and grandchildren must be given the right of self-determination in deciding how involved they wish to be with each other and other family members. It could be potentially destructive to expect a functional relationship if in the past the grandparent-grandchild relationship was superficial and/or conflictual.

Divorce counsellors, family counsellors and mediators need to ensure that they provide assistance in helping grandparents negotiate their new roles as well as empowering them in regard to their ongoing relationship with their grandchildren. The family, at time of divorce, is fractured and it behooves professional counsellors to not allow the grandparent systems to also become disjointed which in turn could promote intergenerational conflicts. Systems theory stresses the importance of considering all family levels and counsellors need to assist the entire kin system develop new family guidelines as they learn to cope with the impact of divorce and subsequent impact on intergenerational relationships.

It is important to recognize that the attitudes of some professionals may slow down the redefinition and treatment of the post-divorce intergenerational family. Research has shown that those counsellors with negative attitudes toward the elderly tend to avoid taking them as clients or involving them as part of the client system when dealing with post-divorce family issues. Counsellors must make a conscious effort to assess their values and attitudes toward the older generation, particularly in light of what is in the "best interests of children." Further, the demographics of our aging society along with grandparents being as young as in their mid-forties, will clearly challenge any counsellors who hold such views. It is only when professionals begin to address the needs and advocate on behalf of the grandparent generation in divorce and post-divorce counselling that we should begin to see increasing numbers of grandparents initiating requests for help. To date, the disengaged grandparent population has been largely invisible to counselling practitioners and we can not assume that their needs will be met solely through the beginning development of self-help groups. This is particularly relevant to those grandparents experiencing a grief reaction due to loss of contact with grandchildren.

The main concern for paternal grandparents is that of access to their grandchildren. How can we begin to address their concerns? One approach is to empower grandparents in relation to access to their grandchildren. This can be done not only by therapeutic means but also by educating parents regarding the salience of grandparents to the child's emotional well-being during and after divorce. When adult children are divorcing, it is imperative that the family be encouraged to seek out mediators who are sensitive to the needs of the grandparent generation and who do not view a court of law as the only place to make decisions.

Traditionally the law has tended to have more flexible attitudes toward the *custody* claims of grandparents than those for access; the "best interests of the child" doctrine is more operative on the custody issue than it is on grandparent access to grandchildren, as grandparents are more likely to be successful in applying for custody than for access (Thompson, Tinsley, Scalora, & Parke, 1989). There have been changes in legislation, however, in most U.S. and Canadian jurisdictions, allowing grandparents to petition to the court for access to grandchildren whose parents are divorced. The changes represent new challenges to the judicial system as the complexities of family dynamics are factored into the legal decision making processes (Thompson, Scalora, Limber & Castrianno, 1991). Whether grandparent access is to be granted is determined according to one or more of: whether it is in the best interests of the child; the nature of the previous relationship and amount of grandparent-grandchild contact before the divorce; the existence of animosity between the parties; and the child's wishes.

The existence of such a statutory provision permitting grandparents to petition for access does not mean, however, that grandparents are in fact experiencing greater success via the judicial system. Even if they obtain an access award, if a parent is determined to continue to withhold it, access usually fails. In Canada, only the province of Quebec gives special recognition to grandparents in legislation; Article 659 reads, "In no case may the father or mother, without serious cause, place obstacles to personal relations between the child and his grandparents. Failing agreement between the parties, the modalities of the relations are settled by the court."

Despite the concerted advocacy efforts of "grandparent rights"

groups, the question remains: Is the utilization of legal policies the most effective method of ensuring multigenerational supports for children during and after divorce? Is a litigated access award, over the objections of a child's custodial parent, truly in the child's "best interests?" Despite evidence that in most cases a continued, unthreatened positive relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is in the child's best interests, are the courts the best arena to determine if the relationship should continue? Is the judicial system the most appropriate arena for this kind of intrafamilial dispute resolution (Thompson et al., 1989)? As legal scholars have argued, allowing grandparent access is a moral, not a legal obligation; judicial enforcement of access undermines parental authority and parents' capacity to raise children as they think best; the "best interests of the child" are not furthered by drawing children into a conflict between parents and grandparents; and coercive measures are not in fact likely to be helpful in ameliorating the problem of denied grandparental access (Thompson et al., 1989).

Counsellors, mediators, and legal professionals are in a position to have considerable impact on the grandparent generation. By embracing the concept of the intergenerational post-divorce family system, we are empowering grandparents vis-à-vis access to their grandchildren. As we begin to recognize the salience of grandparents in their grandchildren's lives, both before and after divorce, the necessity of actively advocating on behalf of the grandparent population, particularly those paternal grandparents who are most at risk of contact loss, becomes clear.

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