

Gabriela Matthews:

That's my most important case as far as legal precedent that I've done in my career. It's called the Mason versus Dwinnell case. The law was that if two same-sex people chose to have a child together, like for instance through artificial insemination, that kind of thing, then if they were later separated, the law in North Carolina was that the person who did not conceive the child, when they separated, that person had no custodial rights to that child.

So imagine two people decide to have a child together. They raise a child together for 12 years. They're co-parents. They do everything together as parents. It's just that the child cannot come out of both people's bodies. It has to come out of one person's body. But all of a sudden, if they split up, they separate, the law was that the person whose body it didn't come out of, well, you don't have any custodial rights to, in my view, your own child.

So there was no law about that. We did a major trial and it set the law as to not only for that case, for same-sex parents, but it's all about if a third party... because at that time they were considered third parties... how do I get custody if I'm a third party away from the biological parent? The point is that that case, even today, it is still the law.