Millions of families strive to give their children the best possible upbringing after being split apart by divorce. Separated mothers and fathers—and in many cases their second spouses—struggle to find the right way to piece together parent-child relationships in its wake. In this revolutionary work, psychologist Sanford L. Braver—who undertook the largest-ever federally funded study on issues confronting divorced fathers—shows how millions of well-intentioned mothers, fathers, judges, lawyers, educators, and other caregivers have been repeatedly and tragically misled by the prevailing data about divorce and parenthood. For years our society has accepted the image of the deadbeat dad who shirks childcare payments and other responsibilities. Yet Braver proves that this villainous figure—like many other myths of the divorced parent—simply does not exist in significant numbers. Moreover, Braver overturns one of the most important pieces of data on divorce in the past quarter-century: the belief that divorced women suffer a steep decline in their standard of living. This widely embraced notion was the result of misread data, but was transformed into fact by the
media and the courts, and accepted by divorced families and their advocates. No other book has revealed the deep flaws in today's research on divorce. One-sided studies of divorced men and women, misused census data, and poor research have skewed many of the assumptions around which parents and courts have shaped divorce settlements, parenting responsibilities, and child-rearing decisions. Every divorced parent--and anyone who loves a divorced parent--urgently needs this book to understand the new realities behind divorce and parenting.

**Personal Review: Divorced Dads: Shattering the Myths by Diane O'Connell**

Family issues are among the most important we face as individuals and as a nation. But the public has been indoctrinated with false information, rendering us vulnerable to destructive corrupt policy and destructive social trends.

You've all heard about "deadbeat dads" from the intense propaganda campaign in the 1990s. Every election season, the war against fathers continues. Recently, I heard a female lawyer on O'Reilly state that only 25% of single mothers receive child support. Well, everything you've been told is wrong. If your instincts tell you that fathers are not genetically tuned to abandon their wives and children, trust your instincts. The propaganda campaign against fathers (and the family) was all about pork-barrel federal spending.

Arm yourself with the truth: Author Sanford Braver is a highly praised scientist at Arizona State University who conducted the largest federally funded study of divorced (non-welfare) fathers. "Shattering the Myths" does exactly what the title suggests. Results correspond well with a previous study that lost its funds as soon as it was realized that they did not support the father as deadbeat image. This book is well written and digestable for the average reader, while providing scientific evidence and insight.

Chapter by chapter, myths are exposed:

1. The "Bad Divorced Dad" image
2. Taking on the Myth: Deadbeat Dads
3. Taking on the Myth: The No-Show Dad
4. Taking on the Myth: Standards of Living
5. Taking on the Myth: Terms of Divorce
7. Taking on the Myth: Who Leaves the Marriage
8. The "Parentally Disenfranchised" Dad
9. Joint Legal Custody: Keeping Dad Involved
10. Caveat: When Joint Legal Custody is Wrong
11. Custody Policies That Work
12. Changing the Landscape of Divorce: Additional Recommendations for Reform