

# SNOHOMISH COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT PRESIDING JUDGE PAUL THOMPSON OVERTURNED ON APPEAL

By Gina Bloom

In a concerning instance of judicial overreach, Judge Paul Thompson of the Snohomish County Superior Court recently faced a reversal from the Washington Court of Appeals Division I for infringing upon the First Amendment rights of a domestic violence survivor. Acting under the broad doctrine of absolute judicial immunity, Judge Thompson's actions not only violated fundamental constitutional protections but also underscored a troubling pattern of judicial impunity.

In the case of Brian Christopher Yorks v. Olympia Georgiana Yorks, Judge Thompson inserted a provision that effectively prohibited Ms. Yorks from filing reports with Child Protective Services (CPS) or the police without risking the loss of parenting time if such reports were later deemed "unsubstantiated." This provision constituted a clear and impermissible infringement on Ms. Yorks' First Amendment rights, particularly her right to free speech. Despite a request from Ms. Yorks on May 3, 2023, to correct this constitutional violation, Judge Thompson refused to rescind the order, further entrenching his unconstitutional stance.

The Washington Court of Appeals responded by overturning the gag order, declaring it an "impermissible infringement" on Ms. Yorks' rights, thereby affirming the fundamental importance of free speech, even within the sensitive context of family court proceedings. The Amicus Curiae brief, submitted by The Village Firm on behalf of Ms. Yorks, highlighted the essential need for domestic violence survivors to maintain their voices as a means of seeking justice and protection. The brief also criticized the chilling effect that such a gag order would have on survivors, effectively silencing them at a time when their voices are most needed.

Compounding the issue, it was revealed that the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) in the case, Brian Parker of Port Gardner Law Group, allegedly committed first-degree perjury during



the proceedings overseen by Judge Thompson. An investigation by the Everett Police Department uncovered a false statement made under oath, yet Judge Thompson allowed this false testimony to influence the case's outcome. This failure to address the perjury in a timely manner further compromised the fairness and integrity of the trial. Ultimately, the perjury scandal led to Judge Thompson's disqualification from the case, a necessary step that critics argue should have been taken much earlier.

The disqualification raises significant concerns regarding the limits of judicial power and the need for accountability when those limits are breached. Judge Thompson's actions, protected under the shield of absolute immunity, have prompted a critical examination of the qualifications and experience of judges, particularly in civil matters. The case underscores the importance of electing or appointing judges with comprehensive experience in both civil and criminal law to ensure that justice is served in all aspects of the judiciary.

In the case of Brian Christopher Yorks v. Olympia Georgiana Yorks, the judicial overreach by Judge Paul Thompson didn't go unchecked, thanks in large part to the Family Violence Appellate Project (FVAP). FVAP is a vital legal organization dedicated to ensuring justice for domestic violence survivors through the appellate courts. Their involvement in this case was instrumental in challenging and ultimately overturning the unconstitutional gag order that threatened to silence Ms. Yorks.

FVAP, known for its tireless advocacy on be-

half of survivors, provided pro-bono legal support to Ms. Yorks, highlighting the broader implications of Judge Thompson's overreach. Through their sharp and compelling brief, FVAP not only exposed the flaws in the trial court's ruling but also underscored a disturbing trend in family courts where survivors are increasingly being silenced by the very system meant to protect them. 🔥

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## ENDORSEMENTS

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Moving up a rung toward endorsement, the next step is acknowledgement. Acknowledgement is the observation that someone has put some effort into learning a new skill or developing a natural talent. You might say acknowledgement honors elbow grease applied to potential.

Photography is my hobby and a compliment is nice attached to an image I post on social media. However, it may only mean that I was at the right time at the right place to observe a fiery orange ball, accompanied by supportive clouds, descending into a bronze sea. An acknowledgement means more. It indicates a careful observer has paused long enough to notice that it wasn't the camera that made a pretty picture, just as it wasn't the gas oven that made the tasty dinner. Behind every camera and kitchen range is a person who developed their craft over many years with many failed attempts but possessed the courage and persistence to keep on improving their craft.

Recently I posted some pictures from a trip to the Southwest in a group dedicated to RV travelers. One man wrote, "Are you a professional photographer? Your images consistently rise above the threshold of a casual 'picture taker'. Light balance, color balance, image focal points...all are composed with nuance and skill. Yours is a very practiced eye!"

This comment was an acknowledgement. He did not compliment me on what a great camera I used, but sought to know who I was as a person and a photographer. He was getting closer to the real me in his acknowledgement of how skill had been applied to craft.

The final rung is endorsement. Here the words spoken probe to the depth of who the person is at the crosshairs of their identity. When my grandfather told my father, "Everything I have built will return to dust. What you build will live eternally," he recognized that at his very core, my father had placed his efforts and energy in values that would have long-lasting influence, even beyond the lifetime of both men.

An endorsement affirms the person who receives it because it clearly identifies them for who they are. It looks past the thin, yet shiny veneer and gets to the solid truth and complete transparency of the fine hardwood from which

they are hewn.

Endorsements may come only once in a lifetime. They are like fine gold to the recipient. They are memorable. They are treasures tucked away for a blustery day. They form a rudder steering the recipient into a lifetime of contribution.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to tour Ireland with a group of creatives. We planned to write poetry and photograph images that would endorse the people of Ireland for who they are at the core. Our aim was to publish a book that would endorse this nation for its history, culture, and raw beauty. We hoped to combat the plethora of suicides that have taken a tremendous toll on the youth.

Interestingly, the following year, the leader of the tour was speaking locally where the hall was packed with people hungry to release creativity. He began speaking about the book that we would shortly publish. All of a sudden, he raised his finger and pointed directly at me and said, "Marlee Huber, here, is a world-class photographer." I wanted to sink into the floor. I thought I knew world-class photographers and I was not in that number, but rather than sinking, I smiled a silly smile. I should have known that a visionary who would choose to endorse a nation, would also choose to endorse an individual. This was an unexpected endorsement.


Recently, I was sharing with a church congregation about my book, A Life of Resounding Joy, when the pastor pointed his finger at me and said, "Marlee Huber is a world-class author." This time, I did not sink, but straightened my back and smiled confidently.

Why? In the intervening years I had discovered that these two men did not speak from their own intellect, but yielded to a higher voice identifying me as world class in my discipline.

I have discovered that in the eyes of the Creator of the Universe all of us were designed to be world class. Occasionally, someone hears the voice from the great beyond and passes along the good news to the earth-bound recipient. This is endorsement at its finest.

My word for you is to learn to listen so you can pass along endorsements to those who will find them welcome anchors in troubled waters.

Begin today offering compliments. Practice making acknowledgements. Try your hand in social media offering both. Then move on to speaking acknowledgements over those you love. Don't stop until you become an endorser for those who will embrace your words carrying them forward through good times and bad. This is one of the most valuable gifts you will ever offer your son or daughter, your employee, or your partner. And it just might change your world as well as it did for my family. 🔥



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Marlee Huber, is a local Snohomish County author of A Life of Resounding Joy, available exclusively through her website, [RadiantLifeMapping.com](http://RadiantLifeMapping.com). Marlee is available for speaking opportunities. Her keynote address is "What if Creativity is the First Spiritual Discipline, and We Have Made it the Last?"