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### **Defining Parentage: Same-Sex Unions, Reproductive Technologies, Bio-identity, and the Law**

"Parent" was until quite recently a well-defined legal term. That is no longer true in the United States where state courts are now struggling with the effects of seismic cultural, scientific, and legal changes when determining exactly who is a "parent." This has happened in several ways. Thus parentage established by either marital presumption or voluntary acknowledgment is now met with attempts to "disestablish" parentage because the legal father has been found not to have been the biological parent. Moreover, medical interventions and scientific advances now offer a smorgasbord of assisted reproductive technologies, and a child may be biologically related to one, both, or neither member of the couple - and a child may also have as many as six parents. For same-sex couples, who must deal with assisted conception and (possibly) gestation of the child, their intent concerning parentage may not be recognized by the law - particularly when the couple separates and the arguments turn to who has or does not have parental rights and responsibilities. While granting legal status to a same-sex couple may alter the legal landscape, laws establishing or recognizing civil unions, domestic partnerships or same-sex marriage are rarely sufficient on the issue of parentage. This session will explore the legal and social issues around determining parentage and child support in the modern world and the impact of the Hague Maintenance Convention on these issues.