

Research Assessment #5

Date: October 23, 2017

Subject: Finance Splitting After Divorce

MLA Citation:

Rapacon, Stacy. "Why Women Should Rethink Their Finances After Divorce." U.S. News Money, U.S. News World Report, 14 Aug. 2017, money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/family-finance/articles/2017-08-14/why-women-should-rethink-their-finances-after-divorce.

Assessment:

When choosing the article for my fifth research assessment, I really wanted to shift focus away from immigration law and move more to family and divorce law, which is more and more looking like will be my final topic of study this year in ISM. The article I read was really interesting, citing not only the female-male wage gap as a reason for female divorcees to have a weaker financial situation post-split but also many other factors that I hadn't previously considered.

The article also highlighted the increased confidence women feel about their financial situation after getting a divorce, and that was also really fascinating. I had never thought of divorce in that light-- being able to instill a strength in women that they lacked from having their partners being the primary breadwinners and handler of finances in their marriages for years. It was really interesting to mean to learn that there was actually that benefit, even though I still wonder if maybe the article I read was sugarcoating an otherwise unhappy occurrence. I was really surprised to learn about that silver lining of divorce, not that divorce is necessarily a good thing, but that it can in times bring out the best in people through the adversity. I also learned that education is really widely recommended, regardless of what kind of assets are being split. The more knowledge a woman getting divorced has, the better, according to this article, because after people getting used to financial support that has the potential to disappear, it could be too late for stability. What is the best time to go about working on the financial aspect

of a split? And who is best to talk to about these matters? At first I assumed an accountant, but upon further consideration, it's possible that the legality of asset splitting would be better in the hands of a divorce and family attorney, or better yet, a more financial based lawyer.

I was also really interested to learn about all of the different ways women face hardship in a divorce because of pretty unchangeable factors such as gender roles and societal expectations. I still have a lot of questions about that, though, because I'm not sure I understand how child support works after a divorce. Does it go on forever or is it more of a temporary financing from the ex-husband to the caregiving ex-wife until she gets more financial stability? And if so, when is that point agreed upon by both parties? Also, I wonder how often the splitting of assets end up in court? I feel like based on the interviews I've been on with family and divorce lawyers, they seem to usually stay out of court, so I think that it's usually avoided when possible.

Overall, the more I read about family and divorce law, the more interested I become in it. Although I was a little tepid about it at first, I truly feel like the topic well combined the more clear-cut law aspect with a more compassionate, almost therapy-like side and I get more and more excited about studying family and divorce law the more that I research it. Through this article I've gained a better understanding of the post-split financial aspect, especially in conjunction with societal gender roles and how that affects the situation. I think next time I would like to focus more on the divorce process as it's happening, but as a whole, this was a very fascinating article that has altered my outlook on the field of family and divorce law.