

Thank you for allowing me to tell my story. Although I have not gone through the court system with my abusive ex I fully expect to be forced to in order to get some sort of settlement. I have been trying to get divorced for two and a half years and I'm not even close. My ex refuses to give full financial disclosure. All bank accounts, multiple properties and assets were purposely put in his name...I wasn't even allowed to have a say in even picking out the matrimonial house that we raised two kids in. I have had to pay dearly for property appraisals and accounting business evaluations on what he has disclosed and in turn my ex has discredited all of these evaluations every step of the way by devaluing everything that comes back. He has trust funds, an estate settlement and who knows what else that he thinks he can exclude from disclosure. I am forced to keep throwing money trying to get true and fair disclosure. What troubles me the most are the lawyers that enable this behaviour especially my ex's lawyer Brett Vining out of Nanaimo, BC. In my six hour discovery Mr. Vining proceeded to tell me I was a bitch, cold bitch, lazy, accuse me of sexual abuse, a terrible mother, said I had no friends and nobody liked me and I needed to provide names and phone numbers of people to prove I had friends. I also was told by Vining that this is the worst case of parental alienation he has ever seen, a common tactic used by abusive men when their kids refuse contact. In my case I have two teenagers that have gone no contact with their father for their own mental health and had this decision fully supported by counsellors. Vining then proceeded to tell me that I reminded him of his wife who is also a bitch and that if a big boobied blonde had of come into his life he would have cheated on his wife just like I got cheated on because we're both bitches. I kid you not this really happened. I immediately filed a complaint with the BC Law Society against Mr. Vining which has been an ongoing investigation for well over a year. I recently had a zoom call to tell my story with the Law Society and am waiting to hear back as to the next step in this complaint. So far I hold out very little hope there will be any consequences for Vining's conduct. So in addition to being in an abusive relationship I have had to be additionally abused by his lawyer. This has been excruciatingly painful and traumatic for myself and my kids.

I have been subjected to emotional, financial, and sexual abuse. My ex has tried kicking myself and our kids out of our house, he turned the hydro off on us last winter, he only started paying child support when ordered by the judge after discovery, he has threatened our son where I called the cops, driven over my lawn several times, sat in my driveway stalking me, abused the family dog yet the police did absolutely nothing but have a chat with my ex and told him his behaviour would not look good in court. I enquired about getting a family protection order but was told by my lawyer not to so I installed security cameras.

The family law system is completely broken. Only the wealthy can afford lawyers. I am spending money disputing letters from my ex's lawyer saying I have no friends. Really?? Why is this behaviour allowed by lawyers, they're well aware of their code of conduct yet it's all a joke if it's not enforced and why did my lawyer find it acceptable to allow me to be abused for six hours in discovery. I have never gotten any answers to this other than I had to answer the questions and with no intervention. The judge during our Judicial Case Conference advocated for family counseling which infuriated me. This judge knew nothing of abuse and as women we are told do not mention abuse as lawyers and judges don't want to hear about it you will look crazy and like a troublemaker. So now I'm being told by a judge that my kids have to go into counseling to have a relationship with an abusive father and I need to learn to coparent with my abuser.

There simply has to be mandatory education on coercive control and domestic abuse for all involved in these cases, lawyers, judges, police officer, doctors, mental health professionals. If not children and spouses will continue to be killed at the current alarming rates.

I will conclude this for now as I want to submit before the deadline. Thank you for giving us a voice and I optimistically wait for change.