

# Court will review unwed father case

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court Monday agreed to consider what a father has to prove to gain custody of his out-of-wedlock child.

The justices will hear an appeal from a state court ruling that a Nebraska man's custody of his baby daughter was not in the child's "best interest."

At issue is what a father must show legally to avoid having a

child taken away by the state and put up for adoption.

The case was brought to court by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of Donald Kirkpatrick, whose relationship with a Texas woman resulted in the birth of baby in January 1981.

Kirkpatrick, offered to marry the mother but she refused.

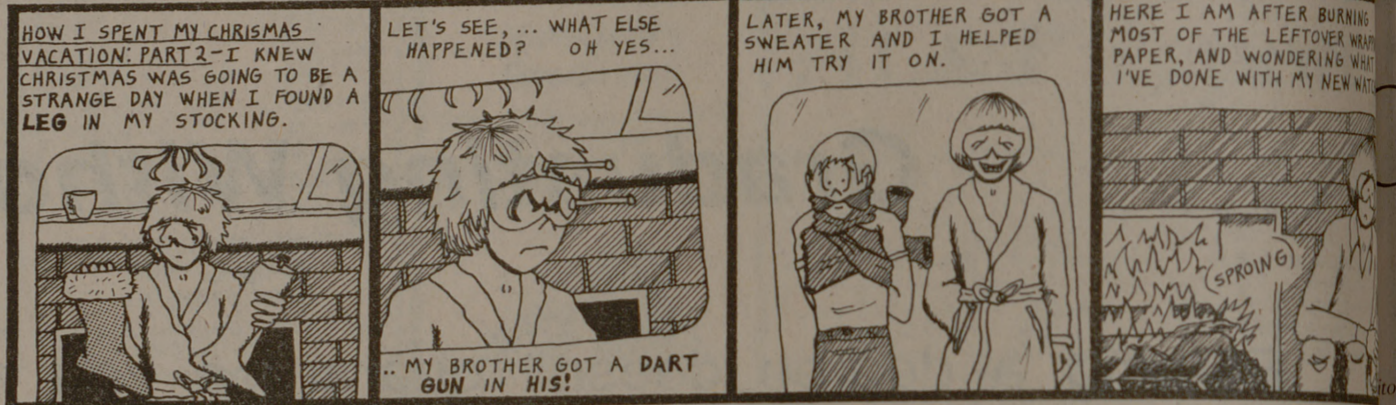
The mother opposed Kirkpatrick taking custody. Under Texas law, a biological father of

a child born out of wedlock is not a "legal" parent until a court enters a legitimization order. A father must prove that the legitimization would be in the child's "best interest."

Kirkpatrick's lawyers said the court ruling was contrary to state law which requires ending a parent-child relationship only when the father is found unfit.

Mothers of illegitimate children are not required to meet the "best interest" test.

## Warped



by Scott McCullar

## Computer makes decisions

# New help in life's choices

United Press International  
PALO ALTO, Calif. — Two young computer entrepreneurs are marketing what they say is the first software package enabling the user to pick apart some of life's tougher problems, sort through the choices and make the best move.

"Rank Master," which retails for \$195, was designed and marketed by Gary Retelny, 24, who now lives in Nicaragua, and Chuck Esserman, 23, of Bethesda, Md.

It takes into consideration in-

tangibles like the quality of life and the weather, along with quantitative data like cost of living and proximity to business centers, in deciding such things as where to go to college or where to start a new business.

"It lets you make qualitative decisions — decisions based on your gut feeling — and there's no other program on the market that lets you do that," says Retelny.

"Suppose you have a home computer and you're trying to decide where your children

should go to college," he said. "You consider where the school is located, how the weather is, what it costs, what kind of music program it has. The program compares schools based on the criteria you have fed into it, and it comes up with the decision you would make."

"Rank Master" is said to be applicable to complex questions that require consideration of many factors and have many possible solutions. It assembles the user's considerations in order of priority.

"Most people who get to four or five factors lose track of what they're doing and become very inconsistent," Retelny said. "When you have 10 important factors and 10 choices, there's nobody in this world who can figure all that out."

The software comes with a 30-page step-by-step instruction manual. The computer asks the user to rank criteria in importance and the degree to which

one factor is more important than another.

"It's not forcing you to do something you don't mean," he says. "It's just a conversation with a friend who might," Retelny said. "And the model also checks your own consistency. If you say weather is important, but you say money is more important than weather, the program will tell you where you are inconsistent. Then you have the option of correcting the inconsistency, or going ahead with consistent data."

Retelny and Esserman met as students at Stanford University, took 18 months to develop the program, start their company — called Extended-the-ear Software — and put "Rank Master" on the market.

"The model gives you a scratch sheet to figure out important decisions," Retelny said. "This software is going to be an example and open a whole new field."

## Now you know

United Press International  
Smoking a couple of high-nicotine cigarettes can depress male sexual response.

In a study done by Florida State University psychologist Richard Hagen, male subjects were tested after they had smoked either two low or two high-nicotine cigarettes, or, in a control group after they had eaten candy bars. Science Digest reports.

The men were then shown erotic movies. Sexual response, as measured by penile diameter or heart rate, decreased in those who had smoked the high-nicotine cigarettes. Hagen does not presently know the basis of this phenomenon but he is continuing his studies. He is particularly interested in finding out whether long-term smoking has a similar effect.

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