



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on December 31, 2009

Former Lesbian Couple Battles Over Child Custody

A seven-year-old girl stands in the crosshairs of a bizarre custody battle between former lesbian domestic partners Lisa Miller and Janet Jenkins. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that Miller is the child's biological mother and conceived her by artificial insemination while living with Jenkins in Vermont, where they were joined in a civil union in 2001. Miller became a Christian in 2003, renounced the homosexual lifestyle, and moved to Virginia with her then-infant daughter, Isabella Miller-Jenkins.



Jenkins sued for unsupervised visitation, which Vermont Judge William Cohen granted after dissolving the civil union, but Miller refused to comply with the court order. She said allowing Isabella to spend time unsupervised with Jenkins would violate her Christian principles. Miller appealed the visitation order to courts in Vermont and Virginia. The *Vermont Times Argus* reports that Miller's attorneys argued that Isabella has not lived with Jenkins since she was a baby. A doctor who testified in the case said the change could "induce devastating trauma." Miller also expressed concern that Jenkins refuses to take Isabella to church. Jenkins' attorneys denied these claims.

Miller's appeals in both states were unsuccessful, but she remained in contempt. As a result, in November the court awarded Jenkins sole custody. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, an attorney for Jenkins claimed, "It is Ms. Jenkins' intent when she has custody of Isabella to allow as liberal contact as is possible with her other mother."

Miller tried to delay the transfer, set for January 1, but the court [denied that request](#), too. Now, Miller and Isabella are missing. *ABC News* reports that no one has seen or heard from either of them since November 20, not even Miller's attorneys.

Under Vermont law, Jenkins is one of Isabella's legally recognized parents. She filed a missing person report on Wednesday since she does not know the whereabouts of her daughter. Her attorney Sarah Star said Jenkins is concerned about Isabella's safety and about Miller's mental stability. *ABC News* also quoted a professor of constitutional law at Vermont Law School who explained that if the transfer does not take place January 1, the court will likely issue a warrant for Miller's arrest.



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Photo of Lisa Miller: AP Images



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